



OAK HILL
MONTESSORI
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook Addendum for COVID-19

August 2021

Version 2.0

Campus Opening Guidelines

The Oak Hill Administration Team and Faculty have been planning and preparing for the start of the new school year, continuing to prioritize the health and safety of our entire school community, and the purpose of this document is to outline the protocols and procedures that have been implemented in order to achieve that.

Our faculty and staff are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to campus. One very important point to keep in mind for families is that while we believe the risk is manageable and the socio-affective benefits for students will be significant, it would be impossible and impractical to state that there is no risk at all.

Our staff will use their professionalism to create classroom environments which - to the best of their ability and within the limitations that exist - promote maximum safety as outlined in this document. As such, we ask each family to read through what is outlined here very closely.

Please also note we will continue to add/modify this addendum as we receive more information. Families will be notified of any updates via News & Notes.

Family Role and Responsibility

It is important that everyone in our school take steps to reduce COVID-19 transmission, particularly to those at high risk, while balancing the need to maintain a strong community that effectively supports staff, students, and families. We will need to work together to ensure that everyone stays healthy.

- Monitor health and check temperatures before leaving home. A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher indicates a fever and the need to stay home.

- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. If you detect these symptoms, contact your health care provider immediately.

- Stay home when any family member is sick.

- Stay mindful in social settings, avoiding large groups or unnecessary activities and wear a mask in indoor spaces.

Oak Hill will monitor the community and school-level impact of COVID-19 on a regular basis in consultation with public health. We will maintain awareness of changes in viral activity in the community through continued review of the biweekly county-level case data. We respect the impact any closure or shift in learning model could have on the school community; making a change requires coordination and communication even when well thought-out plans are in place, and therefore will do so only when absolutely necessary.

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Key Information

According to CDC guidance, the key factors in minimizing the risk of infection and community spread of Covid-19 are:

- Cutting off the source of infection
- Cutting off the transmission route
- Improving one's resistance to infection (e.g. by sleeping and eating well, exercising, etc.)

Oak Hill's approach to minimizing risk is detailed below. We appreciate the understanding of all parents that protocols may evolve as we refine and analyze our practices on an ongoing basis.

Measures for Members of the Oak Hill Community

Student and Faculty Attendance

Students and faculty members who show any signs of illness should consult the MDH Decision Tree found on Oak Hill's Covid related webpage. Examples of symptoms include:

- a persistent cough
- a persistent runny nose
- a temperature > 100.4°F
- chills
- muscle pain
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of taste or smell
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- rash
- fatigue

If any member of the household exhibits any of the above symptoms, please refrain from coming to campus until such time as you have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours, without the aid of any medication.

If your child is not feeling well enough to come to school in the morning (COVID-related or not), we ask that they stay home the entire day. Please do not bring them to school mid-day.

Returning to the Oak Hill Campus

Arrival Procedure

We require that parents/caregivers take their child(ren)'s temperature prior to leaving home each morning. Should a child's temperature be 100°F or higher, please keep them at home.

- Toddler Community: Parents should park in the reserved parking area along Hodgson Road, near the building. We ask that you walk your child to the building and enter

through Door #1, where they will be greeted by their teacher for entry into the classroom.

- Children's House: To reduce congestion, we encourage parents to drop their children off at the curb whenever possible. The children will enter Door #1, where a staff member will be present to greet them. If you must bring your child to the door, please park your car, and walk with them into the courtyard.
- Elementary & Junior High Students: Parents may drop their children off at the curb, and students will enter through **Door #2 (Junior High), Door #4 (Lower Elem & Upper Elem)**.

We ask that all parents/caregivers wear a **non-vented** face mask for drop-off and pick-up.

The following arrival procedure will apply to all staff and students:

1. Transition from outdoor to indoor shoes prior to entering the classrooms
2. Handwashing upon entry to the classroom

Departure Procedure

Parents should refrain from entering the building for pick-up, and follow the appropriate pick-up procedures:

- Toddler Community: Parents should park their cars, and meet their children just outside the Door #1 where staff will greet you.
- Children's House, Elementary & Junior High: Using the pick-up line is the preferred option, and we encourage all parents to do so when possible. Simply place the provided name card in your window to keep the process moving efficiently.

Students will be dismissed from the same doors by which they have entered.

Parents on Campus

Parents and non-essential visitors are asked to not enter the school building on a regular basis. We do, however, recognize instances when entering will be necessary. This includes, but is not limited to: late arrival, early pick-up, appointments, or meeting with the teacher or other staff member.

Faculty

All faculty must complete the daily at-home health assessment before leaving home.

In addition, faculty must arrive on campus wearing a face mask. A face shield and reusable face masks will be provided by Oak Hill for each staff member; spare disposable masks will be available on-site if required.

Use of the Oak Hill Bus

Elementary staff and students can expect the following protocols and procedures for transportation in the school bus or van:

- Each passenger must wear a non-vented face mask and use the available alcohol-based sanitizer at the entrance upon boarding
- The high-touch areas on the bus will be sanitized after each trip

Safety Precautions on Campus

Multiple safety measures have been put in place according to the required and recommended practices published for schools by the Minnesota Department Of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). These practices are foundational to minimizing the risks of exposure to COVID-19 for students, staff, and families.

Masks

Non-vented face masks will be mandatory for all staff members, as well as all students ages 3 and up while indoors, regardless of vaccination status. As vaccines are currently only available for those 12 and older, we must view our school community as an unvaccinated population.

Handwashing

All staff and children will wash their hands:

- Upon arrival on campus, when moving from one area to another and before leaving the classroom.
- After diapering/toileting, coughing, sneezing, blowing/wiping noses, handling bodily fluids, garbage or animals, cleaning/sanitizing, plain-goggles, in the activity room and handling sick children.
- Before and after preparing or eating any food, giving medicine, water table and play dough use.

Where possible, older students will be asked to use a paper towel when turning the tap on and off themselves. Handwashing procedures are posted at sinks.

Handwashing will be with running water and liquid soap when available. Alternatively, a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol will be used. Hand sanitizer use will happen only under adult supervision and will be inaccessible to preschool children when not in use.

Hand sanitizers will be located in each classroom and in each shared space, i.e. bathroom, kitchen, reception area, school bus, etc. Please make sure to utilize hand sanitizers whenever hand washing is not feasible.

Lunch and Recess

Lunch and recess will be staggered and will take place in level cohorts. Any indoor common areas used throughout the day will be disinfected between cohorts.

In addition to a daily lunch, elementary and junior high families should also send a water bottle, clearly labeled with your child's first and last name and filled with only water. Students will keep drink bottles in their lockers or cubbies, and will be asked not to touch other students' personal items.

We ask that parents wash their child(ren)'s drink bottle thoroughly in warm, soapy water at the end of each day.

Illness at School

When a student presents with a temperature of 100.4°F or higher, a persistent cough or runny nose during the school day, a parent will be notified and the child will be kept in a safe, isolated area. Please make arrangements for students to be picked up within 30 minutes of notification.

Indoor isolation areas will be disinfected after each use, and remain closed off for at least 24 hours, whenever possible.

Oak Hill Facilities & Use of Physical Space

Ventilation Systems

HVAC systems in the school have been inspected for effectiveness and tuned for efficiency. We have installed bipolar ionization technology in all of our air handling units. While this technology has been a part of hospital settings for years, it is now an option for schools seeking safer ways to destroy Coronaviruses. During the system's cleaning process the NPBI technology attacks and kills viruses, mold spores and bacteria. The ions remove hydrogen from the pathogens, leaving them to die, and leaving behind clean and healthy indoor air. For more information, visit: <https://globalplasma.com/npbi/>.

Water

Each classroom is equipped with handwashing sinks and hand sanitizer, in addition to those located in common spaces. Sinks and surrounding areas will be disinfected throughout the day. Elementary bathrooms will utilize a touchless wash basin.

Drinking fountains will be capped and only water bottle stations will be in use at each end of the building for filling bottles and disposable cups.

Cleaning Schedule and Routine

Classrooms, including all high touch surfaces and used learning materials will be cleaned and disinfected by staff and by custodial crews in the evening. Frequently touched surfaces and objects include but are not limited to:

- Doorknobs and handles
- Stair / hand rails
- Classroom furniture
- Lunch tables and chairs
- Countertops
- Light switches
- Shared toys
- Shared remote controls
- Shared telephones
- Shared desktops
- Shared computer keyboards and mice
- Toilet door locks
- Toilet flush handles
- Hand sanitizer pumps
- Water faucets

All classrooms will be equipped with a kit of cleaning products. Students will be permitted to clean their own work area with a soap/detergent solution that is dispensed by the teacher. Surfaces will be *cleaned* before they are *disinfected*. Children will not come into contact with disinfectant spray.

Health Precautions Related to COVID Exposure

Planning for travel & return to school

Travel can increase your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

You and your travel companions (including children) may feel well and not have any symptoms, but you can still spread COVID-19 to family, friends, and community after travel.

Upon return from travel, it is recommended that family members complete a viral test 3-5 days after your trip and reduce non-essential activities for a full 7 days after travel, even if test results are negative. If you choose not to get tested, consider reducing non-essential activities for 10 days after travel.

Monitoring and Excluding for Illness

Families are expected to monitor their health and body temperature prior to leaving for school each day. If your child is registering a fever of 100.4 or higher, please keep them home and notify the school of their absence. If a temperature check at school shows a fever of 100.4 or higher, this will result in immediate isolation of a student from their peers and parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up the child. **Please make arrangements for students to be picked up within 30 minutes of notification.**

Handling Suspected or Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19

When a student or staff member develops any symptoms consistent with COVID-19:

- The student or staff member will be isolated while they wait to be picked up or until they are able to leave the facility on their own. We will ensure that they have hygiene supplies available, including a cloth face covering / face shield, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub.
- Staff who are monitoring the student or staff member with symptoms will wear a cloth face mask and practice social distancing. The space used for isolation will be closed off after the ill person leaves. We will wait 24 hours or as long as is feasible before disinfecting. Outside doors and windows and ventilating fans will be used to increase air circulation in the area.
- All areas used by the person who is sick, such as high-touch surfaces, and items they have touched (e.g., individual desk, cot, recently used toys, shared equipment) will be cleaned and disinfected.
- We have developed a contingency plan with our custodial vendor outlining practices and protocols for daily procedures as well as various scenarios when COVID-19 is suspected or identified in our building.

Any diagnosed case of COVID-19 must be immediately reported to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for monitoring. MDH will advise Oak Hill immediately on all next steps and direct our communications.

Oak Hill will follow the *Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs* (provided by the MN Department of Health) when deciding exclusion criteria to determine when sick children, staff or volunteers may return.

Oak Hill will ensure all parent or guardian, staff and volunteers contact information is up-to-date in our student information system. We will follow all guidance from MDH for when and how we should notify our community. Communication will be delivered via email through our student information system.