



SPRUCE TREE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN COVER SHEET

1. Symptoms Control

Students and staff should not come to school if they are sick. Staff will request early pick up for any child displaying any symptoms in order to maintain the wellness of the community.

2. Masking

Students, staff, and visitors are required to wear a mask at all times when inside the building and when outside if 6 feet of distance can not be maintained for the activity. Exceptions include: during lesson or snack/lunch times when acrylic shields are in place, where 6 feet of distance can be maintained, when seated in designated individual spots (at student or teacher desks), or during nap time when in designated individual spots.

3. Hand Hygiene

Students and staff are required to wash their hands frequently; before/after restroom use, eating, and before/after a group lesson or project when shared materials or supplies are used.

4. Co-Horting

Spruce Tree uses the co-horting model as recommended by the CDC in which children are assigned to a designated cohort and classroom environment. Staff are assigned to one cohort as practical. Fully vaccinated staff may support any/all cohorts.

5. Travel

Spruce Tree adheres to state guidance on travel; currently titled State of Alaska Health Advisory #2. Students are not required to test or social distance post travel. See details on p. 4.

6. Communication

Spruce Tree will communicate any/all student or staff Covid cases to the school community and identify those determined to have had high probability of exposure.

7. COVID-19 POSITIVE Case

Students/staff who test positive for COVID-19 will not be able to come to school until completion of their 10-day isolation period as recommended by the CDC and Alaska Public Health. See p. 6 for details.

COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN - updated 2/25/21

- 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, State, 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.
 - 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 a Health Screening & Symptoms 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 cohorts; children 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. The cohort will be multi-aged and identified as Tongass (grades 1 - 6 or at Head of School discretion for placement) for appropriate management of children/staff and contact tracing/exposure record keeping.
 - Siblings are placed in the same cohort at the primary level for parent convenience at drop off/pick up. Cross level siblings (elementary and primary) will not be placed in the same cohort.
- Classroom Staff are assigned to one cohort or level.
- 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 reasonable distance between staff and student, and between students.
 - Time lessons; most lessons are presented within a 15 minute time period per lesson, unless 6' of distance can be facilitated for the duration of the lesson.
 - All lessons lasting longer than 15 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 reasonable distance can not be maintained or lasting more than 15 minutes; i.e. assistance of a child needing immediate attention, will be logged in the Contact Log.
- Each cohort is assigned to 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 aligns with State of Alaska Health Advisory No. 2, issued 2/14/2020**, and any/all revisions made by the State of Alaska.
 - Students or staff members who travel out of state are encouraged to get a COVID-19 test within 72 hours of returning to Alaska or upon their return to Alaska. A negative test is not required to return to work/school.
 - Upon return to Alaska, students/staff are encouraged to social distance until test results are available or for 3 - 5 days, closely monitoring symptoms. Student attendance is aligned with social distance guidelines. Students/staff must adhere to the symptoms section of this plan, see p. 3.
 - Students/staff who have been identified as COVID+ by testing are exempt from quarantine for a period of 3 months from the date of the test if they meet this criteria: 1) have recovered 2) remain without COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Students/staff who travel outside of Alaska for less than 72 hours are exempt from social distance and return testing guidelines but traveler should self - monitor for 10 days after arrival for any symptoms, even mild ones, and stay home from school if symptoms develop.
 - Staff are not required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 within the last three months and show no symptoms. Fully vaccinated is defined as 14 days post second dose.
- STMS will conduct health screenings upon arrival for staff and students; all symptoms are logged in the school's electronic classroom management system, Montessori Compass.
 - 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 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 having high probability of exposure.
- **The COVID+ student** or staff member is not permitted to attend school 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** will be identified as those having high probability of exposure to the student or staff member identified as COVID+ by testing. A thorough review and analysis of the type and length of exposure, including factors related to masking and symptoms, as well as a review of attendance on the days determined as days of exposure will be performed by the Head of School and cohort teacher.
 - Cohorts will not be closed and moved to remote learning due to a COVID + test of a fellow student so long as it can be confirmed that all students were wearing masks on the date of exposure.
 - Close contacts will be allowed to return to school with a negative test result or after CDC recommended quarantine. Current CDC recommends quarantine for 10 days from the last date of exposure to the COVID+ person, without testing. If testing is available, quarantine may be shortened to 7 days. You can take a COVID-19 test within 48 hours prior to when you hope to end your quarantine (test on day 5 or later). You should continue to quarantine until your test comes back negative.
- 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

- Students, staff and visitors are required to wear a mask at all times, except for during snack/lunch times at designated spaces with assigned seating and during nap time when reasonable distance can be maintained.
- 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.

- 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..
 - 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.
 - When 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
 - Spruce Tree Montessori staff sanitize frequently touched surfaces during the mid-day and at their discretion. 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.

<< 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.