COVID-19 HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT

Health and Safety Guidelines and Protocols for the 2020-2021 School Year

THE RIVERS SCHOOL
Most Recent Updates

Below are the most recent changes to this document. Go to the Archive of Changes for a comprehensive list.

**Oct. 8**—When a student travels out of state to a” high-risk” state, as defined by the Massachusetts state guidelines, they will be required to attend class remotely until they can produce a negative PCR COVID test. However, they must wait four days after returning to Massachusetts before getting tested.

**Sept. 25**—When someone has to meet the requirement to produce a negative COVID test in order to return to school, only a negative PCR test (not a rapid antigen test) will be accepted.

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Preventive Hygiene Measures

Preventive measures are our strongest defense against COVID-19 outbreaks. We will take all possible steps to ensure compliance with the following policies and procedures.

**Hand Washing:** Regular hand washing is an important way to prevent becoming ill and spreading virus to others.

- Throughout the school day, students are expected to wash their hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds), especially after they have been in a common area, after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing, and before/after eating.
- If soap and water are not readily available, students may use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Hand sanitizer is available to students in all classrooms and common areas of the school. Students should apply the sanitizer to all surfaces of their hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Students should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Posters and signs reminding students to wash their hands will be placed in school buildings.
- Faculty will remind students throughout the day to wash their hands regularly and/or use hand sanitizer when appropriate.

**Respiratory Etiquette:** Proper respiratory etiquette is another key factor in reducing transmission of most respiratory infections, including influenza and COVID-19.

- Students are expected to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue or use the inside of their elbows when they cough or sneeze.
- Used tissues must be disposed properly in a trash bin immediately after use.
- After sneezing or using a tissue, students must immediately wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, they may clean their hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

**Mask Requirements in School:** According to the CDC, cloth and disposable face masks help slow the spread of the virus and protect people from being infected by asymptomatic carriers. Face masks/face covering are mandatory for everyone on campus. While everyone is encouraged to acquire their own face masks, Rivers will provide two, 3-ply cloth masks to each student and employee at the start of the school year.

- Face masks should never be shared or borrowed.
- Acceptable face mask/face covering should be at least two layers, and preferably three.
- Please refer to Massachusetts guidelines for proper mask usage.
- Face masks must:
○ Cover the nose and mouth.
○ Fit securely and comfortably against the side of the face.
○ Be secured with ties or ear loops.
○ Allow for breathing without restriction.
○ Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change of shape.

● **Unacceptable** mask/face coverings include the following:
  ○ N95 mask (used by healthcare providers)
  ○ Masks with exhalation valves or vents
  ○ Bandanas
  ○ Gaiters
  ○ Scarves

● Students are required to wear a mask/face covering for the entire duration of the school day with very limited exceptions. Exceptions include:
  ○ While eating or drinking (with six feet or more of social distancing)
  ○ During mask breaks outdoors (with six feet or more of social distancing)
  ○ On a case-by-case basis for those who cannot wear a mask due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.

● Mask breaks will be available to students in designated areas and times during the school day.

● Students should come to school with a minimum of two face masks and a plastic bag to hold used cloth masks.

● Students are expected to discard disposable masks properly in a trash bin once they have become soiled or wet.

● The school will have disposable face masks available for students if their masks become soiled or unusable during the school day.

● **Any and all masks or face coverings found on the floor will be disposed of.**

● Students should wash their hands before removing a mask and before putting a new mask on. Hand sanitizer may be used instead.

● We will follow these CDC guidelines on the proper use of face masks.

● Students must continue to maintain six feet of distance between themselves and others, even while wearing a face mask. Masks are no substitute for social distancing.

**Social Distancing:** In addition to mask-wearing, social distancing is one of the most effective ways to decrease the risk of spreading the virus. Maintaining distance from others is especially important for **people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.**

● Per CDC guidelines, students must maintain a distance of at least six feet (about two arms’ length) from other people during the school day.

● Minimum six foot physical distancing between students and faculty/staff
● Desks will be placed six feet apart where possible and will not be placed less than four-and-a-half apart, in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidelines. Students may not move any desk or rearrange any seating assignments.

● Where desks are less than six feet apart the following additional controls will be put into place:
  ○ Desks will face the same direction
  ○ Spaces will be well ventilated, with optimized filtration

● Students should not gather in groups without faculty supervision.

● Students should stay out of crowded areas and avoid any large gatherings on and off campus.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: Regular cleaning and disinfecting are essential to reducing the spread of viruses in the school setting.

● Maintenance personnel will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces several times a day, following CDC guidelines. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

● Classrooms will be equipped with disinfecting supplies for students to wipe down their desks and chairs upon leaving the classroom.

● Hand sanitizer is readily available in classrooms and common areas throughout campus.

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Daily Screening for COVID-19 Symptoms

In accordance with guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and to comply with Rivers School policy, parents/guardians shall perform a symptom screening and temperature check on their child/student prior to school each day. Symptoms to look for are:

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic 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, and when in combination with other symptoms)

If a student exhibits any of these symptoms prior to the start of a school day, parents/guardians will keep the student home, contact the school nurse to report symptoms, and contact the student’s healthcare provider for guidance.

All Rivers community members will be required to sign the Daily Student Health Assessment Acknowledgement and Certification prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year, attesting that they will conduct a daily screening of their child’s health. Reminders will be sent periodically to the community about the importance of having people stay home when exhibiting symptoms.

Managing Exposure to COVID-19

If a student has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (or has a presumptive case of COVID-19), parents/guardians must keep that student at home, contact the school nurse to report the exposure, and contact the student’s healthcare provider for guidance.
**Travel policy:** The governor implemented restrictions on those coming into Massachusetts from states determined to be high-risk areas. This includes restrictions on Massachusetts residents traveling to those regions and then returning to the Commonwealth. Under our protocols, those coming into the state from high risk states must quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative PCR COVID-19 test result. The Rivers School is requiring students who have traveled to a high-risk state to stay out of school for four days before getting a PCR test. Example: *Your child returns from a high risk state on a Sunday, in order to return to school your PCR Test can be administered no earlier than Friday.* A negative test result would enable the return to school; test results must go to the nurse before return-to-school can be approved.

**Decision Trees**

What should a parent do if their child has been exposed to COVID-19 or is exhibiting cold-like symptoms? These decision tree diagrams help guide you to an appropriate response.
PRESENTING WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

The individual chooses not to get tested

May return to school after

- Staying home for 10 days
- Symptoms have improved
- No temperature for 24 hours without the use of medication

Individual has COVID-19 symptoms

Positive

Follow your PCP's advice and the Department of Public Health guidelines.

Negative

The individual gets tested PCR test only

Return to school after 24 hours of no symptoms.

COVID-19 EXPOSURE

Current MA DPH guidance is that all close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should be tested.

Close contact with a positive case

Not tested

Stay home and quarantine for 14 days.

Not tested

Stay home and quarantine for 14 days.

Positive

Follow your PCP's advice and the Department of Public Health guidelines.

Close contact definitions:

School: Close contacts include other students and staff who were within 6 feet of the student or staff for at least 10-15 minutes in a classroom, in other school spaces, on the bus, or at an extracurricular activity.

Home: Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case while the case was symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset.
Dealing with Illness During School Hours

If, during the school day, a student presents with any of the following symptoms, the student should contact the school nurse via Google Chat (nurses@rivers.org) prior to going to the Health Office. The nurse will respond with instructions that explain which isolation room the student should report to.

**Symptoms to watch for:** Following is a list of symptoms associated with COVID-19. This list will be updated as needed per DESE and CDC recommendations.

- Fever greater than 100.0 degrees F
- Chills
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste/smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (in combination with other symptoms)
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Fatigue (in combination with other symptoms)
- Congestion/runny nose (not due to known cause such as allergies)

**Isolation:** A student experiencing any one of the above symptoms during the school day will be placed by the school nurse in an isolation room. The isolation room will be monitored via a camera by the school nurse. Should the student require medical intervention, the school nurse, protected by PPE, will directly attend to the child.

Students will not be allowed to return to their classrooms or other areas of the school prior to leaving campus. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible, and it is expected that the student will be picked up from the designated area within 30 minutes of receiving the call from the school nurse.

- The isolation rooms will be furnished with a medical cot (bed), chair, access to a restroom, and sink.
- Snacks and water will be provided to the student.
- The room will be remotely monitored by the school nurse via camera.
- Students are not allowed to leave the room, and no visitors will be allowed.
- Parents/guardians will check in with the school nurse prior to meeting their child in the isolation room.
Parents/guardians are encouraged to make prior arrangements to ensure that their child can be picked up within the required time frame. The Health Office is not equipped to keep students longer than 30 minutes. Students will not be released to a ride-share service under any circumstance.

**Transporting students who are ill:** If the student has driving privileges and has a car on campus, parents/guardians will be contacted by the school nurse, and the student will be instructed to go directly home.

If the student does not have driving privileges, the school must at all times have access to an authorized adult who can remove the student from campus within 30 minutes.

The Health Office will not dismiss any student to any ride sharing service.

**Further assessment and follow-up:** Students who are sent home with COVID-19 symptoms are expected to be evaluated by their primary-care provider for further assessment. The student’s medical provider will either rule out COVID-19 by providing an alternate diagnosis OR may recommend that the student be tested for COVID-19.

If a student’s medical provider cannot rule out COVID-19, then the student must either receive a negative COVID-19 test OR be quarantined at home for 10 days prior to returning to school (assuming they have not had close contact with someone with COVID). Only PCR test results (not rapid antigen) will be accepted. Parents/guardians are expected to communicate with the school nurse and submit all paperwork to the school nurse for approval prior to a return to school.

**Faculty/Staff Illness During School Hours**

Any faculty/staff that present with COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave campus immediately and contact their PCP. Faculty/staff are required to communicate any findings to the school nurse. Faculty and staff should refer to the faculty/staff hand book for further information.
Protocols for Positive Cases

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are symptomatic and presumed by their medical provider to have COVID-19 must not return to school until they have met the criteria for discontinuing home isolation and have consulted with their medical provider. The Health Office will notify families, faculty, and staff about possible exposure while maintaining confidentiality. Additionally, the Weston Health Department will be notified by the school nurse.

Students who have been in Close Contact with a person with a COVID-19 positive diagnosis will be dismissed home, should be tested and must self-quarantine at home for 14 days after the last exposure regardless of test results. If the student test is positive, follow the advice of your PCP and DPH guidelines.

Close Contact Definition: DESE defines close contact as interactions within six feet lasting longer than 10 to 15 minutes.
- In the school setting, close contact refers to students and faculty who were in contact with the positive case within six feet for longer than 10 to 15 minutes in a stationary environment up to two days before symptoms appear.

In the event of a student reporting a positive COVID-19 test, all potentially exposed facility areas and equipment will be closed until professionally cleaned and disinfected.

The school will continue to monitor Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines and will make updates to these procedures as the public health authorities update their guidance.

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Medication Administration in School

Medications are to be administered at home whenever possible. However, any student who is required to take medication (prescription and non-prescription) during the school day must provide the school nurse with a physician order form and parental authorization form found on Magnus.

If a student is ill upon waking, we ask that parents/guardians keep their student home. We ask that parents/guardians do not administer fever-reducing pain medication or antidiarrheal medications to their students prior to school. These OTC medications may mask symptoms of COVID-19.

The school nurse will administer all medications to students, be responsible for all medication in the school, and maintain accurate medication records. No other individuals, except where stated, will be allowed to administer medications during the school day.

Furthermore, parents/guardians should discourage students from self-medicating during the school day. Per Massachusetts DPH guidelines, students may not self-administer ANY medication, either OTC or prescribed, during school hours without a physician order and written parental permission to self-administer on file in the Health Office. The school nurse is able to administer certain OTC medications listed on the Magnus permission forms to all students attending Rivers. Families may also provide student-specific medications to be kept in the Health Office for safe storage and administration.

All medications brought to the Health Office must have a physician’s order form on file with the school nurse. Exception to this regulation is a short course of antibiotics (10 days or less); a pharmacy label is accepted in these circumstances.

Emergency Medications: The following guidelines apply to medications used to treat life-threatening allergic reactions and asthma.

Epinephrine: Parents whose children may need epinephrine are required to provide the school nurse with a set of two EpiPens for emergency situations, to be kept in the Health Office for the duration of the school year.
If the school nurse is not immediately available and the student has an order from a licensed provider for the administration of emergency epinephrine by auto injector, school personnel trained by the school nurse are authorized to administer epinephrine by an auto-injector, under the Massachusetts Department of Public Health registration authorization, which has granted The Rivers School and the registered nurse authorization to delegate administration of epinephrine to trained faculty.

In the event of a life-threatening allergic reaction, for students who do not have such an order, the school nurse will follow protocols written by The Rivers School physician and in accordance with the school’s standing physician orders.

**Special consideration for asthma management at school during COVID-19:** In order to decrease the risk of infection to the health care provider and others in school, we ask that parents/guardians of students with a diagnosis of asthma provide the school nurse with an extra rescue inhaler (Albuterol) to be kept in the Health Office for the duration of the school year. This simple step will eliminate the need to use nebulizer treatments in the Health Office, which may potentially increase the risk of spreading the virus in the air. If your pediatrician has disclosed asthma as a diagnosis on your student’s physical, we request you provide the Health Office with a rescue inhaler (Albuterol).
Dismissal from School Due to Injury or Non-COVID-Related Illness

In order for a student to be marked as excused from class due to an injury or illness, the student must be seen by the school nurse, who will do an assessment and communicate with parents/guardians regarding whether there is a need for dismissal and if any further referral is warranted. We ask that parents speak to the school nurse prior to arranging any pickup or dismissal due to illness.

It is critical for the health of the entire school community that the Health Office be the point of exit for any student who is feeling ill during school hours. This simple step will help us keep track of any illness that may surge during the school year and can help keep families informed of any trends we may see on campus.

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Return to School from Non-COVID-Related Illness/Injury

Students may return to school from a non-COVID-related illness or injury (for example, physician-diagnosed strep infection, pneumonia, norovirus, influenza, conjunctivitis, etc.) following these guidelines and with the proper documentation.

- Students must be symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours without:
  - Fever-reducing medication
  - Vomiting/diarrhea medication
- Students must be on antibiotic therapy for a bacterial infection such as strep throat or pneumonia (if indicated) for at least 24 hours prior to their return to school.
- After an emergency-room visit, students must wait 24 hours before returning to school. Parents/guardians must provide the school nurse with a copy of discharge paperwork prior to return to school.
- After any surgical procedure, parents/guardians must provide the school nurse with a medical clearance from the attending physician or surgeon prior to the student’s return to school.

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Food and Health in School

The Health Office acknowledges that food sharing is an integral part of celebrations in our school community. However, at this time, we must ask families and students to refrain from bringing food to share at school. This includes pizza, cupcakes, donuts, cake, cookies, potluck dishes, and so forth.

**Store-bought, single-serve packaged snacks** such as chips, popcorn, Goldfish, cookies, and the like are allowed.

**Food Allergy Awareness**
The Health Office would like to remind families and students that our school community has a large number of students, faculty, and staff with **severe food allergies**. We ask that families/students refrain from bringing into school any food that **may contain peanuts or tree nuts** in order to maintain a safe environment for all of our students, faculty, and staff. Any food brought to school (single-serve packaged) **must clearly display allergy information on the packaging**.

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The Health Office
The Health Office has moved from its single-room location in Haffenreffer to a multi-room location in Haynes Hall. The new office has three isolation rooms, a private bathroom, and a waiting area to accommodate up to five students. The Health Office is managed by our school nurse, Claudia Silva, who should serve as the primary point of contact for all students and parents who have health-related concerns or questions.

Ms. Silva can be contacted via email at c.silva@rivers.org or via phone at 339-686-4480.

NOTE: Any parent who has a child who is immunocompromised or who has particular concerns about their child’s presence on campus is encouraged to notify the school as soon as possible, either by sending an email to Ms. Silva or by contacting their child’s grade dean.

Additional Contact Information
While health-related questions should be directed to our school nurse, Claudia Silva, other key points of contact are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ned Parsons, Head of School</th>
<th>Cathy Favreau, Grade Dean for 6th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Long, Assistant Head of School / Head of the Upper School</td>
<td>Lily Gillett, Grade Dean for 7th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bower, Head of the Middle School</td>
<td>Josh Shaller, Grade Dean for 8th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Liston, Director of Counseling and Wellness</td>
<td>Christine Fitzgerald, Grade Dean for 9th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ava Archibald, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</td>
<td>Meredith Caplan, Grade Dean for 10th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Mills, Upper School Dean of Students</td>
<td>Victoria Mizzi, Grade Dean for 11th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Freeman, Middle School Dean of Students</td>
<td>Nick Jordan, Grade Dean for 12th Grade</td>
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Archive of Changes

Given the constantly changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that changes will have to be made to this document periodically. Those changes are archived below.

**Oct. 8**—When a student travels out of state to a “high-risk” state, as defined by the Massachusetts state guidelines, they will be required to attend class remotely until they can produce a negative PCR COVID test. However, they must wait four days after returning to Massachusetts before getting tested.

**Sept. 25**—When someone has to meet the requirement to produce a negative COVID test in order to return to school, only a negative PCR test (not a rapid antigen test) will be accepted.

**Sept. 25**—When it is known to us that a student has participated in a risky social gathering in a manner that potentially jeopardizes the health and safety of the community, they will be required to stay at home for 14 days before returning to live classes.

**Aug. 31**—Update to the decision-tree diagrams related to dealing with COVID exposure and symptoms

**Aug. 28**—Per the DESE, the threshold temperature that should be used to determine if a student should be kept home from school has been lowered from 100.4° to 100°.

**Aug. 28**—Anyone who has had direct contact with someone who has COVID-19 must quarantine for 14 days, even if they have a negative COVID test themselves. If they test positive, they must follow the advice of their PCP and DPH guidelines.

**Aug. 28**—Masks with exhalation valves or vents have been added to the list of unacceptable mask types