



“Prevention is our Focus”

**Working to Control All
That We Can Control**

Controlling to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

2021/2022

***A Restorative Practices Community
Where Children are our Priority***

**“Return to In-Person Instruction
& Continuity of Service Plan”**

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Mission Statement

The Mission of Hope Academy is to provide a positive, nurturing, and collaborative educational environment where we can ensure the intellectual, social, and physical development of every student.

Vision Statement

Hope Academy will be the premier charter school of choice for elementary and middle school students.

Restorative Practices Community

Hope Academy is a Restorative Practices (RPC). Our aim is to build proactive relationships with parents, students, community and each other in order to foster an environment of accountability, growth, and fairness. As an RPC, our staff is brave enough to manage conflict and tension by employing fair process, the psychology of affect, and the restorative practices continuum. We consistently use affective language that teaches empathy, sets boundaries, and provides feedback. We manage conflict and tension by using affective questions that promote deeper thinking, reflection, and accountability. Finally, we incorporate proactive circles as a means to build community that creates safety, equality, equity, and connection.

Educational Beliefs

- Children are happier, more cooperative, and more willing to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.
- High expectations produce high achievement.
- Learning occurs best when each student is active in a positive and academically challenging environment.
- All children have value and are able to learn with appropriate support.
- Learning is maximized through the development of self-worth and pride and achievement.
- Self-disciplined students are productive students.

- A successful teacher motivates, encourages, and values the worth of every student.
- Instruction should motivate, encourage curiosity, develop interests, and foster a positive attitude toward learning.
- Goals and expectations need to be clear and consistent for staff and students.
- The school environment should be caring, comfortable, and safe.
- The school improvement occurs when the faculty, parents, and community are committed to quality education.

Safety Plan for the 2021/2022 School Year

Introduction

First, the safety of students, staff, parents, and all visitors is our top priority, and this was true even before the pandemic. This Compliance Plan is to ensure that Hope Academy is providing continuity of services to students returning to in-person instruction.

This pandemic has brought about a new set of responses and safeguards for something that is far more dangerous than a school or community's usual safety concerns.

Secondly, in planning for this school year, we have reviewed guidelines and recommendations from several sources on how to safely open schools and how to keep them safe.

The guidelines and recommendations are very similar. We have reviewed guidelines from OSHA, CDC, MDE, MDHHS and law firms Clark Hill and Miller Canfield. All referenced sources indicate returning students safely to in-person instruction should be a priority.

The specific CDC guidelines for K-12 schools across the country states: "Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the Fall of 2021 is a priority.

Finally, Hope Academy is expanding on its existing Safety Plan, as approved by the Board in 2020, and incorporating the guidelines set forth by CDC, OSHA, MDE, AND MDHHS.

CONTROLLING FOR A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

Safety is everyone's business. To effectively control for a safe school environment every member of the Hope Academy school community must be a part of assessing continuously for effective safety protocols and adherence to all of the safety protocols.

Every team member is requested to report any suspected or known issues that may be a risk to a safe environment. Team members are requested to communicate with other team members who may not be aligned with the safety protocol. For example, if you observe a team member who is not wearing a mask, please feel free to give a gentle and a restorative reminder regarding the requirement to wear a mask to ensure for the safety of all. There may be team members who are not able to wear a mask for medical reasons and that will be known. Also, for those who can wear a mask, a face shield is not a safe substitute for a mask, although a face shield may be worn with a mask.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide information to the Hope Academy team that will help to keep the school community safe, and provide education on prevention and health and wellness strategies in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overview of Our Approach

To get our students back in school safely, and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, Hope Academy leadership will work in close collaboration with the Detroit Health Department, as we monitor community transmission, outbreaks, the positivity rate, testing, and vaccination coverage. We will particularly monitor vaccination coverage within our school community. Hope Academy is supporting and advocating for vaccinations for all those who are eligible and able within the school community. Vaccination has been identified as the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most recent August 2021 update from the CDC indicates the following: *“A growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to become infected and develop symptoms, and are at substantially reduced risk from severe illness and death from COVID-19, compared with unvaccinated people.”*

Hope Academy leadership is aware that there may be staff who are not able to take the vaccine due to health related issues, or religious and faith reasons. In all that we do to provide a safe work environment, it will be done at a comprehensive level to help protect the vaccinated and unvaccinated team members of our Hope Academy school community.

Information and Education

A. What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a severe respiratory syndrome that is a serious virus that has caused the death of over 21,520 people in the State of Michigan, and 637,539 people in the United States, according to CDC data as of August 28, 2021.

B. How Does COVID-19 Spread?

The Coronavirus spreads through droplets that an infected person emits through coughs or sneezes, and through smaller, infectious viral particles that can drift around in the air. The virus can be spread from talking and singing.

C. What are Symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms may include any combination of the following:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

The most common symptoms in children are fever and cough.

Although these are described as symptoms of COVID-19, these symptoms can be common in many people for a number of reasons, and may not test out to be the COVID-19 virus. However, screening and testing for the virus when these symptoms are evident should be considered.

D. Available COVID-19 Vaccines

There are three (3) available vaccines in the United States to protect against the severe impact of COVID-19. The vaccines are Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. Both Pfizer and Moderna require two (2) doses of mRNA vaccine. Johnson & Johnson requires one (1) dose. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently moved the Pfizer vaccine from emergency approval to full approval.

Prevention Strategy

Hope Academy has adopted the recommendations of OSHA, CDC, and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), which recommends that schools adopt layers of defense against COVID-19. The CDC recommends “*prevention strategies that are layered in different ways, and the number and intensity of the layers can increase if community transmission increases.*”

Layers of Protection:

The Levels of Protection Includes:

Vaccination, Mask Wearing, Physical Distancing, Screening and Testing, Ventilation

1. **Vaccination:** Promoting vaccination is a key factor in the prevention and/or protection against COVID-19.
2. **Mask Wearing:** Wearing a mask consistently and correctly that covers the mouth and nose is recommended for all students and staff. Hope Academy is adopting universal mask wearing, as recommended by CDC, MDE, MDHHS, the Detroit Health Department, and mandated by Wayne County Health Department. Face shields are not a substitute for masks, but can be worn in conjunction with a face mask.
3. **Physical Distance:** Hope Academy will arrange for physical distancing of staff and students as much as possible. It is recognized that it may be challenging for schools to maintain the most ideal physical distance. The CDC recommends that *“schools not exclude students from in-person learning to keep a minimum distance requirement; layering multiple prevention strategies is essential when physical distancing of at least three (3) feet is not possible all the time.”*
4. **Screening and Testing:** Screening and testing is important for identifying COVID-19. Hope Academy is using daily screening strategies, including daily temperature checks for all students, staff, and visitors. Those testing with temperatures of 101 degrees will not be allowed to remain in the school building. Any staff who must leave the building due to the temperature check will be paid for the day from the extra 10 days available due to COVID related absences.
5. **Ventilation:** Good ventilation in the school ensures a healthy school environment and effective ventilation. Hope Academy has invested in ensuring effective ventilation throughout the school. The building’s heating and cooling system unit has been increased by 10% to improve ventilation. Wayne RESA provided to the Academy, Air Filtration Kits for all classrooms and offices. These kits supplement the existing filtration system to further help reduce the risk of COVID-19 virus particle concentrations. Hope Academy has also invested in the NuWave Oxypure Smart Air Purifier to improve ventilation and air quality. Each classroom and commonly used large spaces will have the NuWave Oxypure Smart Air Purifier.

The recommended layers of defense against COVID-19 adopted by BES for Hope Academy, demonstrates that not just one prevention approach is perfect, but layering them together increases the success of having a safe school environment.

Other Prevention Strategies

1. Hand-Washing and Respiratory Etiquette

Hope Academy will educate our students and staff on proper handwashing techniques, including washing hands for 20 seconds; and on respiratory etiquette, which requires covering coughs and sneezes. Ample sanitizing is also available in great quantities.

All staff, students and visitors shall use the hand sanitizer when entering the building at all times.

All teachers shall require students to use the hand sanitizer when entering the class room throughout the day.

Hand washing and/or sanitizing shall occur before each meal and after using the rest room.

2. Staying Home When Sick/Sick in School

Both staff and students must stay home when they are sick, regardless of the type of sickness. Both staff and students must stay home if they believe they have symptoms of COVID-19, and should go to be tested and see their physician.

If a student becomes sick while in school, several options may be used:

- First, notify administration and notify the parent and seek permission to refer the student to the Hope Clinic.
- Contact the Hope Clinic to have the student evaluated.
- The clinic staff will recommend the need to go home or remain in school.
- If the student must go home, notify the parent and escort the student to the designated holding room for students who are sick. Some level of supervision must be provided for the student until the parent arrives.

3. Lunch and Meal Time

Masks are not worn during meal times and extra safety precautions must be considered coupled with physical distancing as is feasible.

Several options may be used for meal time: **Option I**, Outside Tables, **Option II**, Class rooms and **Option III**, the cafeteria.

- **Option I:** The use of outside tables for meals based on the weather condition is highly encouraged. Developing a rotating schedule to allow all

classes to have an opportunity to use outside tables for meals is highly recommended.

- **Option II:** Utilizing the classroom for meals will occur often, but physical distancing must be managed as masks are not worn during meal time.
- **Option III:** The cafeteria may be utilized, but overcrowding should not occur. The air purification units in the cafeteria will be operating at full capacity when students are having lunch.

4. Cleaning and Disinfection

Hope Academy is committed to ensuring a clean, sanitized, and disinfected work environment. Hope Academy has assumed the financial responsibility to provide all of the PPE supplies and equipment as needed to reinforce a safe, clean, and sanitized work environment. Hope Academy has invested in supporting a full-time staff who is responsible for the daily sanitizing of the school building.

New and Expanded Hope Academy School District Policies

- It continues to be the policy of Hope Academy and BES to comply with the recommendations of regulatory and governmental entities that set forth safeguards and protection for workers, students, and schools from COVID-19 that are in accordance with CDC and OSHA.
- In preparation for school reopening for face-to-face instruction for the 2021-2022 school year, BES leadership has reviewed materials and participated in webinars from the following sources:
 - Center for Disease Control (CDC)
 - Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
 - Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration
 - Authority Health (OSHA)
 - Clark Hill Labor and Employment Legal Update

While all of these resources have been helpful, the CDC and OSHA are the primary government agencies with authority in safety matters directly related to COVID-19. BES is using the baseline statutory protections, which require employers to maintain a safe workplace.

The CDC sets out three (3) points of emphasis:

1. Reducing the transmission among employees
2. Maintaining health business operations
3. Ensuring a healthy work environment

OSHA has the following mandate for employers:

“An employer shall furnish to each of his employees, employment and a place of employment, which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.” (1970) This statute is commonly known as the General Duty Clause, which was established in 1970, and is still used to frame an employer’s response to COVID-19.

To ensure that Hope Academy is focused on maintaining a safe environment, all staff in the Hope Academy School District will adhere to the following policies and procedures.

- To provide COVID-19 training to employees that covers, at a minimum:
 - Workplace infection-control practices.
 - The proper use of personal protective equipment.
 - Steps the employee must take to notify the business or operation of any symptoms of COVID-19 or a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.
 - How to report unsafe working conditions.
- To conduct a daily entry self-screening protocol for all employees or contractors entering the workplace, including, at a minimum, a questionnaire covering symptoms and suspected or confirmed exposure to people with possible COVID-19.
- All staff, students and visitors will have a temperature check when entering the building. Anyone with a temperature of 101 and above will not be allowed to remain in the building.
- All persons entering the building must sanitize their hands.
- To provide minimally a three-ply surgical mask, hand sanitizer, rubber gloves; and as requested, face shields, to all employees when on the premises of Hope Academy.
- To have all work spaces cleaned and disinfected daily, and further to increase facility cleaning and disinfection to limit exposure to COVID-19, especially on high-touch surfaces (e.g., door handles).

- To adhere to protocols related to cleaning and disinfecting the facility in the event of a positive COVID-19 exposure in the workplace, a professional sanitizing company will be utilized.
- It is the policy of BFDI Educational Services, Inc. that when an employee is identified with a confirmed case of COVID-19, within 24 hours, notify the local public health department, as required.
- It is the policy of BFDI Educational Services, Inc. to require all staff to have a COVID-19 testing at least eight (5) days before returning to the work space after an extended break. The employee must receive a negative testing of COVID-19 before returning to work space.
- To safeguard employees from unsafe working conditions, including the potential spread of diseases, with a particular focus on respiratory diseases; all employees will be required to have an annual influenza vaccine no later than the month of October. The exception to this policy will occur based upon an employee's stated religious beliefs and/or the written medical advice from their physician.

Hope Academy Protocols

- Universal mask wearing in the school building is required for all persons vaccinated or non-vaccinated adults, children, parents, guests, or visitors. A face shield will also be provided for adults and students who request them; however wearing a face mask is still required. The face shield is not a substitute for a mask, but may be worn over the mask.
- If you are in your offices alone or in your classroom alone, you can be without a mask, unless there are other circumstances. If there are medical reasons why an adult or child cannot wear a face mask, we will require that this is documented by the person affected, and submitted to the Principal. For those individuals, a face shield is then required, but it will not provide the same safety as does a face mask.
- We will continue to encourage all unvaccinated staff to consider vaccination. The CDC, as well as OSHA, has firmly stated that "Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic." Promoting vaccination can help Hope Academy safely return to in-person learning, as well as extracurricular activities and sports.
- We will continue to encourage parents to consider having their children, who are 12 years of age or older, vaccinated.

- BES will has in place protocols for utilizing multiple layer of prevention strategies. The multi-layers strategies have been described by the CDC, and strongly recommended and reinforced by the MDHHS. MDHHS provided Guidelines and Recommendations on August 13, 2021 for Safer Michigan School Operations during COVID-19. The guidelines emphasized, as did CDC, that when schools cannot provide the recommended social distancing, the masking and ventilation are important layers in the prevention strategies.
- BES will work to ensure a high level of ventilation within classrooms and common areas, and in addition to upgrading its present Heating Ventilation Air-condition System (HVAC) and Air Filtration Kits as provided by Wayne RESA. BES has invested in the NuWave Oxypure Smart Air Purifier for all classrooms.

BES will require daily screening of all staff, students, and visitors. Staff or students with temperatures exceeding 101 may be referred to Hope Academy's clinic for a test, but a rapid test is not conclusive and the individual will be referred to their physician for follow up before returning to the school, including evidence of a negative screening for COVID-19. **A rapid test will not be accepted as a return clearance if COVID-19 was confirmed initially.** Contact tracing will be done by the Detroit Health Department. Isolation and quarantine will be determined as recommended by the Health Department, CDC, or OSHA.

- When a staff or student is exposed to COVID-19 and was in close contact with someone who is not fully vaccinated, both will be referred for COVID-19 testing. Regardless of the test results, the staff or student who is not vaccinated may require quarantine at home for an established number of days, combined with testing and a negative test result. **The City of Detroit will be consulted on each case that occurs in the school for directions.**
- If a student or staff test positive for COVID-19, a determination will be made regarding who, where, when, and how long will isolation and quarantine be necessary. These decisions will be done in consultation with the Health Department.
- Professional cleaning and sanitizing will occur in all areas impacted by the exposure.
- Water fountains in the building will continue to remain locked. Ample supply of bottled water is available for staff, students, and visitors.
- Each classroom teacher will be equipped with the classroom PPE bucket of supplies as provided last year.

- The Hope Health Clinic is available to support staff, students, and parents with healthcare needs. They are equipped and qualified to help and respond to COVID-19 related issues.

VISITORS and GUESTS

Hope Academy is a welcoming school and we encourage the engagement of parents in the education of their children. However, to ensure safety within the school community, it is the practice of Hope Academy during the pandemic to limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations. Hope Academy will not limit access to direct service providers, such as social work services and/or medical services.

COMMITMENT

Hope Academy and BFDI Educational Services are committed to maintaining a safe school environment for staff, students, parents, and visitors. We are committed to make the right safety decision and provide the needed resources to control all that we can control to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Bishop Andrew J.D. Merritt, *Founder 1998*

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Hope Academy is a "Restorative Practices" Community