

UNITED FRIENDS SCHOOL

PANDEMIC HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN 2021-22



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE

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Rooted in the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace and Social Justice, Integrity, Community, Equality and Care for the Earth, United Friends School educates students to meet the rest of their lives with courage and conviction by engaging them in critical inquiry, solution-seeking, and participation in social action. United Friends School nurtures the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional growth of students and guides them to see the Light in themselves and in others.

United Friends School has made every effort to consider advice and guidance disseminated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania (CHOP), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), local public school districts, and our extensive peer network of educators & administrators from local Independent Schools. Our school’s administrative team has worked tirelessly with members of the faculty, board, staff, and parent community in considering how to best open our campus to learners. We recognize that what may seem good practice now may have to change once we put our procedures into practice when school begins. As such, please consider this to be a fluid document that will be updated during the pandemic.

Guiding Principles

- o The health and safety of United Friends School’s students, faculty, staff, and community will always be the first consideration in every decision that we make.

- o Our approach to opening UFS this year will be a risk reduction strategy to reduce exposure and limit transmission. There is no such thing as “zero risk” in anything we do, and certainly not during a pandemic.

- o Because the social and emotional benefits of responsibly welcoming students back to campus is crucial to their overall development, we place high value on reopening for all students in preschool through 8th grade, on a full schedule. Please understand that this

decision may need to be changed at any time due to the rapidly evolving nature of the pandemic.

Decision-Making

Our Health & Safety Plan is a collective “best effort” at anticipating the needs of our community in a very complex time. We continually monitor the prevalence and spread of COVID-19 in our local area. Should cases in our community rise, or under the direction of state or federal mandates, UFS may have to move to remote learning or make modifications to this plan at a moment’s notice. The need for patience, understanding, support, and flexibility is something that we must ask of our parents, faculty and staff.

Health & Safety Training

All faculty, staff, and parents are thoroughly trained in our updated health & safety policies and procedures. This is an all-hands approach and training will be ongoing throughout the school year.

Teachers will continue to facilitate and reinforce this learning at school. Children are adaptable and capable of learning these new processes. With much practice at home and at school, we are confident that they will become the experts in your family.

Communications

We expect that there will be changes to our plans and procedures along the way, as conditions continue to evolve in our area and new guidance is given by the CDC, state and local health departments. Parents will be informed of any changes to our plan in a timely manner. In the event of a COVID-19 positive case within our community, the health department will be notified and inform guidance given to families on quarantining procedures. As of now, all contact tracing will be performed by the Bucks County Health Department.

An all-school Parent Orientation is planned for Thursday, September 2, 2021 at 7pm. During

this zoom presentation, we will walk you through the 2021-22 Health & Safety plan. Families will be able to submit their questions via Zoom's chat feature.

Social Contract

United Friends School is working hard on mitigation strategies to provide our faculty and students a safe campus. Reopening our campus is highly dependent on the partnership of the community members. Although the risk of viral transmission cannot be completely eliminated, it can be lessened significantly by a social contract between all members of our community. Our unified commitment to adhere to this contract will be critical to help keep our in-person learning environment open as much as possible.

We expect all staff and families to be respectful of each other, to collectively safeguard the health and safety of others, and to abide by the policies, procedures, and orders related to COVID-19 implemented by the state, county, and school.

The following are community expectations in anticipation of reopening and must continue throughout in-person learning.

- Use and reinforce mask-wearing, physical distancing, handwashing, and meticulous hygiene both inside and outside of school.
- Limit exposure by avoiding large gatherings or situations in which people are not observing recommended behaviors, such as wearing masks and practicing physical distancing.
- Observe routine medical practices, e.g., routine annual checkups, immunizations, and flu vaccines.
- (For faculty & staff) Stay home when you are sick or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- (For families) Keep your children home when they, or any member of your household, are sick or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

- Partner with faculty & staff to help children learn the Health and Safety protocols.
- Limit the personal items your child brings onto campus each day and reinforce policies around not sharing of food, supplies, and other items with other students.
- Notify UFS regarding sick household members or if any household members have had close contact (less than 6 ft for more than 15 min) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Depending on the situation, your student may have to stay home for a period of time based on our most current medical advice.
- Notify the school and undergo testing if you suspect your child or a household member has COVID-19 and await test results from home.
- Be kind, attentive, and helpful to anyone around who may be in need of support in following safety health practices. Provide respectful and gentle safety reminders and suggestions to those who may need them, and respond graciously when others provide them.

Please understand that each of us is individually responsible for the common good of the school community. We strongly suggest that all community members adhere to our social contract in the 10 days prior to returning to campus. UFS will proactively communicate and, as necessary, take administrative action regarding the observance and enforcement of these expectations which may include a student or staff member not being able to participate in in-person learning / teaching.

Symptom Monitoring

All families should closely monitor their child for [symptoms synonymous with Covid-19](#). **We must emphasize the importance of staying home when sick or when feeling run down.** Gone are the days that one can give their child Tylenol and send them to school. If your child becomes sick with one of the three key COVID-19 symptoms (fever, difficulty breathing, cough) during the school day, he/she will be isolated in a designated room until a parent arrives. The ill child must adhere to UFS's *Exclusion from and Return to School* policy.

Hand washing

Students and adults will establish good hand washing routines from our first day and wash their hands at least: upon arrival each day; before and after eating; before and after outdoor recess; before and after exiting the classroom.

Masks

Masks are mandatory for all adults as well as children in Preschool through 8th grade. Mask breaks will be built into the school day and will be scheduled by the individual classroom teachers.

We have gotten a few questions about the best masks for children to wear while at school. Your child's mask should fit **snugly** around their mouth and nose at all times. Surgical masks are highly recommended. Cloth masks should be at least 2 layers. Gaiters are not recommended.

Cloth masks must be washed after each school day. Children should always carry **at least TWO** fresh/clean masks with them to school each day in their backpack.

On the first day of school, children should also bring in 2 extra masks, labeled, in a Ziploc baggie that their teacher will store in the classroom.

Distancing

We have gotten creative with our classroom layouts and our classroom assignments. Our indoor instructional spaces have been configured to ensure proper spacing of at least three feet between students who will be seated at desks and/or tables.

This overall in-person strategy relies on maintaining self-contained groups, or "pods", throughout the day to minimize interactions and potential spread of infection. Children will

remain with their classmates in “pods” throughout the day. During outdoor recess, smaller pods will be combined. Teachers will work to maintain the social distance requirements.

Testing

United Friends School is once again partnering with Anywhere Testing & Phi Life Sciences to conduct pool testing to screen all members of our in-person learning community. Anywhere Testing & Phi Life Sciences partners with many other independent K-12 schools in our area and across the country. This is the same form of testing we did in January and UFS will absorb the cost of all testing.

The saliva-based PCR test for students, faculty and staff is non-invasive and self-administered on campus. I have attached testing instructions and an overview of the program below. Please carefully review all information and testing instructions. **Note: There is no eating or drinking for at least 30 minutes prior to testing.**

Testing is mandatory to ensure every member of our in-person learning community is screened. We strongly encourage you to participate in our testing on September 9th, but if that is not possible for any reason, you can elect to pursue your own PCR test dated on or after September 9th. Proof of a negative test must be provided to the School in order to return to school.

UFS recognizes that testing provides a limited benefit as it gives a snapshot on a single date that will help detect any virus present in the community at that particular time. Along with all of our other mitigation measures, including each family’s commitment to our school’s social contract, we believe that testing provides an additional layer of confidence during this time of increasing community transmission.

The lab will provide the results directly to you, via email. They will also be sent to me directly via a HIPPA-compliant delivery system. If your child’s results are positive, it is your

responsibility to contact your family doctor for a follow-up. Further instructions about quarantining will be provided to you by the health department and the School. UFS does NOT follow Bucks County's *Modified Quarantine* for a positive case.

Cleaning & Disinfection

UFS's maintenance crew has been busy getting the buildings ready for our students, faculty, and staff to return. All classrooms, toys, manipulatives, materials, and common areas have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Each evening, enhanced cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched surfaces (with [Saniquat](#)) will be conducted. When/if a Covid-19 (or flu, stomach virus) case is confirmed, our maintenance crew will utilize the electrostatic cleaning machine to disinfect the entire affected classroom/s.

Ventilation/Air Handlers

Our maintenance crew have installed the optimal filters and replace them on a regimented schedule. Windows & doors will remain open to improve air flow. We keep the windows open during all seasons, so please plan your child's clothing accordingly.

Co-Curriculars

Art: Stacie will travel with her art cart for Elementary art classes. Middle School classes will be held in two groups in our art room.

ITL/Library: Students will visit the library this year.

PE: PE will be held outdoors in our 10th Street parking lot.

Music: Music will be held in the "Big Room". Any shared materials will be thoroughly disinfected between classes.

Spanish: Spanish will take place in individual classrooms.

Field Trips

We are hopeful to be able to offer select outdoor field trips this year, up to the discretion of individual teachers and with the approval of the Head of School.

After-School Program

UFS will continue to provide an after-school program for those families that need one. That being said, we will not be able to maintain the “pods” that will be in existence during the school day, so students who attend the after-school program will not be segregated from each other. Those who attend this program will be spending as much time as possible outdoors. As a result, it would be best if we keep the number of students as low as possible, so please consider exploring other after-school options if you do not absolutely need the program.

Sports

We recognize the vital importance of physical activity and will be offering a twice-weekly soccer clinic for 2nd-4th graders and a once-weekly running club for 5th-8th graders.

Visitors

Visitors will have limited access to campus and must make arrangements with our Front Office Manager. The campus will be restricted to students, faculty, staff, and only essential visitors such as delivery persons and contracted service people. Parents will not be routinely allowed into buildings as we begin the school year.

Lunch/Snacks

Children will eat in their classrooms or outdoors. All food and beverages should be sent in from home. Lunch and snack will be the only times during the day that our students will be unmasked indoors. We have been advised to continue utilizing quiet lunches. Teachers will play podcasts, music, educational videos and/or read to their students to promote a calm environment that minimizes the spread of respiratory droplets.

Arrival

Doors open at 7:45am. Masks must be worn at all times while on-campus.

Preschool

The Mott class students should be dropped off at the entrance to the small, gated playground behind the main school building, off the playground. Park in the 10th Street parking lot (or on 10th Street) and walk your family directly to check in. One of our Mott teachers will be on the playground ready to greet your child no earlier than 7:45am. Older siblings can then walk themselves to the front door where an administrator will greet them.

Elementary & Middle School

For all other grades, drop-off will run as a car line. Cars may drop off their children beginning at 7:45am. One of our administrators will open the door each morning to welcome your child into the building. We cannot accept children inside of the building before this time, nor should they be left unattended.

Dismissal

Begins at 2:50pm. Masks must be worn at all times while on-campus. ***Two placards will be distributed to each family to display in their car window at pick-up. Placards must be conspicuously displayed for a child to be safely released to their designated adult.***

Preschool* (and siblings)

Families arrive for pick-up by **2:50pm**. You will use the 10th Street parking lot to park your car, display your placard, and wait for your child/ren to be dismissed to you at your car. Caretakers should wait at their cars. **1pm Preschool pick-up at the Broad Street driveway door (by Mott Classroom).*

Middle School (without younger siblings)

Families will arrive for pick up at **3:00pm**. Pull up to the Middle School entrance located on 10th Street. Display your placard and your child will be dismissed right to your car.

Elementary & Remaining Middle School

· Families with last names: A-L

Families arrive for pick-up at **3:00pm**. You will use the driveway entrance accessible off West Broad Street to pull in and like drop-off, will wait for your child/ren to meet you at your car. Caretakers should park and remain in their cars.

· Families with last names: M-Z

Families arrive for pick-up at **3:00pm**. You will use the 10th Street parking lot to park your car, display your placard, and wait for your child/ren to be dismissed to you at your car. Caretakers should wait at their cars.

Transportation

Holly Sharp, our Front Office Manager is actively collaborating with the school districts and will be sharing more information once we have more concrete plans from the districts. We encourage families to consider alternatives including drop off and pick up by the family or a caregiver if that is an option.

Vaccinations

UFS ***strongly*** recommends that all eligible community members be vaccinated against Covid-19. If your child is vaccinated, please forward a copy of their vaccination card to Roger.

Exclusion From and Return to School Policy

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| <p>COVID-19 Symptoms</p> <p><u>Two</u> of the following symptoms: chills, fatigue, myalgia, headache, sore throat, congestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or new loss of taste or smell</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-OR-</p> <p><u>One</u> of the following symptoms: fever (100 or higher), cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing</p> | | <p>Individual should be tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>If test result is negative, return to school 24 hours after symptoms are no longer present.</p> <p>If test result is positive or individual is unable/refuses to get tested, may return to school after:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 days with no fever -AND- • Improvement in symptoms -AND- • 10 days since symptoms first appeared | |
| <p>Positive COVID-19 Test</p> | <p>WITH SYMPTOMS</p> <p>May return to school after</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 days with no fever and • Improvement in symptoms and • 10 days since symptoms first appeared | <p>WITHOUT SYMPTOMS</p> <p>May return to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 days after test was collected <p><i>*If symptoms develop during the 10 days, follow return to school guidance for positive test with symptoms</i></p> | |
| <p>Close Contact to Positive Case/Household Contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 6ft for 15 minutes or more • Household contact | <p>WITH SYMPTOMS</p> <p><i>Non-household contact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If test result is negative, return to school at least 7 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved. Test must be taken on or after Day 5 • If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for positive test with symptoms <p><i>Household contact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for positive test with symptoms | <p>WITHOUT SYMPTOMS</p> <p><i>Non-household contact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluded 7 days after last date of exposure to the person with Covid-19 PLUS a negative test taken on or after Day 5 <p><i>Household contact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household contacts are in quarantine until 7 days after household positive is released from isolation plus a negative test taken on or after Day 5 (after household contact is released from isolation) | |

Special thanks to those who contributed to our Pandemic Advisory Committee...

Daena Berdugo, Head of School & Parent
David Eldridge, Director of Advancement
Leslie Erhardt, Parent
Shonne Jurin, Faculty & Parent
Dr. Gretchen Maurer, Parent
Ann Manta, Trustee
Kathy Redding, Clerk of School Board
Holly Sharp, School Office Coordinator & Parent
Roger Sternfeld, Assistant Head of School
Kris Thompson, Trustee & Parent
Amy Wall, Faculty
Jane Walsh, Faculty
Meurcie Zignoli, Trustee

References

[CHOP PolicyLab Guidance for In-Person Education in K-12 Settings](#)

[CDC Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)

[PA DOH Isolation Information](#)