



SPRUCE TREE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN - updated 1/4/2021.

- Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to guide the Spruce Tree Montessori school community in responsible school operations protecting the health and wellness of students and staff, in an effort to support general public health.
- Spruce Tree Montessori School aligns its mitigation policies with current guidance from the CDC and the local public health department.

- Definition of Cohort - the number of children in each class; it does not include staff.

- Definition of Contacts - contacts are those living, learning, working, and playing with a person identified as COVID+ through testing.

- Household contact - a member of your immediate household
- Close contact - anyone who comes within six feet of a symptomatic COVID+ person for a total of 15 minutes or more on the days of contagion; typically members of your child's cohort, depending on the type and length of exposure, will be identified as close contacts.
 - Close contacts of an asymptomatic COVID+ person are identified as those who come within six feet of that person for a total of 15 minutes or more within 48 hours of the person's test date.
- Secondary contact - a contact of a contact; i.e. a sibling or parent, a team mate or friend, of a close contact.

GENERAL PREVENTION

- STMS maintains a hard copy of this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan in the front office, along with Sanitization Logs, Health Screening Log, Contact Log and attendance information.
- STMS posts entryway signage stating clearly that any person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 may not enter the premises.
- STMS provides training for staff regarding this Mitigation Plan and each staff member receives an electronic copy of this plan. Staff were instrumental in composing this plan and provide input, feedback, comments and suggestions, on any/all revisions to this plan.

- STMS enrolls children into four static cohorts, that is, children will remain with their respective cohort for the duration of the school day.
 - Cohort size is limited to 30 children at the primary level. Cohorts will be multi-aged as follows: two cohorts ages 3 - 6. Cohorts will be identified as Boreal and Taiga for appropriate management of children/staff and contact tracing/exposure record keeping.
 - Cohort size is limited to 30 total children at the elementary level. Cohorts will be multi-aged and identified as Tongass Lower (grades 1 - 3 or at Head of School discretion for placement) and Tongass Upper (grades 4 - 6 or at Head of School discretion for placement) for appropriate management of children/staff and contact tracing/exposure record keeping.
 - Siblings and staff children are placed in the same cohort at the primary level to reduce exposure for each cohort and for parent convenience at drop off/pick up. Cross level siblings and staff children (elementary and primary) will not be placed in the same cohort.
 - Classroom Staff are assigned to one cohort.
 - Support Staff (Head of School, Administrative Manager, School Counselor, Chef, Educational Assistant(s), PE Teacher) follow the following precautions for presenting lessons, behavioral intervention, emergency assistance:
 - Present lessons with a minimum of 6 feet of distance between staff and student, preferably in classroom, on playground, or in gym. Smaller spaces like the library and Peace Room do not offer enough space for more than 1 - 2 children at a time.
 - Time lessons; no more than 12 minutes per lesson, unless distance can be facilitated for the duration of the lesson.
 - All lessons lasting longer than 12 minutes should be logged on the Contact Log.
 - Support staff shall wash their hands before and after each lesson or intervention.
 - Substitutes are assigned to a designated cohort as practical.
 - Staff avoids mixing between cohorts; however if a child in another cohort needs immediate assistance, the staff member washes their hands before and at the end of such interactions, disinfects any common items or spaces, and tries to limit that interaction to less than 15 minutes; such contact will be logged in the Contact Log.
 - The Head of School, Educational Counselor and PE Teacher may have contact with multiple cohorts according to their specific job duties, but a distance of six feet is maintained as practical. Any contact where six feet of distance can not be maintained; i.e. assistance of a child needing immediate attention, will be logged in the Contact Log.

- Each cohort uses a designated entry / exit point and designated carline for drop off and pick up.
 - Gate A, Boreal and Taiga cohorts without siblings, east/Main carline.
 - Gate B, Tongass cohorts and all families with two or more children, North carline.
- STMS requires adherence to Travel Mandate 10, and any/all revisions made by the State of Alaska; i.e. affirmation from the parent/guardian of a child or the staff member who has recently traveled out of state that the child/staff member has proof of a COVID-19 negative test taken within 72 hours of arrival. Upon return to Alaska, students/staff should follow social distancing guidelines for five days after arrival. Students/staff member attendance is aligned with the testing and distancing guidance outlined in Travel Mandate 10. A second negative test is not required to return to work/school. Students/staff must adhere to the symptoms section of this plan, see p. 3.
- STMS will conduct health screenings upon arrival for staff and students; a screening log will be kept in the school office.
 - Staff will check their own temperature upon arrival .
 - Staff will take the temperature of children upon arrival.
- The Administrative Manager or Head of School will conduct a health screening for visitors.
 - Visitors are allowed on a limited basis at the discretion of the Head of School, by appointment, for classroom observation, including parents of enrolled students who have not yet observed as a part of their enrollment commitment, and for guest teaching and/or assembly purposes. Face coverings are required for all visitors and each shall undergo a health screening on the day of their visit (temperature check, symptoms, exposure, travel).
- STMS staff and students are to stay home if they are sick.
 - Spruce Tree Montessori will use the CDC's definition of subjective fever / feeling feverish or experiencing chills, or a temperature greater than 100.4 to determine student wellness. Temperature checks are performed upon morning arrival.
 - Staff and students must be 72 hours clear of fever prior to returning to STMS, unless the fever has a known cause and the child's provider has cleared attendance; i.e. flu vaccines can cause low grade fever in children and providers may clear children for attendance after 24 hours fever free, post vaccination.
 - If a staff member or student is displaying any of the following symptoms as listed below, they should stay home.

- Fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Cough, or shortness of breath with an unknown cause
- Congestion, runny nose, or sore throat with an unknown cause
- Headache, Muscle aches or chills with an unknown cause
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting*
- Diarrhea*
- Parents should call the school office to report symptoms and answer questions related to potential exposure for the school's health screening log intended to assist with contact tracing if/when a child/sibling/household member tests positive.
 - The Head of School reserves the right to use discretion for communicating illness, reports of symptoms, and testing.
- Depending on potential exposure and the advice of the local health department, the Head of School reserves the right to temporarily close the potentially infected classroom for a 72 hour period. Educational support will be provided virtually during the closure in accordance with the Pandemic Policy (as stated in the Parent Handbook).

*The Spruce Tree Montessori School Parent Handbook asks that children stay home when vomiting or diarrhea has occurred within 24 hours of the school day.

CONTAINMENT & RE-ENTRY

- When a student or staff member is identified as COVID+ by testing, the student's parent or the staff member should inform the Head of School immediately.
 - The Head of School is to inform the school community as soon as possible via email.
 - The email will contain pertinent information as follows: contagion period (defined as day of onset of symptoms plus two days prior to day of onset of symptoms), date of positive test, general information about close contacts if known.
 - A subsequent email will be sent to those identified as close contacts with information related to the guidance from public health officials.
- The COVID+ student or staff member is not permitted to attend for the CDC defined isolation period; currently 10 days.

- A child/staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 may return to school/work following their isolation period and confirmation that they have had no symptoms for 24 hours.
 - A child/staff member who tests positive is not subject to further quarantine or testing requirements for a period of time as determined by public health; currently 90 days from the date of symptoms onset.
- When a student or staff member is identified as being COVID+ by testing, STMS performs CDC recommended cleaning in the affected environments. At the discretion of the Head of School, alternatively, the school may close the potentially contaminated classroom for 72 hours to allow for natural deactivation of the virus followed by comprehensive disinfection of all common surfaces prior to students' return.
- Close contacts of a student or staff member identified as COVID+ by testing are identified through review and analysis of the type and length of exposure (the CDC definition of close contact is coming within six feet of a C+ person for a total of 15 minutes or more), and a review of attendance on the days determined as days of contagion.
 - Students/staff identified as close contacts will be advised by Public Health to quarantine. The length of quarantine will be determined by public health, and our attendance tolerance will align with the current guidance of local public health officials; currently 7 days from the last date of exposure to the COVID+ person. If testing is available, you may be able to end your quarantine after 7 days of quarantine, on the 8th day. You can take a COVID-19 test within 48 hours prior to when you hope to end your quarantine (test on day 6 or 7). You must continue to quarantine until your test comes back negative.
 - The Head of School will provide contact information (names, phone numbers) to the Public Health Department for those identified as close contacts. The Public Health Department may call each of the identified close contacts to provide guidance.
- A sibling/parent of a COVID+ student is considered a household contact. Household contacts may not attend school/work at Spruce Tree for the duration of the COVID+ child's isolation period. Public Health may advise household contacts to quarantine for an additional period of time, and the household contact should not attend school/work at Spruce Tree for that duration.
 - Household contacts may return to school/work at Spruce Tree following the isolation and quarantine periods as advised by Public Health with proof of a negative test and confirmation that they have been asymptomatic for 24 hours.
- Siblings and parents of a close contact are considered secondary contacts. Secondary contacts are not subject to quarantine or testing and may attend school / work at Spruce Tree so long as they are asymptomatic.

- If a student or staff member gets tested for COVID due to having symptoms, the student or staff member should stay home until test results come back negative.
 - Similarly, if a parent/household member of a student or staff member gets tested for COVID due to having symptoms, the student or staff member should stay home until test results come back negative.

OPERATIONAL MITIGATION

- STMS will closely manage the inventory of classroom supplies so as to ensure adequate supplies for the number of children in each cohort to minimize sharing of high-touch materials to the extent possible. Spruce Tree Montessori will provide individual school supplies, general art supplies, and assign a container to each child as appropriate. Speciality supplies and Montessori materials will be disinfected between uses as practical and children will be instructed to wash their hands before and after using community supplies.
- STMS will designate sink use: kitchen sink - food prep; classroom sinks - hand washing and filling water bottles.
- Spruce Tree Montessori Staff will explain mitigation guidelines to all children, parents, and staff, in an age-appropriate manner.
- STMS will conduct student and parent orientation meetings (via Zoom if needed) in order to communicate the details of this plan, along with other basic enrollment requirements as listed below, and periodically as necessary, to update parents on new/revised public health or school-sanctioned guidelines.
 - Required Personal belongings to remain at school: indoor shoes, water bottle, spare clothing.
 - Optional personal belongings: nap blanket (remains for week at a time), sunscreen, bug spray.
 - No other optional belongings (including stuffed animals and unnecessary accessories may be brought to school, including school supplies.
 - Use of face coverings, required use of personal water bottles, use of indoor/outdoor shoes, designated entry/exits and drop off/pick up times.
 - Sack lunch limitations; i.e. importance of independence (easy open packages/containers to reduce the need for adult assistance), use of own utensils, no heat ups/microwave use.
 - Health screening best practices:
 - Use of touchless thermometer to screen temperature upon arrival.

- STMS will not administer fever-reducing medicine for the foreseeable future.
- Should a child show symptoms during the day, parents will be notified for pick up as soon as possible. The child will await pick up in the Main Lobby until parents arrive.
- Physical Distancing
 - Each class will have a designated indoor and outdoor classroom space (as weather permits) and hand washing sink.
 - Each environment will have sanitization toolboxes, with hand sanitizer, sanitization spray (as available), all purpose cleaner, paper towels, etc.
 - Physical distancing will be encouraged in designated outdoor spaces for each class and whenever possible in indoor classroom environments with an understanding on limitations in physical distancing in young children.
 - Snack, lunch, circle time, morning meetings, art, PE and other academic and/or enrichment activities will be held outside whenever feasible and weather permitting or in the gym where distance can be more easily maintained.
 - Excursions (bike rides, hikes, walks) and off campus field trips to various venues and parks will be scheduled by cohorts (no mixing of cohorts). Students will practice physical distancing guidelines during such excursions.
 - If the STMS school bus is required, children will wear cloth face coverings during transport.
 - Children who nap will use designated nap mats and sheets in designated space so as to maintain physical distance while napping as is practical.
- Hygiene Protocols
 - Cloth face coverings are required to be worn by all STMS personnel upon entry and in shared spaces. Face coverings may be removed by staff when presenting lessons when 6' of distance can be maintained or when a barrier is used, leading outdoor activities, eating, when in private spaces, and whenever adequate spacing can be achieved.
 - Cloth face coverings are required to be worn by all children. Face coverings may be removed during lessons when adequate spacing can be achieved, during outdoor activities with their particular cohort, PE activities, and whenever adequate spacing can be achieved.
 - Students wash their hands frequently using warm water and soap. Hand washing will occur upon arrival, after restroom use, before/after eating, after PE, and/or once per hour, at minimum. Hand sanitizer will be used at teacher discretion.

- Upon entry to the school, students are required to wear a face covering. Children will meet a staff member at the assigned entrance, be screened for temperature, and apply hand sanitizer. Children will proceed to their classroom door, remove outside shoes, place personal belongings in cubby/locker, and put on inside shoes. Once this is complete, students will thoroughly wash their hands before doing a lesson and/or using materials.
- STMS Staff wash hands frequently using hot water and soap. Hand washing will occur upon arrival, before/after lesson prep, before/after food preparation, before/after assisting a child with eating, or helping a child in the restroom.
- STMS provides hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol for each designated environment.
- Sanitization
 - Sanitization checklists are kept in each classroom and staff members initial after each sanitization.
 - Spruce Tree Montessori staff sanitize frequently touched surfaces on an hourly basis. This includes doorknobs, light switches, countertops, cabinet handles, sinks, faucets, paper towel dispenser, soap dispenser, sanitizer pump, and restroom hardware.
 - Teachers sanitize shared supplies/materials at their discretion, or remove the supply/material for a period of 72 hours to allow for a natural deactivation of the virus
 - Individual work packets and laminated materials are utilized to reduce sharing of materials. If a student chooses a lesson that is difficult to sanitize (ex: flag lesson or puzzle), said lesson may be stored away for a 72 hour period to allow natural deactivation of potential contamination before the next use.
 - Students have a designated space for class gatherings; i.e. circle time, class meetings, and for snack/lunch.
 - Students have individual supply baskets and supplies; sanitized weekly.
 - Classrooms have designated PE toys; i.e. balls, frisbees, etc and each set is sanitized daily.
 - Spruce Tree Montessori maintains an adequate supply of disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and paper towels. Inventory of sanitization supplies is closely monitored.

- Snacks are provided each morning using a set weekly menu, pre-prepared and plated and/or individually wrapped and do not require the use of utensils.
 - Children are required to bring a water bottle from home to remain at STMS for the duration of attendance. Water bottles are washed by Spruce Tree staff regularly.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting is conducted in compliance with CDC protocols daily by a contracted janitorial service.
 - Nap mats are sanitized daily after use and nap sheets are laundered weekly.
 - Work mats are cleaned frequently.
- Attachments
- School Operations Schedule (for internal use only)
 - Health Screening Log (kept in front office binder)
 - Sanitization Log (kept in front office binder)
 - Contact Log (kept in office binder)

<< END OF SPRUCE TREE MONTESSORI SCHOOL MITIGATION PLAN >>

FRIENDLY REMINDERS ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Vision & Mission

Our vision is to nurture a conscientious spirit in children, families and educators that empowers all to make a positive impact in their community and world while leading a productive and happy life.

The mission of Spruce Tree Montessori School is to create an experience that we all love.

We seek to instill a lifetime love of learning in students by providing authentic Montessori early childhood and elementary education in an inspiring environment using the Montessori philosophy.

Core Values Statement

At Spruce Tree we value creativity, honesty, and patience, and strive to preserve the ideals of the Montessori philosophy with integrity and compassion.