

Propel Schools Health and Safety Plan

School District	Propel Charter Schools: Propel Homestead/ASHS, Propel McKeesport, Propel East, Propel Montour, Propel Hazelwood, Propel Northside, Propel Braddock Hills, Propel Pitcairn
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Pandemic Coordinator and Team

Pandemic Coordinator: Dr. Tina Chekan - CEO/Superintendent

Health and Safety Team

- Jaclyn Hoover - Senior Director of Human Resources
- Sonya Meadows - Senior Director of Strategic Communication and Enrollment
- Danielle Parson - Senior Director of Community Affairs
- Richard Snyder - Senior Director of School Operations
- Sandra Madden - Senior Director of Data, Reporting and Compliance

Input has been gathered from all stakeholders through a variety of methods including surveys, focus groups and public comment.

Propel’s Commitment to Physical, Mental, and Emotional Wellness

Propel Schools remain committed to the physical, mental and emotional health of our staff and our scholars. We are accountable for following best practices in workplace and educational space safety, when planning for staff and scholars to return to school. These best practices will include, but not be limited to:

- Sanitizing and cleaning
- Conducting routine, regular health checks including processes for ensuring safety and wellness
- Maintaining medical privacy while following CDC guidelines for pandemics

Additional supports as school buildings and administrative offices reopen may include:

- Addressing concerns, fears, and anxieties
- Professional development and virtual Absorb courses regarding health and wellness

Core Response Protocol

Face Coverings in School Entities

General Masking Requirement

Face coverings are optional in all Propel School buildings and offices. Each educator, scholar, staff, or visitor working, attending, or visiting a school building or office has the option to wear a face covering should they so choose.

In addition, any scholars who present symptoms of COVID-19 after arrival at school may be given a face covering to wear either until a family member picks them up or throughout the remainder of the day.

Public Transportation and School Buses

Scholars are expected to follow the face-covering guidelines as indicated on public transportation or their resident district school buses.

Scholar and Staff Hygiene and Disease Prevention

Members of the Propel community are to follow the below essential steps to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home. Practice social distancing.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth or disposable face covering or mask while in public.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home when sick. Staff members must follow policies in the Employee Handbook.

Wellness for Scholars, Families and Staff

This pandemic may have been a traumatic event for some scholars, families and staff. We must assure that our scholars and staff are feeling safe and supported to return to school and work.

Scholars: Propel is committed to whole-scholar wellness, and the Propel Partners in Wellness (PPIW) program and Crew classes will be leveraged to ensure that scholars are receiving the supports that they need. PPIW classroom lessons will be delivered by Prevention Specialists at all grade levels. The existing backpack feeding program is being evaluated for expansion beyond elementary school scholars to ensure that all scholars have access to nutritious meals. Additional partners are being identified to build a uniform stockpile at all schools with the awareness that families may experience economic challenges as a result of the pandemic that prevents them from purchasing scholar uniforms.



Families and Community: Family and community engagement will continue to occur through both in-person and virtual events, including School Community Council (SCC) meetings.

Staff: Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available. All staff have access to Life Solutions which allows for up to 6 sessions for each concern the staff member, or any member of their household, has. In addition to individual sessions, Life Solutions has many courses available online for staff covering over 40 different topics. The telephone number and information to access Life Solutions can be found on this document: [Life Solutions](#). Staff can also access Life Solutions programming through the Northside Wellness Center. Propel will be offering a "Propel Your Health!" Wellness Initiative during the 2022-23 school year that will focus on both activity and mental health.

Privacy Protection

Propel will continue to follow existing policies regarding Privacy Protection including the Personally Identifiable Information Policy, FERPA requirements as outlined in the Scholar and Family Handbooks and [HIPAA Medical Privacy Policy](#).

Athletics Health and Safety

Propel will follow PIAA guidance regarding health and safety protocols for the 2023-24 school year. At this time, face coverings are not required for those participating in athletic games, practices and training sessions. Propel will require that all scholars participating in Propel sports teams complete the PIAA CIPPE packet, which includes a "SUPPLEMENTAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, WAIVER AND RELEASE: COVID-19" section.

Essential Staff

Essential staff ensure the equitable provision of multiple life-sustaining services to scholars and families. Propel defines the following as essential staff: Operations including Food Service and Custodial staff, Information Technology, Senior Leaders, Directors, School Leadership Teams and other designated staff as approved by the Pandemic Response Team. If Propel is required to transition to remote or hybrid learning due to changing circumstances, essential staff may be called to work a full schedule on-site depending on the circumstances to support scholar nutrition, facility maintenance, remote instruction, and other critically required functions.

Technology Devices

Propel will again have 1:1 devices during the 2022-23 school year with Chromebooks for 3rd-12th graders and tablets for KG-2nd graders. Families with scholars in 3rd-12th will be required to agree to the Chromebook Lending Agreement and sign off digitally using Script. KG-2nd families will have a separate iPad Agreement that will be signed digitally using Script. Electronic signature can be completed on a smartphone in the event that the family lacks access to a computer. If the family is unable to access a smartphone, the family will be connected with a member of the Technology Team for next steps. Signed Technology Loan Agreements will be saved by the Director of Technology with viewable access for school staff members.

Device expectations will be outlined in the Chromebook Lending Agreement and iPad Agreement. All scholars grades KG through 12th grade will be expected to take their devices home after school

every day for charging. Those scholars will be expected to arrive at school the next day with a fully charged device.

Flexible Instructional Days

Propel has received PDE approval for the use of Flexible Instructional Days (FIDs). These days may be used for unplanned school closure reasons such as weather.

Building Operations, Logistics and Social Distancing

Ventilation

Propel's school building ventilation systems utilize fresh air recirculation in the use of our HVAC systems. Propel meets all national building code requirements for HVAC systems in public schools.

Visitor Policy

Propel will be permitting limited visitor access in accordance with the Building Visitation Policy outlined in the Scholar and Family Handbooks.

Field Trips

Propel recognizes that closing the experience gap is a key aspect of programming, and to that end, field trips will be permitted during the 2022-23 school year, provided that scholars and school staff follow the Health and Safety requirements outlined in this plan and the health and safety requirements at the field trip venue.

Cleaning and Sanitization

Cleaning Procedures at School and Administrative Office Facilities

The Propel Operations Team has implemented an updated and robust custodial cleaning/sanitizing program to ensure that our buildings are ready to receive scholars each day in a safe and nurturing environment.

Custodial Staff will use hospital grade, CDC-approved disinfectants and color coded cleaning tool systems to prevent cross contamination when cleaning. Custodial Staff will ensure:

- All restroom soap dispensers are in good working condition and are supplied - [Restroom Cleaning Log template](#)
- All hand sanitizer units are full
- Cleaning checklist is completed and signed - [School Custodian's Job Description/Duties](#) are outlined here and include cleaning frequency by room

Classroom educators and other Propel staff will be provided with disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer.

Scholar Training

The school nursing team will visit all classrooms to conduct training on proper hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, and other important health topics. The lesson plan is [linked here](#).

Staff and Scholar Illness

Staff and Scholar Illness and Expectations Regarding Staying Home

The Scholar and Family Handbook provides guidance on "When to Keep Your Child Home from School." Both staff and scholars are expected to follow this guidance.

The Allegheny County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided the following guidelines:

- Your child should not be sent to school hoping that he or she will feel better after arriving.
- Your child should be kept home following an overnight bout of nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea and watched for further symptoms.
- Your child should remain home if he/she has had a temperature of 100 degrees or higher. A child should have a normal temperature for 24 hours or as long as outlined in current CDC guidance without fever reducing medicines before returning to school.

Returning to School After Exhibiting Symptoms of or Having a Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Staff and scholars with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions before returning to school. Staff and scholars with fever or symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19 and no known direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 may return to school when they are asymptomatic and have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine or have confirmation of an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that explains the COVID-19-like symptom(s).

Propel Schools will follow the latest guidance on release from isolation for both staff and scholars. Test results and/or doctor's notes for scholars must be shared with the school nurse, and the school nurse will communicate with the Principal. Test results and/or doctor's notes for staff members must be shared with the appropriate HR representative.

Learning Schedule

All Propel Schools will follow a 5-day per week, in-person learning schedule for all scholars and staff. We know that scholars experience maximum learning and growth when they engage with in-person, in-school instruction.

100% Remote Learning Protocol or Hybrid Learning Protocol **will not be offered as a choice for families** in the upcoming school year. This protocol will **only** be utilized in cases of weather-related or other emergency conditions, including guidance received from the Governor of Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Department of Health or the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). If these conditions should ever occur, you will receive notification from us regarding specific details and processes.