



Winter 2022 Health & Safety Policies and Procedures

Emerson is committed to promoting the safety and health of all staff, visitors, and students. In order to achieve this as safely as possible, we will be implementing the following policies for all children and adults planning to attend campus, whether they enter the building or not, even if for a brief amount of time. This document provides the guidelines as they relate to our on-campus activities for the start of the school year.

Please note that while this document follows the current guidelines set forth by the Washtenaw County Health Department, this information could change and develop as the school receives new information from local, state, and federal sources. Emerson reserves the right to implement different or additional policies as it deems necessary, and modifications will be communicated to the Emerson community in a timely fashion.

1. Arrival to campus (updated)

This year we will be asking families to conduct an at-home self-screening prior to arrival on campus.

The at-home screening will include the following questions:

- In the past 10 days, have you developed any two of the following symptoms? Runny nose, fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, chills, muscle or body aches
- Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past week?
- If unvaccinated, have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past week?

We kindly ask that should your child answer “yes” for any of these questions, that you keep them home until a negative COVID test is received (for unvaccinated students).

2. Arrival on campus and building entry

For this school year, we are encouraging volunteerism from our vaccinated parents and adults at the school. Parents may enter the building to support events and activities at the school, pick or drop their child (while remaining at the Main Office), or to drop off materials for your child and/or their classroom. We similarly ask that all adults planning to enter the building conduct the same at-home self-screening prior to arrival.

3. Masks (updated)

Facial coverings will be required at all times for all those inside the school regardless of vaccination status. Individuals on campus will be allowed to remove their masks during structured outdoor activities as directed by teachers. We will certainly support any individual's desire to remain masked while outside. Masks will be required during unstructured outdoor recess. We will reassess masking requirements as the school year progresses. Any change in the policy will be communicated with families ahead of time.

We highly recommend that facial coverings be disposable surgical, N95, KN95 or other high grade masks. Further recommendations on suitable masks are provided by the [CDC](#). As per CDC recommendations, facial coverings should cover the nose and mouth, and be secured under the chin. Masks with an exhalation valve or vent are not recommended. Here are a few good resources for purchasing high grade, KN95 kids masks - [Vida](#), [Lutema](#), [Wellbefore](#).

Every family will need to provide masks for students. While the school will provide a non-medical grade face covering for any individual requiring one to enter the building, we have a limited supply. Fabric designs should be appropriate per the dress code in our Family Handbook.

To read more about mask comparisons, you can read "[Some COVID masks are better than others. I Know - I'm the Mask Nerd](#)"

Anyone with questions regarding this requirement should contact the School Medical Assistant, [Francesca DiCesare](#) and/or Head of School, [Ed Hollinger](#).

4. Hygiene

Handwashing and/or hand sanitizing will be expected prior to arrival at school, before and after all visits to the playground, and after lavatory visits. The school will provide hand sanitizer for outdoor activities. Families are welcome to send a bottle of sanitizer for personal use by their students if they wish.

Restrooms will be supplied with soap and disposable paper towels. Everyone should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds. Everyone should refrain from touching their eyes or other parts of their face. Individuals should cough or sneeze into their elbows, or cover with a tissue, even if wearing a mask. Used tissues and paper towels should be disposed of in the trash.

Drinking fountains will not be in use. Students and staff should bring a personal labeled water bottle filled from home. For employees and those inside of the building, they may refill their bottles, if needed, from one of the many water coolers stationed throughout the school.

Individuals should not share personal items or supplies, and items should be stored separately from one another.

5. Physical distancing and grouping

As often as possible, we will work to ensure that students maintain a minimum of 3 feet of physical distance while at school (both inside and outside). Students will remain in their grade level groups throughout the majority of their day, and have limited opportunities to interact (while distancing) with members of other grade levels (i.e. recess, electives, and during transition times in the hallways).

6. Ventilation in the school

As often as possible, exterior doors and windows will be open to allow rooms to stay well ventilated with outside air. In addition, all school HVAC systems are equipped with MERV-13 filters, the highest grade possible with our current units. Each indoor classroom is also equipped with a portable HEPA filter that will run throughout the day.

Finally, we have increased the mobility of students throughout their day, by allowing them to move from homerooms (in Lower School) and classrooms (in Middle School) to other classrooms in the school. We have ensured that our Specials classrooms, Science Labs, and other shared spaces have all of the same mitigations as our other classrooms. Additionally, we will allow for some period of time between when one group leaves and another group enters a shared space. This additional mobility will allow for homerooms and classrooms to "air out" periodically throughout the day.

7. Cleaning and disinfecting

Surfaces touched during the course of a given day will undergo cleaning and disinfecting daily.

8. Eating on campus

As often as possible, students will be eating outside. Should students need to eat indoors, we have provided plexiglass dividers for each student in each classroom, and we will also work to ensure the greatest spacing possible in the classrooms. Students may use these dividers as needed while eating indoors. Plexiglass will be disinfected daily and prior to any repeated use. Middle school students will travel to the MS Commons area to eat lunch together as a grade level.

We are anticipating resuming a hot lunch program for our students. This will include daily meal deliveries to the school of pre-ordered, pre-labeled lunches for students in all grades. We also are planning to host bimonthly Pizza Lunches, similar to previous years.

9. Illness response (updated)

A general acknowledgment of risk is assumed as no environment can be guaranteed COVID-free. Anyone who is or becomes symptomatic will be isolated and sent home immediately. Our Medical Assistant will provide an isolated space adjacent to her office for anyone who is symptomatic. It will be kept distant from other workspaces.

Symptoms of note include runny nose, fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, chills, muscle or body aches.

Depending on the symptoms, symptomatic students will be required to take a rapid antigen test upon return. This test can be administered at school or at home prior to arrival. Results should be shared directly with the school prior to the start of the school day.

In the event of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis in our community, we will immediately contact the Washtenaw County Health Department, and we will coordinate with them, as well as our Risk Task Force regarding return to school, contact tracing, and extent of school closure. Classroom close contacts are determined by school administration, our Risk Task Force and the Washtenaw County Health Department. As a result of this guidance, we will make a determination as to the school's response, in order to ensure the safety of our community. We will follow all protocols relating to cleaning and disinfecting the affected areas of the school after a COVID-19 exposure/incident.

The Head of School will notify all families of any positive case within the Emerson community without identifying the individual.

10. Vaccination Expectations (added from Fall Return to School Plan)

Our priority this year is to keep our community healthy, both physically and social-emotionally. In order to do so, we are asking that all community members receive their COVID-19 vaccine as soon as they are age-eligible. All individuals will be asked to complete a Vaccination Status form. Through this form you will be asked to either attest to your child's vaccination or request an exemption based on any medical, closely held religious or conscientious belief. Parents can contact Head of School, [Ed Hollinger](#) with any questions regarding these expectations.

11. Quarantine Guidelines (added and updated from Fall Return to School Plan)

In the event of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis in our community, we will immediately contact the Washtenaw County Health Department, and we will coordinate with them, as well as our Risk Task Force regarding return to school, contact tracing, and extent of school closure. As a result of this guidance, we will make a determination as to the level of quarantine required (individuals, full classroom, full grade level, multiple grade levels, or the school), in order to ensure the safety of our community. We will follow all protocols relating to cleaning and disinfecting the affected areas of the school after a COVID-19 exposure/incident.

The need to quarantine as the result of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or confirmed exposure to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 (for an unvaccinated individual) still exists as a recommended practice by the Washtenaw County Health Department. In addition, as a school, we may choose to be more conservative than those recommendations, in order to protect the health and safety of our students and community.

Based on this, we will follow the guidelines and protocols below for those scenarios:

A positive diagnosis of COVID-19:

- Any individual (vaccinated or unvaccinated) who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 5 days before returning to school. Day Zero in this case is the date of the test that determined the positive diagnosis.
- An individual (vaccinated or unvaccinated) may return to school on Day 6 under the following conditions:
 - All symptoms have resolved, including being fever-free for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication).
 - The individual has tested negative on a rapid antigen test conducted by a lab (at-home rapid antigen tests are not acceptable for re-entry to school). That result must be provided to the school prior to their return.
 - The individual can ensure that they remain masked for the duration of their time at school, except during lunch and snack times.

A confirmed exposure to an individual with COVID-19:

1. Household contacts (considered high risk)
 - Individuals exposed at home (vaccinated and/or unvaccinated) need to quarantine for 5 days, and may return to school under the conditions listed above.
2. Classroom close contacts (considered low risk)
 - All vaccinated individuals are allowed to return to school and must monitor symptoms for 10 days.
 - All unvaccinated individuals must participate in the "test to stay" program during this period of quarantine (10 days).

10. Accountability and quality control

The above policies will be monitored and reinforced through the use of checklists, daily data, reminders, signage, observations, and spot checks.

We will work closely with the Washtenaw County Health Department and maintain weekly contact at a minimum.

The prime COVID-19 contacts at Emerson are Medical Assistant [Francesca DiCesare](#), Head of School [Ed Hollinger](#) and Assistant Head of School [Andy Zimmer](#). We will use multiple platforms for communicating, including the Head of School's letter, the weekly Newsletter, the school's website, and RenWeb alerts.

Emerson School will provide for a culture of care and accountability for its members.