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**St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf in Brooklyn**  
**COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan**  
**2023- 2024 School Year**

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the School's plans regarding COVID-19 guidance and procedures.

This plan provides employees, families, students, and other members of the community with assurances that our school has established policies and procedures to respond to COVID-19 in a thoughtful and effective manner.

The School will continue to communicate information called for by state and local health departments and will communicate it to employees, students, and families regularly.

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## COMMUNICATION

### 1) Communication to Families

- a) Letters in backpacks
- b) Website [www.sfdesales.org](http://www.sfdesales.org)
- c) K12 Alert system for Email/text blasts

### 2) Communication to Employees

- a) School-wide e-mail
- b) Website [www.sfdesales.org](http://www.sfdesales.org)
- c) K12 Alert system for Email/text blasts

### 3) Family Communication to the School

- a) Families should contact the school social worker as the liaison between school and home
- b) Contact information for all employees is listed on the school website [www.sfdesales.org](http://www.sfdesales.org)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### 1) Procedures for Face Coverings and PPE, when needed

- a) The School will provide clear masks to all employees and students
- b) Students unable to wear masks due to disability and/or IEP classification will not be required to wear one.
- c) The School will provide additional PPE for employees including but not limited to masks, facial shields, gloves, eye protection and gowns.
- d) Students who are required to wear face masks will have face covering breaks included in their daily schedules.
- e) The School Nurse will provide educational services to the students on proper hand and respiratory hygiene.
- f) School Audiologist will ensure that audio-clips will be used to reduce the loss of audiological equipment due to the removal of facial masks throughout the school day.

### 2) Vaccination Status

- a) Employees- All employees must have proof of Vaccination Card on file.
- b) Visitors- All visitors must either show proof of vaccination or a negative Rapid Test result from a diagnostic Testing Facility (i.e., Urgent Care, City MD, Primary Care Physician)

### 3) Asthma-Related Acute Respiratory Treatment Care

- a) *Asthma Medication Form*
  - i) Any student with a diagnosis of asthma is required to have a Asthma Medication Form completed by their health care provider
  - ii) Prescribed Medications- in school and/or at home

- iii) Emergency plan of action
- iv) Doctors Contact Information
- v) Parents/ Caregiver's consent to administer medication and contact information

*b) School Procedures regarding Asthma*

- i) The school nurse provides information and referrals to families when concerns arise in the school during daily activity.
- ii) The school nurse works with families to ensure medications are current and have up to date orders from their health care provider.
- iii) The school nurse administers medications for students who cannot do so independently and have current orders provided by the student's health care provider.
- iv) Staff are educated to recognize the symptoms of asthma and the potential triggers that may cause an attack.
- v) Physical Education classes are adapted for the students with asthma to ensure they are able participate
- vi) Field Trips are reviewed in consideration of students with asthma to ensure proper accommodations
- vii) Sub nurses are hired for school trips when a student with asthma who needs medication supervision is attending
- viii) Air Conditioners are installed in all classrooms
- ix) Humidifiers are put all classrooms where students with asthma are located

*c) Considerations for COVID-19 & Asthma*

- i) Nursing staff will wear PPEs, while administering asthma treatments.
- ii) Students who have trouble breathing due to asthma will not be required to wear masks
- iii) Students sent home after experiencing an asthma attack during school will be required to provide a note by their health care provider clearing them to return to school.

#### **4) Reporting Positive Tests Results to School**

*a) Students*

- i) If a student has a positive test result, the Parent/Guardian must notify the PPS Department immediately.
- ii) PPS Staff will give isolation instructions detailing the number of days to quarantine based on DOH guidelines.
- iii) PPS staff will immediately gather information about the student's Contacts (class & bus).
- iv) The student will not be allowed into the building until they either provide a medical clearance note from a Healthcare Provider based on DOH guidance or after the required number of total days of isolation.

*b) Employees/Visitors*

- i) If an employee/visitor has a positive test result, the employee/visitor must contact the PPS Department immediately.
- ii) PPS Staff will gather information regarding all Contacts.
- iii) The employee or visitor will not be allowed into the building until they either provide a medical clearance note from a Healthcare Provider based on DOH guidance or after the required number of total days of isolation.

*c) Positive Test Results*

- i) Individuals who test positive will be required to isolate for a minimum of 5 days regardless of vaccination status (as of 1.10.22)
- ii) If symptoms persist, further isolation may be required
- iii) If symptoms resolve, return to school/work after the 5-day isolation return to work & wear a mask for the next 5 days

## **5) NYSDOH GUIDANCE**

*a) Direct Contacts*

- i) All individuals who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 may continue to attend or work at school regardless of booster status
- ii) If no symptoms, then may continue attending school/work
- iii) If no symptoms and if possible, get tested on day 5
- iv) If develop symptoms, stay home, and get tested

*b) Illness with COVID-Like Symptoms*

- i) If an individual is diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with an illness with COVID-like symptoms (determined to NOT be COVID), they can return to school/work with documentation from the healthcare provider stating they are medically cleared to return.

## **FACILITIES**

### **1) Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection**

- a) The School follows the NYS Education Guidance on acceptable disinfecting products and procedures.
- b) The School follows the hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and New York State Department of Health (DOH) and maintains logs.
- c) The Daily Cleaning logs can be found in the slop sink closets on each floor (east and west ends of each floor) for that section of the building. The Disinfecting and Cleaning checklist can be found in the secondary nurse's office.

- d) The School will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible.
- e) Hand sanitizers will be placed in convenient locations such as classrooms and entrances/exits and hygiene stations at entry points of the building.
- f) Ventilation: Classrooms and offices should increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols, particularly for younger students.
- g) Air Purifiers will be used in all classrooms.
- h) Paper towel dispensers are monitored and immediately replenished
- i) Disinfecting and cleaning schedules of the restrooms follow the requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and New York State Department of Health (DOH)
- j) Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content are provided throughout the building. All classrooms, offices, therapy rooms & common spaces have hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol which is effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- k) Hospital-grade disinfectant wipes (Sani-Cloths) are provided throughout the building. All classrooms, offices, therapy rooms & common spaces have Sani-Cloths. They are used by employees only to clean classroom surfaces and high-frequency touch points such as doorknobs, keyboards, etc.
- l) Soap at all sink locations are monitored and immediately replenished.
- m) High-Frequency Touch Points such as railings, doorknobs, drinking fountains, and elevator buttons were added to the regular cleaning schedule.

## **SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL WELLBEING**

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown have created an unprecedented situation universally and have made it difficult to gauge its specific impacts on the mental health of students, families, and employees at SFDS. The experience has been diverse based on various challenges they have faced such as exposure to the virus, fear of exposure, safety concerns, illness, loss of loved ones, loss of income, various transitions, etc. Mental health support services have been provided through a multitiered approach since the school closure in March of 2020 and will continue in the 2022-2023 school year.

<b>TIERED SUPPORT</b>			
<b>Modalities</b>		<b>In-Person</b>	<b>Distance Learning</b>
<b>UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS - ALL</b>			
Establish and maintain positive relationships with students	Students	In class discussions/Presentations	Google Classroom
Students and parents to help them to cope with the various outcomes of the pandemic.	Families	Parent education classes	Zoom and Google Classroom
		Parent Recreation Events	same via zoom
Instill general awareness regarding student/Family experiences related to the pandemic	Employees	PD programs regarding coping mechanisms	Same via online platforms
		Tools and discussions, Recreation events	Google classroom resources
<b>SECONDARY INTERVENTIONS – HIGH-RISK GROUP</b>			
Identified through pre-Covid diagnosis, psychosocial factors, etc.	Students	Student support group regarding specific stressors identified	Same via Zoom
Parents of high-risk students	Families	Parent support groups	Support group via zoom

Identified based on class composition/Risk factors	Employees	Peer support groups	Peer support zoom meets
<b>TERTIARY INTERVENTIONS - Identified High Risk Individuals</b>			
Based on functional aspects pre and post covid	Students	Individual non-mandated counselling	
Parent seeking help or identified as beneficial	Families	Individual parent counselling and referrals to community agencies.	Parent support via Telephone and Zoom
Staff Self-Referral	Employees	Support via mental health staff 1:1 as needed and individually scheduled	Session via telephone and zoom

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**1) Remote Learning (ONLY, IF NEEDED)**

- a) Modes of Distance Learning includes both Asynchronous and Synchronous Learning.
- b) The primary platforms used are Google Suite, Zoom and Smartphone and/or telephone conferencing.
- c) Educational resources used to address IEP goals and NYS Standards: (i.e., Boomlearning.com, Razkids.com, IXL.com, BrainPop.com, etc.)
- d) Asynchronous Learning
  - i) Daily assignments directly correlated to content area and IEP are posted
  - ii) Assignments are to be completed independently with a designated due date for submission and review.
  - iii) Daily prerecorded ASL stories reinforcing vocabulary and comprehension skills are posted.
  - iv) Physical Education -weekly videos and pertinent health activities aligned to NYS standards are posted
- e) Synchronous Learning (occurs in several ways including but not limited to):
  - i) Live classroom instruction offering core content subject areas takes place between 8:30am-2:45pm.
  - ii) The teacher and teacher assistant are present in the virtual classroom with prepared engaging lessons.



- iii) Breakout rooms and small group instruction for additional support are available during portions of each lesson in Zoom.
- iv) One to one teaching opportunities are offered weekly as well to ensure acquisition of new skills while maintaining mastered skills.
- v) Live Physical Education is offered to every student 1-2 times per week. Activities are aligned with NYS Physical Education standards.
- vi) Live-related service sessions (Speech, OT, PT, TVI, O&M, Counseling) are scheduled according to IEP mandates. Service delivery takes place with a push-in model joining the virtual classroom or 1:1 in a separate session. Related services can be delivered in a consultation

## **2) Internet and Device Access Among Students**

- a) All students will have access to devices provided by the school. Devices include but are not limited to Chromebooks, iPads, and laptops.
- b) The IT Supervisor, in collaboration with the School Social Worker, Educational Supervisor, and Pupil Personnel Services Supervisor, have trained students and their families with limited technology experience to gain independence with their devices.
- c) Families will complete and sign a Technology agreement with the School regarding any device or connectivity device provided to them during the school year.

## **3) Alternatives for Students Unable to Access Remote or In-Person**

- a) Hard copy packets mailed home weekly
- b) Phone Consultations with teachers and related service providers
- c) Weekly correspondence with school Social Worker

# **HUMAN RESOURCES**

## **1) Temporary Requests to Work Remotely due to COVID-19 Quarantine**

St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf in Brooklyn understands the disruption to daily routines and impact that COVID-19 has on its employees. The following policy was developed with this in mind to support our employees during this pandemic by eliminating the stress that sudden quarantines put on families.

The School will allow employees to temporarily work from home due to a COVID-19 quarantine-related instance on a case-by-case basis. These approvals are for a temporary period, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

The employee must put this request in an email to the Executive Director, Business Office, and Supervisor. The email must contain the reason for the request as well as the anticipated begin and end date of the remote work. In addition, please include documentation if applicable (ex. Notification from school in the event of

closing, order of quarantine from local health department, etc.). You are expected to follow the guidelines as described below.

## **2) Guidelines While Working Remotely**

While working remotely you are expected to maintain productivity, performance, communication, and responsiveness standards as if you are not working remotely. You are responsible to punch in/out each day utilizing the ADP Workforce Now application – If you have difficulty, you must notify the Business Office immediately. You will perform all your duties as set forth in your job description (if applicable), as well as those additional and/or different duties assigned. The School recognizes that some of your essential job functions will necessarily be removed during this limited time and arrangements will be made prior to approval of the request.

While working remotely, you will be solely responsible for the configuration and expenses associated with your remote workspace. Employees are expected to maintain their workspace in a safe manner, free from hazards. Remote employees are responsible for notifying the Business Office immediately for any injury sustained in conjunction with their work duties.