EAST HADDAM
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Start Strong 2021-22
August 23, 2021

Dear East Haddam Elementary School Parents/Guardians,

As we prepare to open our doors for the 2021-2022 school year, our priorities continue to be to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment, where students can engage in creative blended learning opportunities alongside their teachers and peers. We are committed to developing a learning environment that balances academic learning with the social and emotional needs of our students.

Please read through the EHES Start Strong Plan plan using the guidelines set forth by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Health. The information below is a summary of our revised plan that highlights the procedures that are in place at EHES. As you read through our plan, please know that there is nothing more important to us than the safety and well-being of our students, staff, and families. Our team will continue to meet and plan as information, guidelines, and local factors continue to be updated and we will adjust and communicate accordingly.

**EHES Start Strong Committee:**
Megan Peterson, Principal
Annette Vaccarino, Administrative Assistant to the Principal
Marty Dexter, School Nurse
Connie Kukta, Head Custodian
Rosemary Sweeney, Grade 1 Teacher
Jessica Lowery, Grade 2 Teacher
Lauren Cryan, Art Teacher
Kelsea Burkhardt, PreK/Special Education Teacher
Carole Marvin, Grade 1 Teacher/EHEA Rep.
Nicole Weaver, Paraeducator

I would like to thank the EHES Start Strong Committee for their dedication, problem solving, and attention to details as it relates to the safety and well being of our school community. Their guidance and support has been invaluable during this process and our plan is a result of their combined efforts.

**WASH HANDS COVER FACE MAKE SPACE**

EHES Start Strong Plan p. 1
At this time, the State of Connecticut has recommended a 100% in-person learning model for school this fall based on confirmed COVID-19 cases, available resources, etc. The East Haddam Public Schools will follow a more traditional schedule with health and safety expectations/protocols in place.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students and teachers attend every day with all State guidelines and expectations in place.</strong></td>
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*There will only be **REMOTE LEARNING** for those students required to quarantine. The expectation is that children who are remote learning due to quarantine are supervised and supported at home to access and engage with their learning and assignments. Remote learning may look different during the 2021-2022 school year.*

- If your child has to quarantine we will either send their chromebook home with them, or ask you to pick it up at EHES. There may be additional supplies sent home as well depending on the grade/needs of the student.
- The classroom teacher will provide a remote learning schedule to assist families with knowing when learning is taking place during the day.
- The schedule will provide times when students should log in and listen to the instruction in the class.
- Teachers will identify times that remote learners will engage directly with the teacher/staff person for support. Learning will not be synchronous in the same way it was previously.
- **Students are expected to engage in school work throughout the day.**
- Assignments for the day will be posted in Seesaw for children to access before the school day starts. Assignments may include video/audio instructions, links to learning websites used at EHES, or documents.
- If an entire class has to quarantine, the temporary remote learning model will revert to synchronous and direct instruction by the classroom teacher. In this scenario, all students will follow their schedule via remote learning and are expected to participate in live instruction.
- **Attendance will be taken daily for all students including those in quarantine. There will be no remote learning for snow/inclement weather days.**
**Schedule**

- Each grade-level schedule has a traditional weekly schedule.
- Lunch and recess groups will be cohorted.
- We will continue to provide mask breaks, and outside learning time when appropriate. Teachers are encouraged to have snacks outdoors when appropriate.
- Grade-Level teams will develop remote learning schedules to share when students have to quarantine.

**Attendance**

- Attendance practices will resume as normal. Students arriving after 8:55am will be marked tardy. If your student needs to be picked up early please send in a note (or call the office).
- To be marked present, quarantined remote students are expected to participate in any assigned synchronous class lessons, and complete and submit their assignments within the school day hours.

**Lunch/Recess**

- All students will eat lunch in the cafeteria with their cohort.
- Students will wash/sanitize their hands prior to eating lunch.
- At this time we will use shields as an added mitigation strategy.
- Staff handling lunches/on lunch duty will wear masks and sanitize hands frequently.
- Students with food allergies will be contacted by the school nurse to discuss necessary accommodations for mealtime.
- Touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected after each lunch.
- Classes will have 1 scheduled recess period each day with their cohort.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands before going to recess and upon returning to the building from outside.

**Transportation**

- Students will have assigned bus seats for the purpose of contact tracing.
- We ask that children from the same family sit together.
- Per Federal mandate, all students and bus drivers will wear masks at all times while on the school bus.
- The bus driver will have cleaning and disinfecting supplies on the bus and will disinfect between runs.
- Students will be assigned one bus from home to school in the AM, and one bus from school to home in the PM. If a student is unable to take their assigned bus, they must be picked up at the school during afternoon dismissal.
After School Programming (Clubs/Athletics)

- We hope to resume after school clubs or activities in October. Further details will be provided as available. At this time students will be dismissed at the regular time.

Physical Distancing

- We will continue to practice physical distancing within the school building, especially in the classrooms and cafeteria.
  - Per recommendations we will provide some spacing between desks, although we will be working in groups and engaging in learning together.
  - Students will have marked spots in the cafeteria to create distancing between students.

Visitors

AT this time, EHES will limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving large gatherings.

- Using a digital platform in order to limit face to face meetings is highly encouraged where appropriate.
- All safety precautions must be met for any in-person meetings, for visitors, and volunteers.
- There will be a limit to the number of visitors in the building at one time. We will limit visitors in the building to 5 at one time during the student day. We ask that visitors at this time have a specific purpose
- Visitors will be asked to provide information about where they spent their time, and if they spent more than 15 minutes with any one student or staff person in closer proximity than our distancing practices.
- Please stop at the office to get your visitor’s log to record your information before entering the building and return it to the office before you leave.

Masks/Face Coverings

- All students and school personnel must always use a face covering or mask while in the school building or riding the school bus.
- All students and staff will have multiple daily mask-breaks.
- Parents are asked to send in extra masks for their child(ren).
- Soiled/used cloth masks will be sent home daily to be replaced. Disposable masks will be discarded when finished being used for the day.
- Teachers will provide regular opportunities for mask breaks.
Cleaning and Sanitizing

- EHES will follow district procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting. This means daily sanitizing of surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, etc.

Reporting Absence of Illness/Containment

- Absence reporting by families will be done via calling the main office and speaking to secretaries or leaving a message on the voicemail system. Families reporting absences will be asked if COVID-19 related symptoms are present.
- If a positive result is reported by students or staff, the school nurse implements action steps in accordance with the health department and district procedures for reporting, tracking, and contact tracing.
- An Isolation space will be available to accommodate students who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms and need to be picked up. The isolation room will be supervised by a person wearing proper PPE.
- The child must be picked up in a timely manner.
- Returning to school will be based on relevant DPH guidelines for anyone who has been sick with COVID-19 or been in close contact with a person with COVID-19.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mitigation Measure</th>
<th>Update for 2021 - 2022</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quarantining from school and sports after exposure to COVID-positive individual</td>
<td>- Not required for students or faculty/staff who have been fully vaccinated <strong>AND</strong> are asymptomatic—staff should be tested within 3–5 days after exposure</td>
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<td>- Not required for students seated at least 3 feet from a positive peer in classrooms if both students were properly wearing masks and the non-positive student is asymptomatic (applies only to students)</td>
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<td>- 10 days will be the quarantine period unless a negative Covid test <strong>and</strong> 24 hr symptom free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remote Learning</td>
<td>- There will be no remote learning unless students are mandated to quarantine away from the classroom</td>
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<td>Masks for students</td>
<td>- Currently, all students are required to wear a facemask (per Executive Order)</td>
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<td>- Required when students are riding district buses and vans</td>
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<td>- Not required when students are outdoors</td>
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<td>- Students will be provided regular opportunities for mask breaks.</td>
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<td>Masks for Visitors, faculty &amp; staff</td>
<td>- Currently, all visitors, faculty, and staff are required to wear a facemask (per Executive Order) inside the building</td>
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<td>- Refer to SDE Guidance Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together - Fall 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>- Masks are required when students are riding district buses and vans</td>
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<td>- Assigned seating on buses and vans (contact tracing purposes)</td>
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<td>- One bus to school and one bus to home or daycare</td>
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<td>Social distancing</td>
<td>- Students should, when practical and/or feasible, be seated in classrooms at least 3 feet apart</td>
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<td>- Staff should be mindful of distancing. When practical and/or feasible, remain 6 feet from students or staff.</td>
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<td>- Maintaining as much distance as possible in all other circumstances is strongly encouraged</td>
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| Cohorting | ● Returning to the normal use of areas such as cafeterias, gyms, and art rooms  
● Cohorting of students remains a recommended strategy to the greatest extent possible (recess pairs, assigned cafeteria seats)  
● Intervention groups can be mixed. Log contacts after each group |
| --- | --- |
| Hand washing & sanitizing | ● Students and staff will practice regular handwashing  
● Hand sanitizer stations provided in classrooms and throughout school |
| Shared classroom materials | ● Sharing of materials is permitted. Disinfect as necessary |
| Cleaning & disinfecting | ● Routine daily cleaning of classrooms, offices, etc.  
● Cleaning and disinfecting of restrooms, Nurses Office, and known exposure areas at least once daily  
● Daily cleaning of buses |
| Water fountains | ● For bottle filling only (please send in a refillable bottle with your child) |
| Lunches/cafeteria | ● Promote spacing of students using spot markers to identify where to sit  
● Shields will be used as an added measure at this time.  
● Classes will be cohorted  
● Students will wash/sanitize their hands prior to eating lunch.  
● Staff handling lunches/on lunch duty will wear masks and sanitize hands frequently.  
● Areas will be cleaned and disinfected after lunch. |
| Ventilation | ● Recommendations about enhanced ventilation (i.e., maximizing fresh air intake) remain in place  
● Fans should blow out of the classrooms  
● AC’s can be utilized |
| Daily health screening for families & staff | ● Families and staff should continue to screen for COVID-19 symptoms before departing for school each morning  
● Students/Staff must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music</th>
<th>● Distancing during singing activities.</th>
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| Physical Education | ● Outdoor activities encouraged  
● PE classes inside are required to wear masks  
● Masks not needed for outdoor PE, recess, outdoor activities |
| School Events and Activities | ● No immediate return of large assemblies or concerts  
● School-wide events will be planned with social distancing and mitigation practices |
| Visitors to buildings | ● Encourage virtual meetings or in-person meetings after school  
● Visitors must comply with mitigation strategies inside schools and log details about their visit |
| Isolation Room | ● The isolation room will be utilized when a student becomes ill at school and is exhibiting a key symptom(s) of COVID-19  
● The isolation room may also be utilized if the school becomes aware that a child is a close contact to a positive case.  
● A staff member will be with the student until they are picked up. All mitigation strategies will be in place in the isolation room, including additional PPE for the staff person. |