

Gathering Waters Charter School Health & Safety Opening Plan

2021/2022

A dark blue diagonal graphic that starts from the bottom left corner and extends towards the top right corner, covering the lower half of the page.

Our **number one goal** is the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff, while delivering a full Waldorf Education.

As we near the start of the new school year, the Gathering Waters Board, faculty and staff are excited to share details of our School Opening Plan. The information received from the Gathering Waters Medical Advisory Group, and guidance from the *New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHHS)*, *CDC Guidance for K-12 Schools*, and *American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Guidance for K-12 Schools*, is the foundation and basis of this Opening Plan. Further, up to date regional and local COVID-19 data is readily available at the State of New Hampshire's *COVID-19 Interactive Dashboard*.

This letter and accompanying documents will communicate the GWS health and safety protocols for students, families, faculty and staff. **It is of utmost importance for us to open school safely.** We will implement our health and safety protocols to ensure success while we continue to monitor regional and local COVID-19 spread. The primary goal of our medical protocols is to create an environment that reduces the transmission of the virus through layered protections. We will constantly evaluate our protocols based on regional data and our observation of school practice.

4 Layers of Protection

1. **Wear a mask.** Only double layer cloth masks or surgical masks are allowable (no bandanas, gaiters, or valve masks will be allowed). All students, faculty, staff, parents, and guests must wear a mask inside our two buildings. Masks will not be required outside. We will closely monitor the community transmission rates in Cheshire County and will consider updating our mask protocols when transmission rates move to Minimal Community Transmission levels.
2. **Sanitize Hands.** Teachers will reinforce the habit of hand washing and hand sanitizing before and after most activities. Hand sanitizer will be located throughout the buildings.
3. **Maintain Distance.** Student desks will be arranged 3-6 feet apart when possible.
4. **Air Circulation.** Proper air circulation and ventilation is important to decrease transmission of the virus. We will utilize air-purifiers in the Lower School. The Upper School is equipped with a new HVAC air circulation system. We will utilize open windows on both campuses to the greatest extent possible.

Safe Building Practices

- ❖ **Hand Sanitizer:** Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the building and in classrooms.
- ❖ **Outdoor classrooms:** Our students will be experiencing outdoor educational experiences as much as possible.
- ❖ **Bathrooms:** Bathroom breaks will be staggered in the Lower School to limit cohort mixing and the amount of students in the bathroom at one time. One student per stall at a time. Students will wash their hands after all bathroom use. Bathrooms will be sanitized frequently.
- ❖ **Water coolers:** Water coolers will only be used for filling water bottles.

Health & Safety Protocols for Opening

Over the summer, we have been in constant contact with the New Hampshire Department of Education, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, local independent and public school leaders, and most recently, our Gathering Waters Medical Advisory Group. Best practice medical protocols are updated regularly and we are confident in the following policies to open the school year.

- Two-week before school screening plan. Please see the attached form that will guide your child(ren)'s health monitoring for the two weeks leading up to school, August 25 through September 8.
- Student, Faculty & Staff Outbreak Occurrence Plan. Please see the attached NHHS STUDENT & STAFF SCREENING ALGORITHM and WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK Flow Charts that will guide Gathering Waters' response to COVID symptom monitoring and potential positive COVID test results for the community.
- Gathering Waters School Community Health Commitment. Please see the attached form that we are asking each family to review, commit, and sign.

Before School Screening Form

In order to keep our school community as safe as possible, we are requiring all faculty, staff and students to complete the following pre-school screening form for 14 days prior to returning to school after the Summer Break. This will help minimize the risk of exposure for all. This form is required by all students prior to the beginning of the school year and must be turned in to your child's teacher on the first day of school.

Please indicate if your student has exhibited any of these symptoms during the last two weeks:

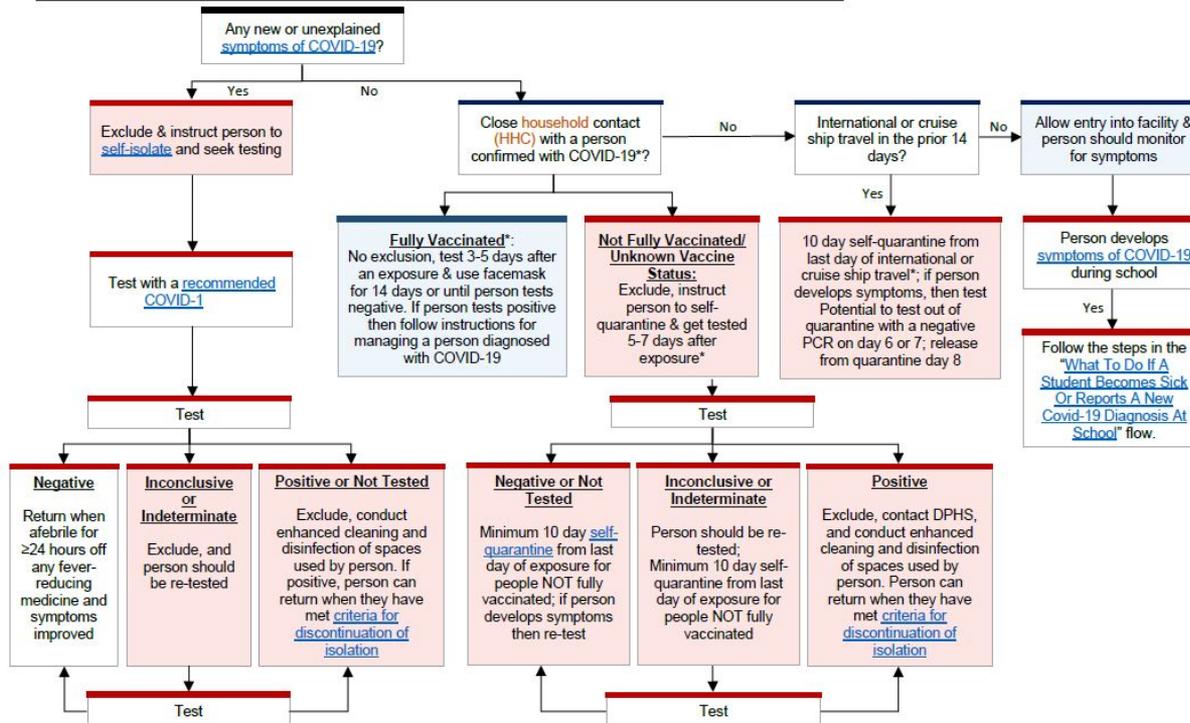
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell

Please initial the following on behalf of your student:

- _____ My child will turn this form into their teacher on the first day of school.
- _____ My student has not been around anyone who displays any of the above listed symptoms within the past 14 days
- _____ My student has not been around anyone who has a positive COVID-19 diagnosis within the past 14 days
- _____ No one in our household has been sick during the past 14 days

My Signature here indicates that I have answered truthfully: _____

STUDENT & STAFF SCREENING ALGORITHM

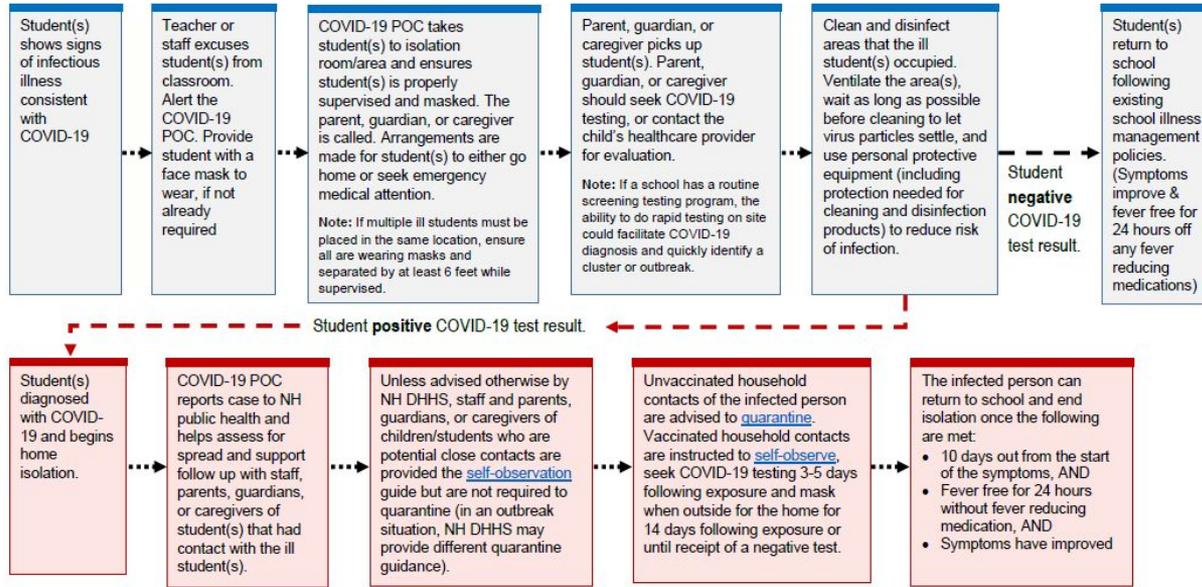


*The following people do not need to quarantine (see Checklist below for greater detail):

1. Persons who are 14 days or more beyond completion of COVID-19 VACCINATION
2. Persons who are within 90 days of a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection that was diagnosed by PCR or antigen testing

Household contact (HHC): any individual who lives and sleeps in the same indoor space as another person diagnosed with COVID-19 (either temporary or permanent living arrangement), leading to close contact and potential repeated exposure to the person with COVID-19. This includes situations where there may be temporary but prolonged exposure such as sleepover events, shared camp, cabins, vacation rentals, dorm living scenarios, etc.)

WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK OR REPORTS A NEW COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS AT SCHOOL



Note: COVID-19 POC = designated point of contact (a staff person that is responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns)

Key Health Services and Support Needs

- ❖ Student will be isolated and under the care of faculty or staff in a designated room until their parent/guardian arrives.
- ❖ Parents will notify their pediatrician and follow recommended next steps.
- ❖ Gathering Waters School does not accept home COVID tests. Tests must be completed by a medical professional or in lab.
- ❖ We will not offer a remote learning option this school year. Should a student become ill from COVID-19 and need to isolate, or need to quarantine due to a close COVID-19 contact, we will support that student by sending school work home. We will revisit this policy should there be a COVID-19 outbreak in the school community or if local health mandates require extended absences from in-person learning.

Communication Plan

Lead Administrator will be the spokesperson to the family by phone.

Lead Administrator will send out communications to the cohort if a student or faculty/staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 (protecting the identity of the individual).

Lead Administrator will send out communications to the school community if a student or faculty/staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 (protecting the identity of the individual).

Lead Administrator will contact local health departments and follow all mandated reporting regulations.

Community Health Commitment

As Members of the Gathering Waters School community, it is vital that we work together to protect our community's health and safety. This is our number one priority. This is particularly important during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and we are asking that every person in our school community make this important Community Health Commitment to help prevent the spread of this COVID-19 disease.

For the sake of myself and my fellow Community Members, I agree to uphold the Gathering Waters Community Health Commitment. I will:

- Turn in this Commitment to my child's teacher on the first day of school
- Follow the school mandates regarding face mask use inside the school building
- Maintain a distance of six feet while inside whenever possible
- Wash my hands and use hand sanitizer frequently (for example, before eating, after using the restroom, after touching shared services, and before each class)
- Check health symptoms daily, and stay home if I don't feel well or if I have any COVID-19 symptoms
- Report to Luke Goodwin (luke.goodwin@gatheringwaterscharter.org) if I have knowingly been exposed to or test positive for COVID-19
- Raise any safety concerns with Luke Goodwin and/or my class teacher/class sponsor
- Cooperate with public health officials and adhere to all government quarantine regulations

**By committing to this
Community Health
Commitment, we all help
prevent the spread of
COVID-19 and contribute
to the shared culture of
public health at the
Gathering Waters
Chartered Public School.**

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Addendum

- ❖ Added an extra layer of protection outdoors for Kindergarten and First Grade. In order to protect our youngest students who have difficulty with physical distancing and for whom uninterrupted play is central to their work at school, we are requiring masks outdoors for Kindergarten and First Grade students. Ample mask breaks will be provided.
(Approved September 27, 2021)