

# Mastery Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

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LEA Name: Mastery Charter Schools (Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter School Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter School Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter School Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter School Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter School Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter School Smedley Elementary, Mastery Charter School Hardy Williams Academy, Mastery Charter School Gratz Campus, Mastery Charter School Clymer Elementary, Mastery Charter School Cleveland Elementary, Mastery Charter School Pastorius-Richardson Elementary, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter School, Mastery Charter School John Wister Elementary, and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School)

Initial Effective Date: 7/26/2021

Date of Last Board Review: 8/18/2021 (anticipated)

Date of Last Board Revision: 8/18/2021 (anticipated)

## 1. Maintaining Health and Safety

To the greatest extent practicable, Mastery will support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. Using the mitigation strategies listed below (A–I), Mastery will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.

### A. Universal and correct wearing of masks

Mastery will continue to supply KN95 masks for all individuals to wear during Mastery programming. As long as local mask mandates for school buildings require it, all students, staff, and guests must wear a mask to enter the building and throughout the day except for breaks (*Ex. eating, drinking, where proper social distance is maintained and if one is alone in a space*). The front desk will provide a mask to all guests if they do not have one. Families are asked to send students to school with a mask.

A “Mask or “Face covering” means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. Neck gaiters, bandannas and similar masks are not acceptable. Masks with only one layer of fabric are not acceptable. Acceptable masks include but are not limited to:

- Cloth masks with two or more layers

- Surgical masks with three layers
- N95 or KN95 masks with no valves (masks with valves to release air are not protective according to CDC)

Face covering breaks shall be less than 10 minutes, unless while eating or drinking when spaced at as far apart as possible with at least 3' to the maximum extent possible.

Schools will devote time to ensuring students understand the science behind why mask wearing and social distancing is important.

Schools have a normed language for reminding members of the school community to follow safety guidelines. If a student is not complying with social distancing or wearing a mask, staff will remind the student of the safety expectation and rationale. Staff will model what it looks like to meet expectations (Ex.: demonstrate proper mask wearing and/or outreached arms to show what appropriate social distancing looks like).

If a student is not wearing a mask, the student will be provided with a mask. Staff will provide positive reinforcement to student for accepting the redirection and complying with the health and safety guidance. Students who refuse to comply with mask wearing, despite all the above steps taking place, receive additional interventions.

#### **B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)**

- a. Definition: Physical distancing can be achieved by staggered scheduling, using physical space thoughtfully, and cohorting whenever possible to reduce transitions and minimize the number of individuals a student or staff member comes into contact with.
- b. Cohorting in secondary schools is not a requirement under state guidelines. Whenever possible we will minimize the number of different peers and staff each student is in classes with. In this way, if a quarantine is required there will be fewer people affected.
- c. The current CDC guidance for physical distancing in schools is:
  - i. Students should have 3 feet distance between them to the maximum extent possible
  - ii. Unvaccinated staff and adults (teachers/staff/visitors) should remain 6 feet apart from other adults and students.
  - iii. 6' should also be maintained to the maximum extent possible:
    - During extracurriculars with more intermingling of students
    - In common areas, such as school lobbies
    - Times when many people are talking, cheering or singing or exhalation is heightened (e.g. during strenuous activity in gym class)
  - iv. During meals and other times when masks can't be worn, students should stay at least 3 feet from each other - ideally closer to 6', but as much space as possible.
  - v. The NST is prepared to support schools who transition to three feet in multiple ways:
    - Purchasing and placing new furniture
    - Ensuring that we have adequate safe space for eating
    - Preparing for additional potential quarantines: since the definition of close contact has not been changed, a positive student case would trigger a quarantine for any students who sit <6 feet away.

d. Student meals

- i. To the maximum extent feasible, up to six feet of distancing should be maintained while students are eating, meaning that schools will need to space students out during breakfast, lunch and snack if applicable. Students should not eat closer than 3' apart to the maximum extent possible. Schools can utilize different eating areas to facilitate the six foot distance such as cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, auditoriums, and designated "late" rooms. Many schools are having half of their students eat lunch in the classroom and then transitioning half to a cafeteria, gym, or outdoor setup. 10-15 minutes of protected cleaning time must be scheduled in between each meal service in the cafeteria in order for the food service team to fully clean and sanitize the space. The school is responsible for cleaning any other spaces used for meal service.
- ii. Meals can be provided to in-school students through cafeteria service, classroom delivery, pick-up from high traffic locations, or a combination of these methods. The food service model will be dependent on the meal schedule, food service team capacity, school layout, and other factors.
- iii. Meals should be brief and focused. Staff can choose to share content that may discourage loud conversations – e.g. putting a read-aloud on a projector for younger students, or playing music without lyrics for older students. Conversations while students are eating should be very limited and masks should be put back on as soon as they are finished eating.
- iv. Seating should be adjusted to the maximum extent possible so that students face in the same direction when masks are removed to eat.
- v. Gyms and cafeterias can be employed to serve meals when the following are employed:
  1. 6' distance between students to the maximum extent feasible (3' minimum)
  2. Students facing one direction to the maximum extent feasible
  3. Seating should be assigned to facilitate contact tracing
  4. Shared surfaces must be minimized
  5. No more than 25% of standard room capacity is employed

e. Staff meals

- i. Staff should not remove their mask to eat while around students in the classroom. When eating during the day, staff should either eat in an unoccupied space (E.G. an unused classroom) or an appropriately socially distanced shared adult space.
- ii. If eating in a shared adult space, seats should all be separated by 6 feet to the maximum extent feasible (3 feet minimum) and facing the same direction
- iii. Shared refrigerators and microwaves may be utilized by staff members, with particular care given to ensure they are not a source of transmission. If staff use a shared refrigerator or microwave, the individual must:
  1. Abide by appropriate social distancing guidelines around others waiting to utilize the appliance(s)
  2. Vacate the shared appliance area prior to removing their mask and eating/drinking; meals should be enjoyed in previously noted safer spaces

Job-related duties that must be done in close physical proximity to others in the building should be minimized to the extent possible.

If required for safety, e.g. therapeutic holds, we recommend staff get vaccinated and keep the duration to a minimum. If required for comfort but not safety, staff will keep activities to the minimum required duration (e.g. helping a little one tie shoelaces that have become undone.)

Physical education classes will continue to be planned in line with local department of health guidance. In NJ we reference the [Guidance for Sports Activities](#). Mastery also references [Resources from SHAPEAmerica](#) that may help inform which specific activities could best meet the goals of a school's physical education program.

Key highlights of this guidance include:

- As much programming as possible should happen outside
- Given increased physical activity and exhalation during gym, physical distancing is particularly important, ideally 6+ feet
- Consider individual activities such as drills as much as possible to maintain physical distancing
- High contact sports such as wrestling or football should not take place indoors and if occurring outside should be designed to minimize close contact between players

School leadership will work directly with vendors or internal staff to ensure that all health/safety guidelines are reviewed and followed and the proper training or all related staff occurs including Before/Aftercare Vendors, Extra-Curricular Activities (Non-Sports) and Sports.

Schools can determine if they want to bring vendors in to serve their schools' before/aftercare needs utilizing our health/safety guidelines. Classrooms with a new group of children for aftercare should have at least 10 mins in between sessions to facilitate air exchanges within the Space. All health and safety guidelines, including occupancy, must be adhered to at all times.

### **C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

Recent CDC guidance emphasizes the importance of handwashing over surface cleaning as a more critical prevention strategy. Students and staff must maintain proper handwashing hygiene throughout the school day by utilizing hand sanitizer and washing their hands regularly. (For example after using the bathroom, before/after eating and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.)

Handwashing stations and hand sanitizer stations are placed in high-traffic areas so that students and staff can wash or sanitize their hands as much as needed. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol is placed at the front desk and one per classroom and office spaces, outside of bathrooms and in high traffic areas.

### **D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation**

- a. Ventilation

- i. Ventilation is critical to preventing the transmission of COVID-19.
- ii. Especially in warmer months, as many activities as can be performed outside should be done, especially meals. Tents if used should have good air flow with at least 2 sides left open.
- iii. Mastery hired third-party environmental consultants to conduct a thorough review of every school's ventilation system and indoor air quality to minimize transmission of the COVID-19 virus.
  - 1. The HVAC upgrades and air filter units were recommended by a third-party engineering firm called [Snyder Hoffman](#) that consults on environmental and air quality issues.
  - 2. Mastery and its consultants followed the [guidance issued by ASHRAE](#), the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.
  - 3. Eighteen schools had HVAC systems that could be brought to ASHRAE standards by using existing ventilation and filtration systems.
  - 4. In eight schools, we will use plasma air filters (which remove 99%+ of COVID virus).
  - 5. A school-by-school evaluation report is published on our website.
  - 6. Mastery facilities will continue to be reviewed by external HVAC consultants and appropriately certified and upgraded.
- iv. When non-Mastery facilities are being used, we expect that ventilation will be improved to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants, ideally to 6+ air cycles/hour. This can be achieved through several actions:
  - 1. Bring in as much outdoor air as possible.
  - 2. Ensure Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) settings are maximizing ventilation.
  - 3. Filter and/or clean the air in the school by improving the level of filtration as much as possible. If needed Mastery will pay for portable HEPA air cleaners.
  - 4. Use exhaust fans in restrooms and kitchens.
  - 5. Open windows in buses and other transportation, if doing so does not pose a safety risk. Even just cracking windows open a few inches improves air circulation.

b. Cleaning

Cleaning schedules will be revised by Contractors to ensure required COVID sanitizing/disinfecting as listed below:

i. Day Porter Support

- 1. A minimum of two day porters will support sanitizing high touch points. Spaces (bathrooms, doors, water fountains, front desk counter tops, etc.) will be disinfected frequently throughout the school day by the day time staff.
- 2. Day Porters will seek to sanitize these high touch areas every 1-2 hours.
- 3. The APO will work with the Contractor to determine what level of staffing is required to meet these requirements.

ii. Evening Cleaning/Sanitizing

Includes: Classrooms, Desks & Chairs, Floor sweeping and mopping, Front desk, Visitor waiting room (tables and chairs), Break rooms, copy machines, nursing offices, SQA areas, bathrooms, doors, door push/pull plates/handles, panic bars, water fountains, stairwell doors and handrails, common area spaces

c. Required PPE

For PPE, sites should have on hand 13 weeks supply of mask, gloves, plastic face barriers, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant supplies.

i. Face masks – 13 x (# of students + # of Staff)

ii. SQA items – Work w/Nurses to determine amounts needed: Medical booties, Disposal Gowns, Bouffant Cap and Plastic Head Covers

d. Optional PPE

i. Disinfectant Wipes – 13 boxes of disinfectant wipes

ii. Large Hallway Fans

iii. Hand sanitizer (individual size) – 13 x # of students (one per week per student)

e. Supplies managed by cleaning vendor

i. Cleaning Supplies – Vendors are responsible for these supplies.

ii. Disinfectant Solution & Spray –13 disinfectant sprays per classroom

**E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments**

a. Contact tracing of close contacts within school is the responsibility of the school with support from the Manager of Family Communication and Contact Tracing

b. Schools quarantine anyone who meets the definition of close contact, is not yet fully vaccinated, and has not tested positive for COVID in the last 90 days. Fully vaccinated staff who are experiencing COVID-like symptoms should also quarantine and seek a test.

c. Pay particular attention to:

1. Household contacts including siblings at other Mastery schools if indicated

2. Anyone who has met the definition of close contact – look at sports participation, classroom seating, staff interviews, dean call-outs, related service providers

3. Multi-campus teachers (e.g. ESL)

**F. Diagnostic and screening testing**

Mastery offers weekly testing for everyone in its buildings who consents and will do so as long as community transmission rates meet the levels where the CDC recommends weekly screening. We carefully monitor for symptoms, and then take action to isolate positive cases and quarantine all close contacts. We also offer diagnostic testing in case of symptoms or known exposure.

Symptoms consistent with a COVID-like illness are the following:

- At least ONE of these major symptoms:
  - New or persistent cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - New loss of sense of smell
  - New loss of sense of taste

OR

- At least TWO of these minor symptoms:
  - Fever
  - Chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Nausea/vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion/runny nose

For a student presenting symptoms or who presents with a temperature shall be sent to the school nurse. If the nurse is not immediately available, the nurse may send the student to wait in the School Quarantine Area.

If the parent/emergency contact does not arrive before school ends, staff will do the following:

- Contact the student's family and/or emergency contact, reiterating the current school policy on sick students being picked up.
- Sick students must be monitored by a nurse or other designated staff person until parent/emergency contact arrives.
- If parent/emergency contact does not arrive before school ends, the parent/emergency will be contacted once more.
- After the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt, collaborate with your school's social worker on a viable solution.
- Child MUST be picked up ASAP; they should not travel home alone.

If a staff member experienced COVID-like symptoms or learns that quarantine is required outside of school time, they must stay at home and follow the "Return to School" procedure. If staff member learns in the middle of the school day that quarantine is required due to the appearance of COVID-like symptoms, they must return home and follow the "Return to School" procedure.

Mastery offers weekly screening for COVID-19. Fully vaccinated staff starting in fall 2021 will not be required to participate in weekly screening unless symptomatic, per CDC guidance.

Contractors or other adults in the building are encouraged to participate in testing at no cost to them. Families are also encouraged to participate and must consent to participate in testing.

If a sample or group of samples has an invalid or rejected designation (e.g. not enough saliva was collected to run a test) there is no need to retest.

The appropriate Mastery staff is trained on testing administration.

#### **G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible**

All adults who work in Mastery buildings have been offered the opportunity to be vaccinated multiple times and most have chosen to get vaccinated. Anyone who decides that they want to get vaccinated can contact Mastery for help if accessing vaccinations is challenging. Being vaccinated is currently not a requirement for employment at Mastery but is strongly recommended.

Those who have been vaccinated fully do not need to quarantine in case of exposure unless they become symptomatic; starting in fall 2021 they do not need to continue weekly testing. Many people experience mild symptoms after receiving a vaccine dose and can continue to work and engage in their normal activities. We expect this to be the same for our staff. In the rare case that staff experience more pronounced symptoms, staff can take up to one non-PTO vaccine day to recuperate after each COVID-19 vaccination dosage.

We have partnered with Penn, Temple, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and other entities to offer vaccine town halls to students and parents as well as vaccination clinics, and will continue to do so.

#### **H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies**

Staff and students working with children with disabilities are given PPE and additional supplies and a routine safety checklist that includes the following routines:

- Using PPE
- Drop-off and pick-up
- Hand washing
- Toileting and hygiene

- Cleaning supplies and commonly used areas
- Social distancing during instruction and classroom set up
- Reporting COVID-19 illness during the school day and quarantine room logistics
- Attendance/substitute plans

Staff are also trained extensively on these routines that are specific to working with students with disabilities. Students who have medical conditions can still attend school in person or can select to attend the fully virtual program. Families will make the most appropriate decision for their student. Parents with students with a medical condition are strongly encouraged to contact the school, notify them of their child's condition, and send a note to the school nurse with instructions.

### **I. Coordination with state and local health officials.**

Mastery coordinates closely with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, including COVID case surveillance daily surveys, adhering to all guidance issued for schools, actively engaging in corner cases where guidance is not clear, and in monitoring school-wide positivity trends and needed actions. We are grateful for their support and partnership.

## **2. Ensuring Continuity of Services**

Mastery will continue a variety of services to maintain the safety, health, and well-being of all its students. These services include:

- ESY services
- Access to a technology device and Internet connectivity services
- Providing students with grade-level materials, tasks, and assignments along with the necessary supports to support all learners
- Designing instructional plans that are flexible and utilize the strengths of school leaders, teachers, students, and family and community members
- Providing professional learning that equips leaders, staff, substitutes, students and parent/caregivers with all of the resources needed to adapt to the changing educational needs of our schools

Mastery will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure decisions are made transparently and collaboratively so that all students' learning and well-being is prioritized.

### 3. Public Comment

Families & staff receive regular email updates about our planning processes and opportunities to share their input. Our website is maintained on a regular basis to be reflective of the latest plans and updates. Our social media accounts are used to share important news and updates with families real-time. Our website also includes weekly testing data to show how many tests were run, how many cases were identified, what % are positive, and test turnaround time.

To collect and incorporate stakeholder feedback, Mastery commenced planning process for next year with 9 listening sessions involving over 500 people including 120 parents, 35 students, and 80 teachers and staff. The overwhelming sentiment was that we need to have both an urgent focus on academic acceleration and a comprehensive approach to supporting students' social-emotional needs. Parents, many who have seen their students struggle academically online, urged us to share their children's academic data directly with them and to provide multiple means (tutoring, summer school, etc.) to enable their children to catch up.

Most recently, we hosted public, virtual Family Town Hall meetings on YouTube LIVE during which families and other members of the public can ask questions and give feedback about our plans. Our meetings of our Board of Trustees are open to the public to share their comments on our plans and priorities.

We are continually refining the details of our plan to incorporate the feedback of our key stakeholders and other members of the public. It is our goal to be responsive to the needs and desires of our students, families, and staff.

Mastery has ensured that our plan is presented in a clear and easily digestible written format. Our plan is written in English and available for translation in Spanish and six other languages spoken by members of our school communities via our website. To the extent a member of our school community with limited reading proficiency (in English or any other language) requires assistance understanding the document, the plan will be orally read and explained by a member of our staff or professional interpreter. Mastery will meet any request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, providing the plan in an alternative format that is fully accessible to that parent.

## Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Mastery Charter Schools (Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter School Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter School Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter School Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter School Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter School Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter School Smedley Elementary, Mastery Charter School Hardy Williams Academy, Mastery Charter School Gratz Campus, Mastery Charter School Clymer Elementary, Mastery Charter School Cleveland Elementary, Mastery Charter School Pastorius-Richardson Elementary, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter School, Mastery Charter School John Wister Elementary, and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School)** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **8/18/2021 (anticipated)**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

Yes

No

Affirmed on: **8/18/2021 (anticipated)**

By:

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*(Signature\* of Board President)*

Bob Victor

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*(Print Name of Board President)*

\*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

**Option A:** The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

**Option B:** If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.