



High School (9-12)
600 St. Ann's Ave
Bronx, New York 10455

Middle School (5-8)
470 Jackson Avenue
Bronx, New York 10455

UPPS Reopening Health and Safety Plan

2021 – 2022

Last updated 9.10.21

The purpose of this document is to outline our network's priorities, guiding principles, and approach to healthily returning to school for Fall 2021.

At UPPS, the health and safety of our students, staff, and community is our first priority. As we plan to navigate in-person learning and mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19, we have studied models and best practices from school systems around the world, in addition to guidelines from the Center for Disease Control, New York's Department of Health, and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Our goal is to meet or exceed minimum health guidelines whenever possible to keep our community safe.

Minimizing the risk of COVID-19 Infection

Minimizing the risk of COVID-19 in our schools will require a multi-faceted approach. While some efforts are more impactful than others, no single precaution alone will prevent the unvaccinated from becoming sick or spreading it to others. This section outlines UPPS’s approach to minimizing the risk of the COVID-19 Infection.

Vaccination Policy

Staff Vaccination

UPPS Requires Staff Vaccination.

In line with the policy established by the NYC Mayor, Every school employee must receive at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination by September 27, 2021.

We believe that vaccinating all staff members is the single-most important and powerful mechanism we have to ensure the health and safety of our school community. Getting vaccinated reduces the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission and spread, and it severely reduces illness should a vaccinated individual still contract the virus. Particularly because students under the age of 12 are ineligible for a vaccine at this time, it is imperative that as adults and leaders in our school community, all University Prep staff members do their part to get vaccinated, prevent transmission and spread, and contribute to this pressing public health initiative. While it is known that the Delta variant can be spread by vaccinated people, CDC is clear that “unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern... and the greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to contract, and therefore transmit the virus.”

Staff Vaccination Approach:

- **FULLY VACCINATED:** Schools have been given access to the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) in order to verify your vaccination status of staff members.
- **PARTIALLY VACCINATED:** Until September 27th, partially vaccinated staff members must bring their vaccination card on the first day of preservice.
- **NOT VACCINATED:** Until September 27th, Staff members who are not vaccinated are required to submit a negative COVID-19 test result each week within 72 hours of return to school on Mondays (August 6, September 6, 13, and 20).

Student Vaccination

Vaccines are strongly encouraged for students and required for extracurricular activities.

Although students are not required to be vaccinated at this time, we strongly recommend that all eligible students receive the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. The vaccine can **protect students and others**, reducing the chance that they transmit the virus to others, including family members and friends at home who may be more susceptible to severe consequences of the infection.

Student Vaccination Approach:

- Our Schools' Operations Teams are collecting and monitoring our student vaccination records through the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR).
- Through our partnership with the NYC DOE, UPPS will conduct random testing of those who are not vaccinated at the rate of 10% on a biweekly basis.
- All unvaccinated students at UPPS must obtain parent consent to random testing.
- **PLEASE NOTE! All ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MUST BE VACCINATED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:**
 - All field trips
 - Later Gator / after school activities
 - Sports
 - Clubs
 - Internships
 - Extra-curricular tutoring programs

UPPS Vaccination Goals		
	By September 27	By November 23
Staff	100%	-
Students (of those eligible)	60%	80%

Masks

Masks are required during the school day for all students and school staff in all grade levels regardless of vaccination status.

Masks can only be removed or worn below your nose while actively eating or drinking during lunch.

Masks are our most important precaution to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our schools. According to the CDC, "COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs." The CDC states that unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern. Although breakthrough infections in vaccinated people happen much less often than infections in unvaccinated people, individuals infected with the Delta variant, including fully vaccinated people with symptomatic breakthrough infections, can transmit it to others. Given this, we will wear masks (cloth or surgical face coverings) to limit the spread of the virus and slow unknowingly infected people from transmitting it to others.

Masking Approach:

- Please see [here](#) for appropriate masks.
- All students and staff must:
 - Wear a mask at all times
 - Wear a mask when walking in hallways and using bathrooms
 - Only when actively eating or drinking during lunch should your mask come off or below your nose
- Additional staff mask guidelines:
 - Staff must wear a mask when attending PD or meetings
 - If you are alone in a classroom or office you may remove your mask
 - Groups of 6 or fewer vaccinated adults may remove masks for meetings when students are not present if all participants are comfortable
- UPPS has a sufficient stock of cloth and extra disposable face coverings are kept on site in the event that a student or staff member requires them.
- Students will be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash hands frequently.
- We will provide all community members guidance around sanitation of face coverings and reuse.
- Schools will develop plans for supporting students in meeting this expectation, including protocols for students who struggle with this expectation.
- Face shields can be worn in addition to but *may not* be worn as a substitute for a cloth face covering or mask.
- Masks are not required for outdoor learning or extra-curricular activities including, but not limited to, recess, physical education, and other outdoor classes.

Testing of Students for COVID-19

Through our partnership with the NYC DOE, UPPS will run COVID-19 testing for our unvaccinated students at a rate of 10% on a biweekly basis.

- All unvaccinated students at UPPS must obtain parent consent to random testing.
- Given the staff vaccination mandate, this service will no longer be extended to staff. Prior to September 27th, unvaccinated staff must present negative test results from an independent testing provider within 72 hours of the return to school each week on Monday.

Regular Health Monitoring & Containment

UPPS will engage in regular monitoring, screening, and testing of students and staff health to ensure that we can appropriately exclude those who might be infected and break the chain of transmission for potentially impacted students and staff.

- UPPS will keep scholar and staff medical information private and shared only with need-to-know parties (Principal , Director of Operations, and network leadership).
- **All community members will be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.** The primary method for minimizing the spread of the virus will be our reliance on staff, students, and their families self-screening and monitoring their health. To keep everyone safe, staff and students should not come to school if they are ill. Any flu-like symptoms are a sign that someone should stay home. And, there are four COVID symptoms in particular that we all must focus on: fever; shortness of breath; fatigue; loss of taste or smell. They should inform their Principal, and Director of Operations as soon as they become ill.
- **Daily Health Screening:** Every student and staff member must complete a Health Screening Form prior to entering the school building each day. Anyone entering the building must confirm that they are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have not recently tested positive for COVID-19, and are not currently required to quarantine based on close contact with an infected person. Students, Staff and Families are encouraged to complete the screening online at <https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/>. For families that cannot access the online screening tool, a paper version will be provided.
- **Temperature Checks:** All students, and staff, and visitors will have their temperature checked using non-contact thermometers upon entry into the school.
 - Any scholar or staff member with a temperature above 100.0 degrees will be restricted from accessing the school and sent to the health exclusion room sent home. Visitors with a fever will be denied entry to the school.
 - If someone comes onto campus and develops symptoms of COVID or has a fever, the following protocols will be followed:

- Staff
 - School nurses will be immediately informed and can evaluate the staff member if needed; or
 - Staff will be sent home immediately.
 - Must be seen by a healthcare professional and/or receive a negative COVID test result prior to returning to school
- Student
 - School nurses will be immediately informed and can evaluate the student if needed.
 - Each campus will have a health exclusion room for students who cannot be picked up immediately.
 - School nurse will monitor any student in a health exclusion room at a minimum of 6 feet of distance.
 - Upon parent/guardian pick up, the family will receive instructions that the student must be seen by a health care provider and receive a negative COVID test result prior to returning to school.

Other Precautions

UPPS will continue to practice key layers of prevention.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing

- UPPS will continue to encourage students and staff toward healthy hand washing habits.
- UPPS will provide hand sanitizer in every classroom.
- Students and staff should wash and sanitize hands regularly.

Classroom Ventilation

- Each of our classrooms and bathrooms has been equipped with a HEPA air-filtration system, and we intend to open the top half of each window to promote ventilation in each room.

Warm, Welcoming, and Clean Facilities

- Every University Prep facility will be regularly and thoroughly cleaned by custodial staff with solvents that eliminate 99% of bacteria and are lethal to COVID-19, with an emphasis on high-contact surfaces and high traffic areas.
- Schools are stocked with needed supplies for good hygiene, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and paper face coverings.
- Schools will make every effort to maintain stock to last 60-90 days.
- All frequently traveled spaces have a hand sanitizer dispenser installed.

- Adult and student bathrooms will include guidance and materials for hand washing and proper cleanliness habits.
- Signage is posted to ensure facilities offer frequent reminders of needed protocols and health and safety expectations, including reminders for students and staff to wear masks and maintain distance where possible.

Physical Distancing Where Possible

- Whenever possible, students should adhere to 3 feet of physical distancing, as per the CDC guidelines. Staff should observe 6 ft of physical distancing.
- Handshakes and any other routines that call for direct physical contact are prohibited. Staff may not generally touch students or one another. Air hugs, elbow bumps, shoe taps are permissible.

Shared Materials and Equipment

- Where possible without compromising student's educational experience, schools will avoid sharing materials and equipment, particularly among student populations ineligible for the vaccine.
- Students will have 1:1 technology to avoid sharing.
- Students will not be permitted to drink from drinking fountains but may fill up water bottles.

Shared Spaces, School Events, Visitors, Athletics, and Extracurricular Activities

- Large group gatherings that use shared spaces will be limited (ex. Main Office will have maximum capacities depending on space).
- Large group gatherings and non-essential school events will require proof of vaccination for all students and/or their families.
- In addition to in-person conferences, schools will offer vulnerable families virtual options for engaging in quarterly parent-teacher conferences.
 - Schools may run outdoor community events for families and students as long as mask protocols are in place.
- Staff social events off campus can be held by school leaders for vaccinated staff members.
- Schools may run field trips that they deem safe - and outdoor activities are strongly encouraged. For age groups which are eligible to be vaccinated, field trips will only be available to students who are vaccinated. Families may volunteer if they provide proof of vaccination. Masks are required.
- Athletics, after-school programs, and off-campus privileges will only be led by vaccinated staff and available to students who are vaccinated (for age groups which are eligible to be vaccinated). Masks are required.
- In general, University Prep will only allow access to visitors who are vaccinated or who can provide a negative covid test. We will keep and maintain self reported records of vaccinated community members
- Zoom meetings will be arranged for community members that cannot provide proof of vaccination or recent negative test results.

P.E. Class Expectations

- At a minimum, students and adults should follow the same school-day policies and procedures during athletic and extracurricular activities, including PE
- Limit the sharing of objects and discourage touching of shared surfaces; or, when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched areas, require employees and students to practice hand hygiene before and after contact.
- Spread of COVID-19 is more likely to occur in sports that require sustained close contact (such as wrestling, hockey, football), thus focus on activities with little or no physical contact over those that are close-contact or involve shared equipment (e.g. running);
- Encourage activities that are lower risk such as skill-building and conditioning;

Health and Safety Protocols for Yellow School Buses

- Masks, worn properly over the mouth and nose are required.
- No eating or drinking is allowed.
- Contact tracing:
 - UPPS commits to informing families when a kid has a potential or confirmed case on the bus and being transparent about how a confirmed COVID case on the bus may impact other student's ability to attend school.
- Key points about health/safety on the bus:
 - Given UPPS does not directly contract or manage the bus driver, the bus is never going to be the same experience as a family would have inside of a classroom at UPPS. And it is never the safest, most reliable way to get your child to and from school.
 - We do not directly manage our bus drivers and have limited influence in how they respond to UPPS's internal requirements for our staff (masks, vaccination) and what they do to manage student seating arrangements or behavior on the bus.
 - As a reminder, there is no para or matron on the bus.

Minimizing the spread of COVID-19 Infection

Contact Tracing and Containment

In order to prioritize students' learning, our class sizes and student schedules will return to “normal” this Fall. This means we will not limit the size of classes and cohorts, and will decrease our focus on minimizing the overlap between cohorts.

UPPS will have clear protocols to ensure strong communication around suspected or confirmed COVID cases. Generally, UPPS will follow guidance from the NYCDOE and the DOHMH and rely on knowledge of how DOE’s Situation Room operates with regards to contact tracing and quarantine for suspected cases, confirmed cases, and exposures within the school staff and student body.

Staff Expectations for Contact Tracing

- UPPS leaders, and every adult on campus, will need to ensure careful class rosters for all student movements, and teachers will need to ensure accurate attendance so that contact tracing can be performed.
 - Middle: Instructional blocks and movements should maintain clear rosters. Students should be assigned tables during the lunch period, and rosters and records should be kept for times where cohorts mix or gather.
 - High: Instructional blocks and movements should maintain clear rosters. Students do not need to be assigned tables during the lunch period. Rosters should be kept for times when students are under teacher supervision. Students will need to be informed and be educated about how COVID spreads, what constitutes a close contact, and the importance of self-reporting accurately.
- In settings of student discipline or pull out that cause groups to mix that might not otherwise, staff must keep careful records of who they are in contact with, and students who occupy the shared space, for more than 10 min.

Key Definitions and Protocols:

Term and Definition	Protocol	Criteria for Return to School
<p>Suspected Case <i>Individuals who fail the at-home health screening, fail the temperature screening, or who develop symptoms while at school</i></p>	<p>If a suspected case is identified at school, students are asked to go to the health exclusion room and wait for guardian pick-up. Staff members are asked to go home.</p>	<p>All suspected cases must get a COVID-19 test in order to return to school.</p> <p>If the individual received a positive COVID-19 test, the individual must quarantine for 10 days AND be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving. AND All confirmed cases must provide a negative COVID-19 test in order to return to school.</p> <p>If the individual received a negative COVID-19 test (saliva, nose, or throat swab test) since the onset of symptoms, the individual must have be fever free for 24 hours and overall symptoms are improving</p>
<p>Confirmed Case <i>Individuals who have a laboratory confirmed positive COVID-19 test results.</i></p>	<p>If a confirmed case is identified in an individual at school, the school will isolate the physical classroom of the confirmed case until dismissal. Students in that classroom</p> <p>If a confirmed case is identified outside of school, that person cannot come into school.</p>	<p>If the individual received a Positive COVID-19 test, the individual must quarantine for 10 days AND be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving. AND All confirmed cases must provide a negative COVID-19 test in order to return to school.</p>
<p>Exposure to a Confirmed Case <i>Individuals who have come into close contact (defined below) with someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19</i></p>	<p>If a person is in close contact with someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19 while in or outside of school, they should follow the appropriate criteria detailed to the right.</p> <p>When the school becomes aware of a confirmed case, the school will provide written notification to the families of the students who were in close contact during school hours.</p>	<p>Individuals who are at least 12 years old, vaccinated, and not showing symptoms will continue to attend school in-person. Out of an abundance of caution, these students are encouraged to take a COVID-19 test 3 to 5 days after exposure.</p> <p>Individuals who are at least 12 years old, vaccinated, and showing symptoms will be directed to quarantine for 10 calendar days. On Day 5 of their quarantine, students may take a COVID-19 test, and with a negative result, return to attending school in-person after Day 7.</p> <p>Unvaccinated will be directed to quarantine for 10 calendar days. On Day 5 of their quarantine, students may take a COVID-19 test, and with a negative result, return to attending school in-person after Day 7.</p>

Close Contact:

UPPS will use the Center for Disease Control’s definition of close contact

- Adults and Staff: someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period
- In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time.

Contact Tracing:

If someone is determined to be a close contact by UPPS staff or the NYC partners we will work with, or if someone is contacted via the New York contact tracing program and told that they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, and are told to quarantine, they should do so.

Response Protocol for Suspected and Confirmed Cases

- For any of the above, UPPS staff will implement a normed response protocol that will:
 - Communicate cases to the Department of Health and ensure that they can take appropriate contact tracing measures. UPPS will support local health departments in contact tracing efforts using the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.
 - Inform relevant stakeholders, while taking measures to protect the privacy of students and staff members.
 - Require 10-day quarantine for any unvaccinated who was exposed in close contact to a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19. On Day 5 of their quarantine, students may take a COVID-19 test, and with a negative result, return to attending school in-person after Day 7.
 - Coordinate with the local health department regarding discharge from isolation and return to school.

School Closures and Additional Measures

While we aim to minimize the risks to the health of our community and to prevent the spread using the already detailed measures, University Prep recognizes that it is likely inevitable that we will have a case of COVID-19 in our school community. Given this, we will follow NYC DOHMH and Situation Room protocols for both of our facilities.

UPPS will rely on DOHMH guidance in order to determine the safety of re-opening doors to students and staff:

- University Prep will coordinate with the local health department regarding quarantine of individuals and length of closure of the school

We are optimistic and hopeful that our multi-faceted approach will keep our kids and staff safe. Should additional measures be needed, UPPS will consider increased social distancing and cohorting/limiting movements more strictly than we currently do in our school schedules and daily operations (ex. classroom transitions, mixed class tutoring groups, lunch in the cafeteria).

Staffing Policies & Procedures

University Prep recognizes our Staffing & Support plans need to be flexible and incorporate the needs not only of our students and their families, but also the needs of teachers and staff members, who we believe are the most important assets we have in pursuit of our mission. We recognize that all staff members will have unique needs and perspectives as we return to school, and we are committed to working with each staff member to meet them. Given the nature of COVID-19, we anticipate specific considerations will need to be made for the groups outlined below and we aim to be proactive in planning and problem-solving for any concerns.

Below you will find more information and actions available for:

- I. Accommodation Requests/Medical Exemptions
- II. Sick Days & Sick Leave

I. Accommodation Requests/Medical Exemptions

All staff members are expected to return to work in-person. We know that some staff members may have accommodation requests based on their individual needs in order to fully execute their job responsibilities in-person, and we will do our best to respond to those accommodations requests in a reasonable and equitable manner.

To Submit an Accommodation Request:

Accommodation requests must be submitted in writing to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). An accommodation request is considered fully received when all required medical documentation is submitted in writing, where applicable. All accommodation requests should be submitted to Mayreni Arias at Marrias@uppublicschools.org.

The COO will coordinate on behalf of staff members with Principals and Directors of Operations to approve/deny accommodation requests. Approval or denial of the request will be made to staff members by the COO. If the accommodation request is denied, the staff member's options will be discussed.

It is unlikely that we will be able to approve any virtual work accommodation requests. In those instances, staff members are encouraged to open dialogue with their school leaders in conjunction with the COO to identify if any additional adjustments may be available.

Please note:

- Employees requesting accommodation should be prepared to share documentation from a medical professional addressing the following information:
 - How the disability creates a limitation
 - How the requested accommodation will effectively address the limitation

- Whether another accommodation could solve the issue
- How the proposed accommodation will enable the employee to continue performing the job's essential functions
- Accommodation requests may be denied if deemed unreasonable, that is, if approving the accommodation request would otherwise place an undue hardship on University Prep's ability to operate or fulfill its operations.
- School leaders may be able to fulfill accommodation requests without undue hardship by making scheduling adjustments. In doing so, school leaders will ensure that workloads remain evenly distributed among all team members such that fulfilling the accommodation request will not place an undue hardship or outsized workload on other employees.
- In general, school leaders require a minimum of three (3) school days to appropriately staff and plan for a temporary shift in staffing and responsibilities due to agreed upon accommodations. We encourage staff to share full accommodation requests as soon as possible, as school leaders are unable to plan staffing on incomplete information, or information that has not been fully vetted by the COO.
- More information may be found through the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#).

III. Sick Days & Sick Leave

Part A

- As of September 1, 2021, all staff members have earned all 10 paid sick leave (CAR) days for the 2021-22 school year.
- <subject to negotiation> UPPS will give an additional 5 CAR days for covid related absences this year only. These CAR days cannot be "banked" and carried over into next year.
- Employees can find their up-to-date CAR day balance by logging into basicpay.
- Staff should email hsabsence@uppublicschools.org or msabsence@uppublicschool.org if they need to be absent for any reason.
- Should staff ask or be required to quarantine by a health professional for an extended period of time, please inform your Principal, and DOO.
- If an employee exhausts their CAR days, NY state has issued guidance providing for up to 14 days of paid, job-protected sick leave for any employee asked to quarantine or recover as a result of coronavirus/COVID-19. More information is available [here](#).

Part B

- If an Employee is Experiencing COVID-19-Like Symptoms
 - If a staff member is experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms, as defined by the CDC, or living in the same household as someone experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms, that staff member must not report to work or be around any University Prep staff members or students. The staff member should follow the normal call-in procedures.

- Staff member should immediately contact their healthcare provider and arrange for COVID-19 testing.
- Individuals or a designated family member should communicate with their manager and follow the advice of their healthcare provider.
- Testing Positive for COVID-19
 - Any staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, lives with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, and/or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 is required to immediately follow these steps:
 - Communicate with their school leaders about their situation
 - Quarantine themselves per the policies defined above.
 - Individuals or a designated family member should communicate with their administrator and follow the advice of their healthcare provider. As with all health information, this information is treated as confidential.

COVID-19 Safety Coordination

UPPS designates Mayreni Arias, Chief Operating Officer, as the COVID-19 safety coordinator for the organization. The safety coordinator’s responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school’s reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or “new normal” levels. At the campus level, COVID-19 safety coordinators are as follows:

- UP Middle: Krystal Fluellen, Director of Operations
- UP High: Ryan Sanoguet, Director of Operations

Training

- Training will be conducted regarding all of the above with the following stakeholders.
 - Directors of Operations and Principals will conduct trainings with teachers and staff for COVID related policies, practices, and procedures during Staff PreService.
 - Students will receive explicit instruction during the first two weeks about health and hygiene through the Advisory curriculum.
 - Families will receive communications and training around key principles.