

WELLSPRING's ARCH BRIDGE SCHOOL PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

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Date of Submission: July 24, 2020

Date of Last Update: April 5, 2021

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ARCH BRIDGE SCHOOL PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

April 1, 2021

PRIORITIES

Re-Opening Model

Wellspring and the Arch Bridge School (ABS) will continue to face the myriad of challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic with creativity, integrity and care. Wellspring's Arch Bridge School (ABS) has operating guidelines in concert with CDC, CDPH & CSDE ensuring the maximum safety of students and staff for full time in-person learning.

ABS has maintained in-person learning and guidance from the health department highlights that the spread of COVID-19 is minimal or containable with proper mitigation. This plan includes but is not limited to: 100% capacity, face coverings for staff and students while inside, students have access to non-shared devices, classrooms set up for social distancing, increased cleaning protocols, built in breaks for unmasking while outside and at times weather permitting, full classes outdoors.

ABS will follow state guidelines for scaling back full time in person learning.

A hybrid plan may go into effect if the virus spread increases or when recommended by local health officials. This will include reduced population and will include a blend of in-person and remote learning as based on CSDE and local health official's guidance. When the students are not at school, they will be participating in synchronous learning and working at home on materials provided by the teacher and school.

A full remote learning plan will occur when the transmission of the virus requires quarantining or as recommended by the health department. This could be a short or long-term closure. In this phase, all learning will take place at home with materials and supports provided by the school. Classroom learning and instruction will include, Google Suite, Google Classroom, Google Docs, Khan Academy, and Zoom. Remote learning will include a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

ABS will continue to maintain a no touch policy for unvaccinated staff and students in our school community unless there is a safety issue requiring touch. Face masks will be worn at all times while indoors or when unable to maintain proper social distancing outdoors. Exceptions include safety protocols, physician's order, in a

single stall bathroom, and during meal times with spacing and or proper barriers. All field trips will follow state guidance for transportation. Student and staff temperatures will be taken prior to entering the school each day and staff will be asked to complete a daily CDC screening questionnaire. Procedures are in place to address good respiratory hygiene and proper handwashing protocols. **Given ABS small average class sizes, classroom sizes adapt to recommended distancing by state guidelines.** Student arrival and dismissal times are staggered to minimize gatherings.

All families and guardians will be provided and supported via personal relationships with Wellspring / ABS professional staff and clear and ongoing communication, support and consultation in regards to expectations and ongoing issues. **All families and guardians will have an assigned professional staff person for on-going communications and support.** Surveys will be sent to new students and families to determine the availability and access to the proper technology to be successful in remote learning. All current ABS students have IEP's and will have the same access to inclusion, equality, and access as their peers. ABS will work pro-actively with a student's LEA as the need arises or a survey indicates, to obtain the necessary technology to support remote learning opportunities.

Temporarily Choosing Not to Participate

Students whose families temporarily choose not to have their child participate in in-person instruction may be given the assignments remotely. This decision may have to be requested through the PPT and re-determined prior to each marking period. Students would not be penalized for attendance under these circumstances if allowed by sending school district. Staff will reach out to the family and the school district to maintain IEP compliance and assist in getting the student back to in-person instruction as needed.

School Liaison, Communication Plans and Data Collection

Wellspring's Education Director and Director of Nursing and Accountability will be Co-School Health and Safety Liaisons for COVID-19 Compliance. The Co-Liaisons will be supported by the School Team, including the School Nurses and the Environmental Manager. All new ABS students will meet with the School Nurse, School Staff or the Environmental Manager early on the first day of school. New students will participate in an interactive presentation, in age appropriate language, as to what the Arch Bridge School's protocols are for mitigation of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.

This presentation will include, use of masks/face coverings, social distancing, handwashing, and sneeze and cough etiquette, cleaning procedures, etc. Posters and PPE equipment will be used to demonstrate protocols. Forums for ongoing questions and concerns already exist in our program design and a schedule for frequent reminders and updates will be created and maintained as needed.

The ABS Liaison's will work closely with the School Nurse, the Environmental Manager and the School Staff to update all procedures in real time and to communicate changes with staff and students as needed. Communications and support may occur through any of the multiple weekly support groups for students or team meetings for staff.

All families and guardians will have an assigned professional staff person for on-going, as needed, communications, questions, and support.

OPERATIONS PLAN

Facilities

The School Liaison's will oversee the plans for ABS that specifically addresses the high standards of cleanliness of all classrooms, offices, bathrooms and hallways. The School Liaison's, School Nurse and the Environmental Manager will communicate and assure cleaning and hygiene protocols as recommended by the CSDE, CTDPH and the CDC. Professional cleaning services will clean and sanitize the school prior to opening each morning, environmental staff will clean and sanitize again late morning and, all staff and students will be trained to clean and sanitize surfaces they have touched.

High touch surfaces such as door handles and railings will be cleaned throughout the day. Desks and classroom equipment that have to be shared, will be cleaned in between each use. ABS will be incorporating no touch equipment such as trashcans. Bathrooms are assigned to classrooms, to avoid the mixing of students and are cleaned twice daily. Environmental Manager will keep cleaning logs for bathrooms. Air hand dryers are turned off to address ventilation considerations.

Given our small class sizes, ABS is able to design classroom layouts to maximize social distancing between students. Areas such as the gymnasium, outdoors and conference rooms may be repurposed as classrooms, as needed to allow for proper social distancing. Teachers will maintain social distancing while delivering instruction as feasible. The use of face shields or Plexiglas barriers on teacher desks are options available to teachers to reduce droplet spread. ABS has posted signs and messages throughout all buildings to stop the spread of the virus, which are accessible to all students in their dominant language. All staff have been

trained on ABS protocols. Follow up training days based on need or protocol change, have been planned during staff meetings ongoing as needed.

All staff, students, and families have been given copies of ABS COVID-19 guidelines. Staff and students have attended a school wide training on the first day of school. This training may be repeated as state guidance dictates.

Daily Operations

ABS has a low school census, at least ten classrooms available, and at full capacity, the student body is equal to, two classes in a public school environment. ABS will minimize class and group changes, but due to our extremely small census of high school students with varied needs and abilities, cohorts will rarely be used. ABS has no before or after school programming.

Child Nutrition

ABS does not participate in the National School Lunch Program.

Transportation

ABS does not transport students to or from school to home.

HEALTH PRACTICES AND PROTOCOLS

ABS will educate students and staff about COVID-19 symptoms. Families will also be educated via email, mail and professional staff will be assigned to each parent and available for questions, dialogue and support. Students, their families and staff are to inform the school nurse if they have COVID-19 related symptoms or if they have had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

The school nurse is the point person to receive information and perform assessments, in relationship to Wellspring's MD, concerning sick staff, students and / or their families. This information will maintained in a confidential manner.

ABS will provide an adequate amount of Infection Control materials and PPE for staff and students. Materials includes, but is not limited to, soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings, face shields, gloves, and no touch trash cans and soap dispensers.

Students, their families, and staff have been educated about self-assessments and when to stay home. Students and staff have been instructed in school; parents/guardians have had this information sent to their homes. They will also

receive frequent reminders or updates about symptoms, self-assessments and protocols about when to stay home.

School-wide sick protocols have been established, and include: cough, sore throat, GI illness, loss of taste or smell, general extreme exhaustion, body aches, and temperature over 100.0. These symptoms require nursing consultation, and students and staff may need to go home immediately or stay home.

Social Distancing

ABS will assist staff and students to maintain maximum social distancing between individuals to reduce transmission per current public health guidelines. Visuals will be placed on floors to assist the understanding of maintaining the SDE recommended distance.

Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

All staff and students are required to wear face coverings indoors at all times. The following exception apply: individuals that fall under the CDC guidance (trouble breathing, unconscious individual, etc.) or anyone that has a medical reason that makes it unsafe to wear a face covering. A doctor's note is not required for these exceptions. Snacks and lunch will take place where social distancing and good air circulation can occur. Exceptions also include when in single stall bathrooms, in private offices, outdoors with proper social distancing, and when alone in rooms with the door closed.

There will be a clean supply of cloth masks and disposable masks on hand for anyone that does not have a face covering.

HEALTH MONITORING PLAN

Planning and Distribution of Information

ABS has written protocols for the monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms with the goal of decreasing the risk of spreading or contracting the virus. ABS School Liaison's and administration will maintain the oversight related to the pandemic while maintaining HIPPA compliance. Information will be updated and distributed as our plans and the direction of the CDPH & CSDE dictate.

CONTAINMENT PLAN

The COVID-19 response team for The Arch Bridge School will consist of the Co-School Liaison's, the School Nurse and the Environmental Manager.

They team will be supported and guided by the Wellspring MD and the Executive Director.

The Infirmary will serve as the isolation room for the students, until the parent or guardian arrives to take the student home.

- **Covid-19 Illness or symptoms confirmed, staff or student:** Ill person, go and / or stay home, per CDC isolation guidance. Parent or guardian contacted for immediate pick-up.
- **Covid-19 illness in family, live-ins, etc., with close prolonged exposure without masks & any social distancing:** Unvaccinated staff or student reporting this close contact, go and / or stay home per CDC guidance and monitor symptoms. Parent or guardian contacted for immediate pick-up. Fully vaccinated (vax) staff or students do not need to quarantine after close contact per CDC.
- **Covid-19 exposure without close prolonged exposure:** No schedule changes, monitor temperatures & symptoms at least two times a day.
- **If staff or students travel to states listed by CT.GOV as having high infection rates,** they must follow state CTDPH guidance.

From CDC notes: Factors to consider when defining close contact include proximity, the duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk), whether the individual has symptoms (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk) and whether the individual was wearing a facemask (which can efficiently block respiratory secretions from contaminating others and the environment). "Recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure but 15 min of close exposure can be used as an operational definition." *CDC, CT.Gov & DPH policies*

The Torrington Area Health Department will be immediately contacted if a staff or student has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19. Their advice or directives will be followed.

CANCELLATIONS OF CLASSES, REMOTE LEARNING, AND REOPENING PLANS

ABS will monitor Connecticut Public Health indicators and Executive Orders when considering decisions regarding in-person learning. ABS will consult and notify the CSDE immediately if contemplating in school class cancellations. A plan will be developed in accordance with state guidelines and timelines for closure and re-opening. This will include a hybrid and full remote closure plan. All staff will have clear roles and responsibilities in the event of a shutdown. These role clarifications will be reinforced in staff meetings, emails and on Zoom as needed. The proper materials for the continuity of learning, digital or paper, will be made available to students.

Future Planning for Remote Blended Learning

ABS has plans to provide remote blended learning opportunities immediately upon in-person cancellations. Students, teachers, families, and leaders have been surveyed on their prior remote learning experiences. ABS plans will be communicated to parents and guardians in the event of a closure by phone and email.

ACADEMICS

Special Education

If closed, ABS will provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students as well as those providing instruction, teachers and related service providers. **All attempts will be made to provide services as closely as possible to full in-person learning.** All current ABS students have a current IEP, so for all our students, re-integration plans will take their social emotional needs into consideration and will be closely monitored. All students will be required to wear facemasks and practice social distancing. Outside breaks will be incorporated into the schedule to remove masks where social distancing can be implemented.

English Learners

ABS has no EL Learners.

FAMILY AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Family Support and Communication

All families and guardians will be provided with clear and ongoing communication in regards to expectations. All families and guardians will have assigned professional staff for on-going communications and support. This will include guidance on ABS protocols related to health and safety guidelines. Families and students are welcomed to provide feedback as the school year moves

forward. Pandemic Response plans, including ABS's school liaisons, are available on the ABS website.

Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health

Wellspring / ABS Staff will remain in contact with families throughout any remote learning period. A professional staff person has been assigned to each student and the family as a liaison to disseminate information and address concerns. Administrators, Behavioral Specialists and Therapists will work closely with disengaged students on reintegration. All staff have completed the DCF mandated reporter training for Abuse and Neglect. Abuse and Neglect within the context of the pandemic has been addressed with staff as part of our re-entering staff meeting.

After-School Programming

ABS does not offer after school programming for day students.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

The greenhouse will be utilized safely with increased airflow for ABS programming. **Given the unlimited fresh air available in our gardens, barns, pastures, fields, and trails, outdoor programming related to horticulture, animal care, adventure, team building, recreation, and character education will continue.**

STAFFING AND PERSONNEL

Certification and Personnel Planning

ABS will assess the need for additional support based on our full roster of staff, student census and the requirement of social distancing protocols based on state guidelines and make adjustments as needed.

Professional Development

ABS has held a COVID-19 specific training for staff during the first three days of school staff training in August, prior to the first day of school.

Materials shared and topics covered included, but were not limited to: public health protocols, proper hygiene, PPE, reporting illnesses, and how we will support the social-emotional wellbeing of our students. Ongoing trainings will be held as needed and as state guidelines and public health data dictate.

NOTE: The Covid-19 Pandemic requires flexibility and a fluid responsiveness and ABS will be responding and revising this plan document as the circumstances warrant.