



## **COVID-19 RISK MANAGEMENT & COMMUNITY PLAN**

Please review the following information on how we can work together to minimize risk for all individuals in our community. It is critical that all community members intending to participate in any in-person instruction or activities are committed to upholding the guiding principles of this plan as we move into the fall term.

### **OVERVIEW**

As you read through this document, please keep the following in mind:

- This is a living document. Explorations Academy will update and adjust policies based on the evolving health situation and the evolving guidance from the CDC, state, and local health departments. We will keep families informed of any changes.
- Explorations Academy has established a COVID-19 Task Force whose members represent perspectives from the medical field, public health, teachers, and parents. The COVID-19 Task Force will continually monitor and suggest means of mitigating risk, particularly for those students who will be participating in in-person instruction at Explorations Academy. Metrics will be assessed on an ongoing basis and recommendations will be made based upon available data.
- The precautionary measures described in this document may catch people who display symptoms of COVID-19, but cannot eliminate the possibility of asymptomatic, yet potentially contagious, people present at the school or participating in an in-person school-sponsored activity.
- Explorations Academy continues to navigate policies and procedures of many different federal, state, and local entities that will impact our program season. This handbook outlines the policies and procedures within Explorations Academy's control and influence. We will reach out to parents and guardians if decisions are made outside of our control that prohibit us from running programs.

### **IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION**

The following protocols are expected to change as we learn more and respond to new variants and best practices; however, we expect to offer uninterrupted five day per week classes with all of the below in-school safety procedures in place. Any scheduling or protocol changes will be announced a week in

advance to allow families to prepare for changes unless there is an emergency event that we feel requires an immediate response.

## **INTERNAL SAFETY MEASURES TO MINIMIZE RISK**

Explorations Academy staff will, at a minimum, read and understand our comprehensive COVID-19 Risk Management Plan and undergo training prior to the school year on how to implement COVID-19-related safety protocols, some of which are outlined here:

- Take temperatures of all students, faculty, and any visitors to the campus.
- Frequent hand sanitization and handwashing breaks.
- Provide at least 3 feet of space between students during indoor programming.
- Sanitize materials shared among students before, during, and after coursework.
- Follow and implement the below-mentioned pre- and in-school safety protocols.

## **PRIOR TO DAY ONE OF TERM REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILIES**

All students and/or parents/guardians opting into in-person instruction and/or attending an elective in-person field trip or group activity are required to read through this plan and acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by safety protocols outlined.

By showing up to the Explorations Academy campus and/or programming, your family is attesting that the program participant is not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

To keep our staff, students, and broader community safe, we reserve the right to turn students away if they are experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms and/or refuse to follow safety protocols as outlined here and communicated during programming.

In the event that a student cannot engage in program activities due to a confirmed or possible infection of COVID-19, full or prorated refund options will be made available for families. Refunds will not be offered for non-compliance with safety protocols unless they are health related.

## **IN-SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS**

As part of our COVID-19 safety plan, our check-in screening procedure follows an "attestation model." This means that by bringing your child(ren) to Explorations Academy programming, you are attesting that:

- The student(s) are symptom-free, including symptoms attributed to COVID-19 (as outlined below).
- A public health or medical professional has not recommended the participant(s) or household members self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine due to concerns about a COVID-19 infection.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19**

If a participant displays any of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 without an alternative explanation or pre-existing condition, the participant will not be able to attend the outing.

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- New, persistent dry cough
- Fever  $\geq 100.4$  F
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Nausea/vomiting
- Persistent new diarrhea (longer than 24 hrs)
- Congestion or runny nose (not related to seasonal allergies)
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Significant fatigue

Response to all situations with a potentially symptomatic individual will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Explorations Academy remains committed to promoting transportation options that minimize carbon dioxide emissions and keep the school accessible to all families so long as families remain committed to COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies while using said options. Unless otherwise stated, a staff member will use EA buses to transport students. While in operation, students will be spaced as far apart as is practical and windows will be open to allow for increased airflow. EA buses will be sanitized after each use to ensure the next staff and student passengers are provided with a clean environment.

## **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP**

Family members and students 2 years or older must wear a face covering while student(s) are dropped off or picked up and a temperature check is performed. Please remain on site until you receive a visual confirmation from Explorations Academy staff that your student has been cleared for in-person instruction. Families are welcome in the school building at drop off and pick up as long as they are symptom-free and wearing a mask.

## **IN-SCHOOL SUPPLY NEEDS & CONSIDERATIONS**

Supplies: All students participating in in-person instruction or attending any in-person school activity should now bring:

- Preferably a properly fitted N95 or KF94 mask as a first choice
- Cloth masks of any kind are not as effective against Omicron it is acceptable to wear a tight fitted, multiple layer cloth masks as an alternative
- A cloth face covering that meets the below-mentioned guidelines
- Personal hand sanitizer
- All items labeled as is possible (masking tape and permanent marker is fine) to reduce possibility of students touching other students' materials

Handwashing: All students and staff will wash hands as directed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Due to the nature of any outdoor learning opportunities, there may be times when it makes more sense to use hand sanitizer rather than soap and water. Each student and staff member will carry their own hand sanitizer, labeled with the student or staff name. Staff will also carry backup hand sanitizer along with other safety materials.

At a minimum, appropriate hand cleaning will occur:

- Every morning as soon as students and staff arrive.
- Before and after all snack and meal times.
- Before and after going to the bathroom (including changing menstrual products).
- After blowing your nose, sneezing, coughing, or touching eyes.
- After touching high-touch surfaces (railings, doorknobs, counters, etc.).

Face coverings: All staff and students participating in any in-person activities will be required to wear appropriate face coverings for the duration of the school day or activity. Face coverings will only be removed by students for eating, drinking, and hygiene.

Families are asked to provide their own masks for students, but if families cannot provide their own masks, Explorations Academy will provide the student a face covering. Below are the requirements for

appropriate face coverings, who should not wear face coverings, and instructions for expected mask sanitation:

Cloth face coverings should:

- Cover the mouth and nose,
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
- Be secured with ties or ear loops,
- Include multiple layers of fabric,
- Allow for breathing without restriction,
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.
- Not have any valves (which increase air being expelled from the user),
- Not be a “gaiter” style mask, and
- Not drape or otherwise obscure staff members' ability to ascertain a seal.

To comply with proper mask sanitation, staff and students are expected to wear a clean mask each day of in-person activity.

Staff and students can either wash their cloth face covering between days of in-person activity OR use a different clean mask each day. Wash masks with detergent and hot water and dry on a hot cycle.

## **COMMONS AND OTHER PUBLIC SPACES**

The Commons and all bathrooms will be limited to a reduced number of students to promote appropriate social distancing. Signage indicating the appropriate number of students will be posted in relevant common spaces. Students will be provided dedicated lockers to store their belongings and may access these lockers throughout the day as necessary.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

No food may be consumed within class and no sharing of food will be permitted. Students are permitted to drink bottled water in class if a straw is used and sips are taken from a straw under their mask. Lunch will take place in designated places within and around the campus with assigned seating for potential contact tracing. Signage to indicate food-appropriate locations will be posted throughout the campus to allow multiple options and increased social distancing ability.

## **TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS**

Travel increases your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. Students and staff who leave the state or country to travel are held to the testing and isolation standards regarding exposure/symptoms as outlined in this document.

## **STUDENT OR STAFF SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS WHILE AT SCHOOL**

Explorations Academy will have a response and communication plan in place that includes communication with staff, families, and the Whatcom County Department of Health in the event that a student or staff member exhibits COVID-19 symptoms while at school. Explorations Academy will work with the Whatcom County Department of Health to determine appropriate potential school closure, testing, and isolation measures that should be taken.

Explorations Academy will make sure that teachers and students stay home or immediately go home if they feel or appear sick. Students or staff who feel or appear sick will be separated from other students and staff to help prevent transmission of illness. In the event a student becomes ill while at school, faculty will notify Administrative persons, and Administration will contact the student's family to request immediate pick-up from the campus or off-site location.

Students or staff who have been ill or have been in close contact with someone who is ill will be required to rapid test onsite and allowed to stay with a negative result. Symptomatic students or staff may return to school 5 days after symptom onset and/or when 24 hours have passed without symptoms. Student or staff members must be fever free without use of antipyretic medications (i/e tylenol, aspirin, or ibuprofen) during the 24 hour period.

## **STUDENT OR STAFF TESTING POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

In the event that a student or teacher tests positive for COVID-19, the family or teacher should notify Administration immediately. Administration will immediately notify the COVID-19 Task Force and will work with the school's administration and faculty to notify all impacted families and faculty. A representative of the COVID-19 Task Force will notify the Whatcom County Department of Health.

Following a positive COVID-19 test for a faculty member/ teacher, the entire program of the student or teacher (i.e., Middle Years program or High School program) will:

- Make every attempt to stay in-person as long as staff coverage is available and provide onsite rapid testing as appropriate and while the supply chain is steady.

In the event of a positive test result, contract tracing will be performed by the Whatcom County Department of Health. Please see the Department of Health's website on Contact Tracing to learn more about the process and how it helps the community.

## **AGREEMENT OF RISK AND LIABILITY RELEASE FOR IN-PERSON SCHOOL AND ACTIVITIES/EVENTS**

Explorations Academy provides a Community Handbook annually for new and returning families. As part of the process this year, for our in-person programs, you will be required to sign that you have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the above-mentioned protocols.

### **COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY**

All students and families participating in in-person instruction and/or activities will be required to commit, in writing, to following CDC recommendations both inside and outside of school and abiding by Washington State's guidelines for whatever phase is implemented in a given county.

### **QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Head of School or any member of the Explorations Academy COVID-19 Task Force.