

Covid-19 School Reopening Handbook Updates 2020-2021

The following policies and procedures will be in place until such time the school returns to a pre-Covid 19 setting and can resume daily operations without restrictions.

Drop Off and Pick Up Protocols

Arrival to school:

- o We will prioritize overall safety considerations, in planning school arrival and dismissal.
- o As appropriate, we will consider assigning multiple entry points to avoid crowding in entry and exit areas.
- o We will post appropriate signage and reminders about the health and safety requirements that everyone needs to follow.
- o We will ensure hand washing or sanitizing is available upon entry, as well as appropriate disposal containers.
- o We will ensure that all students, staff, and visitors, with noted exceptions for medical needs, are wearing masks covering their nose and mouth. All students will wear their masks during arrival and dismissal times.
- o We will ensure that additional masks are available at the entry as may be necessary.
- o We will have staff monitor entry to classrooms to ensure everyone properly disinfects their hands and is wearing masks.
- o While there are no screening procedures required at the point of entry, school staff should observe students throughout the day and refer students who may be symptomatic to the school nurse. When it's safe to do so, we will leave doors propped open during entry/exit times if constantly monitored.

Dismissal from school:

We will designate multiple exit points, and monitor hand sanitization upon exit. Before students are dismissed, we will confirm they have gathered all personal belongings before leaving, especially those that require cleaning at home.

Arrival Procedures:

Bus riders will arrive and depart from the back entrance of the school near the gymnasium. In the morning, students will be dismissed from the bus in a staggered fashion. The bus riders will begin departing the bus at 8:10. Kindergarten, then first grade, then second grade, etc. The students will proceed directly to their classrooms. Students who eat breakfast will report to the cafeteria for breakfast. Students should arrive at their classrooms by 8:15.

Students who are dropped off by a family member:

Students in Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade will enter via the entrance nearest the playground. Staff will supervise their arrival. Students will report directly to their classrooms. Students who are eating breakfast will report directly to the cafeteria. Students in grade 3, grade 4, grade 5, and grade 6 will enter through the entrance nearest the main office. They will report directly to their classrooms. If they are eating breakfast they will report directly to the cafeteria.

Dismissal Procedures:

In the afternoon, our students will be dismissed in a staggered fashion. Bus riders will begin dismissal at approximately 2:45. Parent pickup students will be dismissed by 2:50. We will dismiss students in Kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2 through the exit nearest the playground to their waiting family members. Students in grade 3, grade 4, grade 5, and grade 6 will be dismissed through the exit nearest the main office. Students who ride the bus will also be dismissed in a staggered fashion.

Bathrooms

Our bathrooms will be open and accessible to students. However, each bathroom will have a two person capacity. Students waiting to use the bathroom will be expected to wait outside of the bathroom while maintaining appropriate physical distancing.

- When needed, teachers will build in bathroom breaks during their classes.
- Commonly touched surfaces in the bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized multiple times each day.
- Soap, water, paper towels, and hand sanitizer will be available in all bathrooms.

Visitors

No visitors/parents will be allowed in the building during arrival and dismissal times. (8:05 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.) and (1:45 p.m. to 2:55 p.m.)

- When possible, IEP/504 team meetings will be held remotely unless special accommodations are needed.
- Visitors who enter the building between 8:20 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. must wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entering the building.
- All visitors must check in with the main office.

Hand Washing/Hand Sanitizing

Hand hygiene is critical. Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.

- Refillable hand sanitizing stations will be placed in each classroom, bathroom, and common space.

- Students and staff will be asked to sanitize their hands when entering and leaving a classroom or common area.
- Posters displaying proper hand washing/sanitizing techniques will be placed throughout the building.

Recess Protocols

Petersham will:

- NOT limit children's access to recess, the schoolyard, or fixed play equipment
- Wash or sanitize hands before and after recess or using high-touch equipment
- Increase supervision, when necessary, to limit high-risk behaviors
- Stagger recess times, or, if necessary, separate classes by playground area

Recess

- Hand hygiene: Hand sanitizer needs to be used upon entering and leaving recess space.
- Cohorting: We will consider designating outdoor spaces to separate cohorts and we will support physical distancing, when possible, while still providing recess opportunities. We will stagger the release time to recess to minimize hallway contact.
- Cleaning and disinfecting: When possible, we will clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal between cohort use. We will use our electrostatic sprayer on all playground surfaces every Wednesday, when students are home. We will allow use of shared portable equipment (e.g., balls, wheeled toys). Shared equipment will be disinfected between each class/cohort, and students will wash hands after using shared equipment.
- Masking: When students are outdoors and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet, we will consider using recess as an unmasked time if social distancing is observed. Designated areas will be established for students who wish to sit 6' apart and take their masks off. Hula Hoops and cones will be purchased for this purpose, for example.
- Activities: Playgrounds can be used with staff monitoring to ensure physical distancing when possible.

School Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

Although it is not the main way the virus spreads, it may be possible for an individual to get COVID-19 by touching an object that is contaminated and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly eyes.

We will ensure facilities are properly cleaned and disinfected each day following the guidelines below:

Frequency:

Cleaning and disinfecting will occur at least daily for shared spaces and furniture. For high-touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, light switches, water fountains, toilet seats) cleaning and disinfecting should occur three to four times per day and/or

between uses.

Desks will be cleaned at least daily. For situations when cohorts of students move between classrooms or where meals are eaten at desks, cleaning of desks must take place between classes and before and after meals. Cleaning of desks may be done by students or custodial staff. We will carefully choose disinfectant solutions that require a short dwell or drying time and are appropriate with food surfaces.

High Touch Playground Surfaces: When possible, we will clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal between cohort use. We will use our electrostatic sprayer on all playground surfaces every Wednesday, when students are home.

Responsibility: Dedicated custodial staff will handle all disinfection requiring chemicals for facilities (e.g., classrooms, bathrooms, mask break areas) and high-touch (e.g., door handles, light switches, water fountains).

For other surfaces, we will determine cleaning responsibility on a case-by-case basis. For shared and high-touch items such as desks, cleaning responsibility may be shared by students, if the task is age appropriate and safe.

Disinfectant solutions: To select the proper disinfectant, we will review the suggested list on the EPA website.

Mask disposal: If a reusable mask breaks and needs to be thrown out or if a single-use mask needs to be disposed of, it should be placed into the nearest trash can by the individual who wore the mask. The individual should immediately put on a new mask after washing their hands

Food Preparation and Distribution Protocols

Health and safety requirements: We will adjust food preparation and service procedures to minimize shared items (i.e. serving utensils), we will maintain physical distance, and we will comply with health and safety regulations.

Individually packaged meals: We will adjust food offerings to provide individually packaged, to-go style lunches, instead of buffet style served directly to students. We will consider developing non-contact pre-payment systems for our school when offering individually packaged meals, if feasible.

Schedule and distribution:

We will establish a meal serving schedule and distribution process that limits interactions between classrooms and contamination of food items or meal distribution areas. Meal distribution should limit high-touch surfaces and will exclude buffet style serving.

Special dietary accommodations:

We will ensure new menus offer meal accommodations for special dietary needs. We will communicate special dietary accommodations to staff distributing meals to ensure student safety and privacy.

Meal consumption

- **Masks:** We will ensure proper removal and placement of masks before eating. Masks should be removed by handling the ties or back/ear areas of the mask once seated. Students will not touch the outside or inside of the part covering the face. While eating, masks should be placed on a napkin, paper towel, or other container on the table, with the inside of the mask facing up. Masks should be put back on before leaving the seat.
- **Distancing:** Students will be at least 6 feet apart at all times when masks are removed.
- **Hand hygiene:** Students must properly wash or sanitize hands before and after eating.
- **Water fountain usage:** The school will provide potable water to students during mealtimes. Touchless or motion activated fountains are preferred for reusable water bottles, but other fountains, water jugs, or coolers can be used with single-use cups if students wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after fountain use. Water fountains cannot be used for direct consumption. High-touch surfaces on water fountains, jugs or coolers should be cleaned multiple times a day.
- **Food allergies:** Kitchen staff will stay informed of student needs, including food allergies.
- **Food waste removal:** Kitchen and custodial staff will work to determine protocols for waste management. Additional garbage cans may be needed to accommodate food waste, especially if classroom spaces are used for meals. We will consider how normal cleaning procedures and schedules may be affected by new processes. We will consider how students can support clean-up, such as cleaning their own eating area after the meal, if age appropriate and safe to do so.

Meals for remote learners: We will continue to offer meals to eligible students who are learning remotely from home. We will create a plan on how to operate lunch and or breakfast, for students who will not be attending in-person school five days a week.

Communication: We will communicate with families on how remote meal processes will be different from this past spring.

Delivery Methods: We will begin planning for drive-through, delivery, curbside pick-up, or end of school day take-home meals (as appropriate) for students who are not attending in-person school five days a week. Meal distribution methods utilized this past spring, including parent pick-up, can be continued, including providing meals to cover multiple days.

Masks

- **Masks are among the most important single measures to contain the spread of**

COVID-19. PCS will consider reasonable accommodations to the mandatory mask policy for individual students and staff who submit a letter from an appropriate health care provider documenting the medical reason that the individual cannot wear a mask. If possible, a face shield is expected to be worn in place of a mask, and if a face shield also cannot be worn, an appropriate health care provider must also document the medical reason for this. Reasonable accommodations to the mandatory mask policy that may be considered, based on individual documentation, could include, but are not limited to: learning/teaching remotely; daily contactless temperature checks; physical distancing at greater than 6 feet; and/or transitioning between classes at times when other students and staff are not in hallways.

- Masks are required to be worn at all times by all individuals while riding the building, outside during arrival and dismissal times, and while walking through the hallways.
 - [How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering](#)
- Based on guidance from our Board of Health, neck gaiters, open-chin triangle bandanas and face covering will not be considered appropriate face coverings. Extra disposable masks will be available in the event a student forgets their mask. Families should wash reusable masks daily. If a family is unable to afford masks, they should contact the building principal. If a staff member or student does not have a face covering they will be provided with a face covering by the school district for the day.
- Parents and Guardians are expected to provide their children with a mask
- **Non-disposable masks should be washed every night.** Click here for washing instructions. [How to Wash a Cloth Face Covering](#)
- Mask breaks will be provided throughout the day. Mask breaks will be conducted in a manner and time determined by the teacher in order to maintain safety and appropriate physical distancing.
- Mask Policy: Students who refuse to wear a mask will be subject to the following policy:
 - First reminder (Conference with a staff member)
 - Second reminder (Conference with administration)
 - Third reminder (virtual conference with parent)
 - Subsequent reminders: student may be required to shift to the remote learning academy for the duration of the semester.

MEDICATION POLICIES

Please be reminded of the policies that have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of children needing medications during the school day (both long and short-term medications). Optimally, medication should be given at home, however, we understand that this is not always possible.

1. If your child must receive medication at school the medication must be brought to school by a parent/guardian. **NO** medication should be sent to school with a child.
2. **The first dose of medication or treatment must take place at home.**
3. When medication is brought to school, a parent/guardian **MUST** complete the Authorization for Medication Administration form and have a physician's medication order **BEFORE** any dose of the medication can be given.

No medication will be sent home with a student. A parent/guardian must come to the school to pick up the medication.

4. Medication must be in the original prescription bottle, with the pharmacy label. This label serves as the doctor's order for the medicine. It has the child's name on it, date of expiration, and dispensing instructions. No medication will be given without this label.
5. If you know that your child will need his/her medication during school hours, ask your pharmacist to divide the prescription into two bottles when he/she is filling the prescription. They will put a label on both bottles and then you will not have to drop-off/pick-up medication every day, just the first day, and the last day of school.
6. **NO over-the-counter medications, including cough drops** will be given at school unless there is a doctor's order/parent's permission form accompanying the medication. We will not give anti-histamines, cold medications, creams, lotions or ointments without a doctor's medication order.
7. All medications prescribed by the physician ***must be FDA approved.***
8. **NO MEDICATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED AFTER 2:30 P.M.**
9. Tylenol, Bacitracin, Calamine (Calergy) lotion, and Vaseline can be administered with a signed Standing Order form on file. This form is in the packet that goes home at the beginning of the year.
10. **PLEASE NOTE:** Change in aerosolized medication administration. Due to COVID-19, inhalers without a chamber and nebulizers cannot be administered in school. Only inhalers with a chamber can be administered. Speak with your child's physician to obtain the proper the proper equipment & to update the Asthma Action Plan.

PCS ILLNESS POLICIES

At PCS we strive to maintain an environment that promotes learning. Keeping kids as healthy as possible goes hand-in-hand with learning.

- A child who presents with a temperature of 100 F or higher will be dismissed and must be picked up within 30 minutes.
- Any student with a suspected severe injury will be dismissed (fracture, lacerations which might need sutures, head trauma where there may be a concussion) will either be sent to the ER or dismissed to parents, at the discretion of the school nurse.
- If a child is injured and requires accommodations (crutches etc.) ***a note from the doctor stating the restrictions/accommodation must be given to the school nurse.***
- If your child cannot participate in physical education, ***a note from the doctor stating the restrictions/accommodation must be given to the school nurse.***
- If a student is found to have head lice, he/she may return after treatment and live lice and nits are removed. The school nurse must examine the child prior to them going to the classroom.
- If you **DO NOT** wish your child to use hand sanitizer at school you must supply the nurse with a note stating so.

UPDATED CHANGES IN POLICY RELATED TO COVID-19

Section 1: Daily Screening and Symptom Checks at Home for Students

Before Coming to School Families will be required to check their students each morning for illness symptoms **before arrival to school or before getting on the bus**. A parent/guardian ***must keep their child home and report any of the following symptoms/exposures to the school nurse:***

- fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, chills or shaking chills (within the last 24 hours must stay home)
- cough
- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- headache, when in combination with other symptoms
- muscle aches or body aches
- nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- 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

If your child has any of these potential COVID-19 related symptoms, **they must stay home** and should not attend school. Any siblings who attend PCS should also remain home. You should notify the school nurse that your child(ren) will be absent and the reason for the absence. If the school nurse is not available at the time of the call, the nurse will follow-up with a return call regarding your child's symptoms. **To protect all students and staff, any symptoms of COVID-19 will be treated as a suspected case and your child must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school. The test results should be shared with the school nurse.** Additionally, families should consult with their primary care provider (PCP) for further evaluation and instructions. **Your child(ren) should isolate at home until test results are available and the results are negative.**

If your child does not get tested, they must stay home and isolate for 14 days and should not return to school until they are symptom free. This includes any siblings that attend PCS.

Students who become ill at school will be assessed by the school nurse and **if they have suspect symptoms for COVID-19, they and any siblings will isolate in the designated medical waiting room under adult supervision, will be dismissed ASAP and must be picked up within 30 minutes.** To protect all students and staff, any symptoms of COVID-19 will be

treated as a suspected case until determined otherwise therefore any siblings will also be dismissed. The student will wear a mask while waiting for dismissal and maintain 6 feet of separation from any other student in the medical waiting room.

It is of utmost importance for the school nurse to have a completed emergency medical form for each student at the start of the school year with a minimum of two emergency contacts who can be reached at any given time and that any changes in contact information be updated with the school nurse.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOUR CHILD TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

1. Notify the school nurse.
2. If your child tests positive **they must isolate at home.**
3. Assist the school nurse with contact tracing to identify close contacts.
4. The school nurse is required to notify the local Board of Health who will contact you for further information.
5. **Your child will need to stay in isolation at home for 14 days from the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the aid of fever reducing medications, and significant improvement in all symptoms.**
6. **If your child is asymptomatic with a positive test, they must isolate at home for 14 days starting with the date of their COVID-19 test.**

SECTION 2: Close Contact/Potential Exposure

1. Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
2. Traveled to an area outside of Massachusetts and other "low risk states" which require adherence to the Massachusetts Travel Order for 14 days quarantine or a negative COVID-19 test 72 hours after arriving home.