



Robert Frost
Public Charter School

FALL RE-OPENING PLAN

In Response to COVID-19

Approved by Board of Trustees 8/19/2021

Updated and approved by Board of Trustees 12/15/2021

(Updates are in green text)

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Changes to the public health situation over the course of the school year may necessitate changes to this guidance.

INTRODUCTION

Dear Robert Frost Families,

As we reflect on the 2020/2021 school year, we are grateful that we were able to complete a full school year with in-person learning and that we did not have any cases of in-school transmission. We are appreciative of all the support we received to help make this possible.

As we look to a new school year, our Re-Opening Committee met to consider recommendations for the 2021/2022 school year. The committee took into consideration survey data from parents and staff, local transmission rates, and what we have learned this past year about what works for our school community, to revise our plan. The goal is to create a safe learning environment which best meets the needs of our students and reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon the learning environment.

This plan is designed knowing that if COVID-19 cases in our school community increase (including students, families, and staff), we will have to change our course accordingly. Our Head of School in consultation with the Board of Trustees will continue to monitor the situation closely.

The committee presented their recommendations to the Robert Frost Board of Trustees and the Board voted to support those recommendations. We do, however, want to stress that plans are subject to change with a moment's notice as we continue to monitor our local community transmission.

This plan considers many different factors within our building. These factors have direct implications to our students and our staff. Our goal is to provide an environment for students and staff where we can connect with each other, provide support, and create an educational environment within which students can ground themselves and work to make progress. We will continue to teach each student where they are along the learning continuum and look forward to working together with you.

The guidelines referenced in this document are based on guidance from the NH Department of Education (NH DOE), NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and World Health Organization (WHO).

Regular updates will be made to this plan based on updated information provided by the above organizations and applicable federal, state, and local agencies.

Our monthly school board meetings will have reports/updates as a standing agenda item.

Robert Frost Public Charter School (RFPCS) Re-Opening Committee

Tracy Strout, Board Chair

Janine McLaughlan, Head of School

Julie Boewe, Parent/Board Member

Heather Staples, Parent

Kimberly Lee, Classroom Teacher/Board Member

Brenda Burney, Classroom Teacher

DEFINITIONS:

Below are brief summarized descriptions of terms used in relation to COVID-19. For more detailed definitions, please refer to the [State of NH COVID-19 School & Childcare Toolkit](#) attached. The Toolkit has embedded links to assist in locating the most current information and materials available.

Close Contact

Close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*). See the [School Toolkit](#) for more specific information regarding close contact in the K-12 school setting, household and non-household contact definitions and protocols.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a collaborative effort with NH DHHS and involves identifying people who are at risk of COVID-19 following close contact to someone with COVID-19 then notifying them of their risk, recommending testing and advising isolation, self-quarantine, or self-observation.

Exposure

Close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Face Mask

Masks have two different important purposes. They are used to protect the person wearing the face mask and prevent the spread of COVID-19 from the person wearing the face mask to others. They should be made of multiple layers of tightly woven breathable fabric. It should be worn over the nose and mouth and should fit snugly with no gaps. They should not be worn wet or dirty. Masks with exhalation valves or vents are not permitted.

According to the NH DHHS School Toolkit, face masks are recommended for anybody who desires maximal protection for themselves or others, including people who:

1. Have not been fully vaccinated
2. Have a weakened immune system that makes them more susceptible to COVID-19, even after vaccination
3. Want to protect a household member who may be medically vulnerable or unvaccinated (i.e., to prevent the person wearing the face mask from picking up COVID-19 and bringing it home)

Fully Vaccinated

You have been vaccinated against COVID-19 **AND** more than 14 days have passed since you received the last recommended dose of a COVID-19 vaccine series.

Hand Hygiene

In the school setting, hand hygiene will be cleaning your hands by using either handwashing (washing hands with soap and water), or with a greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Household Contact

Any individual who lives and sleeps in the same indoor shared space as another person diagnosed with COVID-19 (temp. or perm. living arrangement), leading to close contact and potential repeated exposure such to the person with COVID-19. This includes situations where there may be temporary but prolonged exposure such as occurs with sleep-over events, shared camp cabins, vacation rentals, etc.

Isolation

Is used to separate people infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Equipment can include:

- **Face masks**- Provides barrier protection against large-particle droplets and does not effectively filter inhaled small particles, fumes, or vapors. A surgical mask is primarily used to protect patients and healthcare workers from people who may have a respiratory infection or to protect sterilized or disinfected medical devices and supplies.
- **Face shields/goggles**- Provides eye protection. Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection.
- **Gloves**- depending on type, provides hand protection against scrapes, scratches, cuts, chemicals and contaminants.
- **Gowns (disposable)**: Protects clothing as they may be resistant or impermeable to fluids.
- **Respirators**- Worn on the face, covers at least the nose and mouth, and is used to reduce the wearer's risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles (including dust particles and infectious agents), gases, or vapors. Respirators are certified by the CDC/NIOSH, including those intended for use in healthcare (N95 masks).

Quarantine

Used to keep someone who might have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

Risk Factors for COVID-19

- Symptoms of COVID-19
- In close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19
- International or cruise ship travel in the prior 14 days.

School Community

Includes students, staff, and their families.

Self-Observation

Self-monitoring for any symptoms of COVID-19 after exposure to COVID-19.

Variants

Viruses constantly change through mutation, and new versions of a virus are expected to occur over time. These variants have the potential to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19.

SECTION 1: SAFETY OF STUDENTS, STAFF, AND VISITORS

HEALTH PROTOCOLS

While we all hope to avoid exposure and illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. Our first concern is for your health and safety and those around you. In this rapidly changing situation, healthcare providers should have the most up-to-date information from the CDC and NH DHHS.

If a **student or** staff member has any of the following **risk factors for COVID-19**

- Symptoms of COVID-19
- In close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19
- International or cruise ship travel in the prior 14 days

The staff member will

1. Not come into the building.
2. Contact the following (in order of priority), let them know of any of the above, then follow their instructions.
 - a. Healthcare provider
 - b. Robert Frost Charter School's Head of School
 - c. The Head of School will determine appropriate next steps.
 - d. In case of an emergency, call 911 and let them know you have been exposed to or have COVID-19, and then follow their instructions.
3. Know that they may be contacted by NH DHHS and given further instructions.
4. May return to work when criteria to return per COVID-19 Protocols is met.

Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact the Head of School. You may be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.

EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 PROTOCOL

If a staff/student has been exposed to COVID-19, we will follow the procedures outlined in the NH DHHS Toolkit. See flow charts on pages 8 & 9 of the toolkit for specific info.

Those who have been instructed to follow the "Self-Observation Guide for People Exposed to COVID-19 Who Are Not Required to Quarantine" will be expected to wear a mask indoors when 6 feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained for 14 days from the date of last exposure. Students who opt not to wear a mask have the option to remain home for the specified 14 days.

In an outbreak situation, NH DHHS may choose to expand quarantine to other non-household contacts to control the outbreak.

SUSPECTED COVID-19 PROTOCOL

If a staff/student becomes sick or reports a new COVID-19 diagnosis at school, we will follow the procedures outlined in the [NH DHHS Toolkit](#). See flow charts on pages 8 & 9 of the toolkit for specific info.

Return to School Conditions:

Parameters for return will be given, which may include, but not limited to, COVID-19 testing results and/or written authorization from a medical doctor to return to school.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 with a negative test result you may return to school **when**

- At least 24 hours have passed since you had a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- and
- Your symptoms are **improving**.

If you have symptoms that could be COVID-19 and do not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, it is assumed that you have COVID-19 and may not return to work/school until the three criteria listed below have been met.

- At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started
- and
- At least 24 hours have passed since you had a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- and
- Your symptoms are **improving**.

CONFIRMED COVID-19 PROTOCOL

If a staff/student has tested positive for COVID-19 we will follow the procedures outlined in the NH DHHS Toolkit. See flow charts on pages 8 & 9 of the toolkit for specific info.

Contact Tracing Protocol Initiation:

In the situation of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by an employee or student who has been within the building during the suspected time of their infection, **contact tracing** in collaboration with NH DHHS will be initiated. All confidentiality and privacy rules will be followed to comply with HIPPA and FERPA rules. Community Notification will be sent AFTER all identified close contacts have been communicated with directly. The Head of School will discuss the situation with the appropriate officials such as the local health officials, DHHS and NHDOE. A decision will soon follow regarding the length of closure, if needed, and any further measures that the school or district will need to take.

COVID-19 TESTING GUIDANCE

Any **symptomatic** person (one or more, new or unexplained COVID-19 symptom(s) or someone who has risk factors for COVID-19 (e.g., exposure, travel, etc.) **even if fully vaccinated** should be tested for COVID-19. Staff or students will be directed to contact their primary care physician for testing.

If COVID-19 testing is required, results from home testing kits (those approved by FDA for Emergency Use) for COVID-19 will be accepted. A photo of the test results, showing date administered, must be sent to the school. *Note: Robert Frost Public Charter School is exploring the possibility of implementing preventative and symptomatic screening via the Safer at School Screening (SASS) program through the NH Department of Education.*

The process of needing to be tested for COVID-19 will be determined dependent on current CDC and NH DHHS guidance. Testing sites can be located at [Testing Guidance | NH COVID-19 Response](#). Further testing recommendations are outlined in the following documents: Isolation, Quarantine, Self Observation and Travel Guidelines.

[Self-Quarantine Guide for Unvaccinated Household Contacts](#)

[Self-Observation Guide for People Exposed to COVID-19 Who Are Not Required to Quarantine](#)

[Self-Isolation Guide](#)

SECTION 2: EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY

DIAGNOSTIC SCREENING & TESTING

The school will continue to ask students and staff to **conduct morning wellness screenings at home** and if not feeling well for any reason, stay home.

FACE MASK GUIDELINES

Based on school community survey results (see Appendix) and guidance from the NH Department of Health and Human Services, the use of a face mask will be optional* indoors and outdoors, **if at least 3 feet of physical distance is maintained**, with some *exceptions*. Staff will not monitor or enforce parental mask wearing preferences unless mask wearing is medically necessary and documented by a physician.

Exceptions to optional masking include but are not limited to:

- When necessary due to COVID-19 exposure
- Riding a bus due to federal mandates

When students and/or staff members are unable to maintain at least 3 feet of distance, masks must be worn.

As part of our social-emotional learning (SEL) supports for this year, the Student Support Specialist will provide information to staff about how to support students who wish to wear masks in school.

*Note: In the event that a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, all student and staff members will be required to wear masks indoors throughout the period of quarantine (**14 days from date of exposure**).

COVID-19 ISOLATION AREA

The school has spaces to accommodate physical distancing requirements and limit student and staff exposure. A designated COVID-19 isolation area will be used when indicated to respond to the needs of students and staff who may need an evaluation for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and provide separation from others.

All persons entering the COVID-19 isolation area will be required to wear the appropriate PPE, which may include a disposable mask provided by the school and follow all safety precautions indicated. Any person entering and leaving the COVID-19 isolation area will be required to perform hand hygiene per protocol. All staff and students being discharged from the school due to health conditions will receive recommendations for healthcare and criteria for return.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. RFPCS employees, students, parents, and visitors should practice staying 6 feet away from others as much as is feasible.

We recognize there are times when 6 feet is not possible, and we would seek to maintain at least 3 feet. Such times include:

- Walking throughout the building
- Students lining up in the classroom or at the beginning and/or end of recess
- Meetings: Staff and visitors are encouraged to maintain a minimum of 3 feet of distance during meetings inside the building.
- Working in a small group setting with a teacher or a peer
- Entering or exiting the building.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

To minimize exposure to COVID-19, PPE may be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE may include facemasks, face shields, goggles, gloves, gowns, and respirators. In addition to using PPE, please remember to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow

PERSONAL WORKSPACE/CLASSROOM

All teachers and students are asked to limit visits to other classrooms based on priority/need. Employees are encouraged to disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc.) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. Cleaning supplies will be provided by the custodial staff.

SHARED WORKSPACE

Employees are encouraged to disinfect their own workspace multiple times throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. RFPCS has alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout the workplace and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and wipes are also available to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards. The school custodian will clean all workspaces at their designated cleaning time.

Please note that proper equipment such as acceptable disinfectant and PPE should be used when cleaning individual workspaces.

VACCINATIONS:

Vaccination is a choice and a personal decision. Unfortunately, we have no mechanism for verifying vaccinations. If we have verification of vaccinations, we can expedite contact tracing because those vaccinated, currently, do not need to be quarantined if exposed to a household member with COVID-19, or other circumstance as identified by NH DHHS, or for travel related risk factors.

To help expedite contact tracing and the notification process, you are welcome to share your vaccination card with the Head of School but are not required to.

VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

As we monitor the situation throughout the year, we will work towards our “normal” visitor operations.

Approved visitors will be screened for any symptoms or risk factors of COVID-19 prior to entry.

SECTION 3: FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our staff and students are our priority. Prior to reopening, our schools will be completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the deep clean of the school before staff and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect staff and students and reduce the risk of spread of infection. We will require staff to maintain this safety standard by continuously cleaning and disinfecting based on the frequency stated below.

GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES

Category	Area	Frequency
Workspaces	Classrooms. Offices	At the end of each use/day
Appliances	Refrigerators. Microwaves. Coffee Machines	Daily
Electronic Equipment	Copiers. Shared computer monitors, telephones, and keyboards.	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
General Used Objects	Handles. Light Switches. Restrooms	At least once daily
Common Areas	Library. Stage. Classroom breakout areas	At the end of each use/day

The goal is to establish a sanitary baseline before the site opens. The school will be 100% disinfected prior to the returning of staff and students for the 2021-22 school year.

GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES PROTOCOL

General measures will be followed regularly. See Appendix for more details.

DEEP CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROTOCOL

Deep cleaning is triggered when an active staff member or student is identified as positive for COVID-19 based on testing or as dictated by needs.

SECTION 4: DAILY PROCEDURES

STUDENT ARRIVAL

By allowing your student to attend school you are attesting to their health status each day. Every morning it is expected that parents will take their child’s temperature and assess for any of the following conditions:

- Fever (100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater) or repeated shaking with chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, Vomiting or Diarrhea

- Close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- Someone in your household has been lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- Traveled internationally or on a cruise ship in the prior 14 days
- Tested positive for COVID-19

Parents must ensure they **do not send their student to school if he/she has ANY ONE OR MORE, new or unexplained, even if mild, including cold symptoms,** COVID-19 symptoms, or risk factors until the conditions for re-entry have been met. If your student has ongoing health conditions such as allergies or asthma, be sure to coordinate communication between your student's doctor and the Head of School. **No student should arrive prior to 8:30 AM.** Kindergarten through second grade students should enter through the back door. Third through eighth grade students should enter through the front door. Physical distancing of 3 feet or more should always be maintained if possible **and if not possible, masks must be worn.**

STUDENT DISMISSAL

At the end of the school day (3:15 PM) classroom teachers will escort students outside for pickup.

If you need to pick up your student prior to dismissal at 3:15 PM, please call the office at 603-656-6332 for pickup instructions. Please remain in your vehicle during pickup.

SECTION 5: REMOTE LEARNING

TEMPORARY REMOTE INSTRUCTION

If the school must move to a remote instruction model, we will follow the guidelines below.

Attendance Vs. Participation/Engagement

It is the expectation that all students will engage in their learning. Through participation in class meetings, instructional opportunities, and completing work, students will demonstrate their engagement.

Online Instruction

Zoom and Google Classroom are our online components to help deliver instruction from the classroom teacher.

SECTION 6: APPENDIX

SCHOOL RE-ENTRY FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS:

For your student, knowing they will be in school for 6 1/2 hours, with potential exposure to COVID-19, are you comfortable with a policy where masking would be optional?

YES – 15 NO – 10

Most school districts in New Hampshire have adopted a re-entry policy based upon the level of community spread. Would you be comfortable following that type of policy?

YES – 21 NO – 4

For your student, would you prefer universal mask wearing?
(100% masked while indoors, except for while eating.)

YES – 6 NO – 19

For your student, would you prefer a similar mask policy to what was in place during the 20/21 school year (masking only when away from their personal workspaces).

YES – 19 NO – 6

ROUTINES/PROCEDURES:

Entrance into the Building

- Anyone who enters the building will immediately upon entry wash or sanitize their hands.
- Scheduled/Expected visitors will register with the Administrative Assistant for security purposes.

Staff and Students Entering Classrooms:

- Wash hands/hand sanitize upon entering.

Sending a Student to Isolation Area:

If inside the building,

- Staff member calls the Head of School or Administrative Assistant and communicates the situation.
- The teacher will be provided with directions of where the student should go, if an escort is needed, etc.

If outside the building,

- Staff member will use the radio to communicate with the Head of School or Administrative Assistant.
- Directions will be provided of where the student should go. A staff escort is necessary.

Staff Member Screening:

- Staff members will self-screen for symptoms at home and not attend school if any new or unexplained symptoms, or risk factors are present.

Hallways and Stairwells:

- At all times students and staff will walk on the right side of hallways and stairwells

- Hallway transitions to outdoor spaces - students will maintain physical distancing of at least 3 feet. When in a line, students should not be able to touch the shoulders of the student in front of him/her. Physical distancing should be maintained for all transitions to and from the classroom.
- Staff will accompany all students throughout the building to ensure the 3 feet of distance is maintained.

Student Bathroom Usage:

- Only one student at a time will be allowed to leave the classroom to use the bathroom.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfection:

Classroom

- Each classroom will be provided a bucket with cleaning and sanitizing supplies that meet state and CDC guidelines for use in schools.
- The teacher will coordinate cleaning periodically, during the day, in the room as needed.
- If the need arises for additional cleaning during the day, the teacher will contact the custodian for support.
- At the end of each school day, custodians will do a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the room after all students and staff have left.

General Areas/Frequently Touched Surfaces

- Custodian will monitor restrooms and common areas and clean as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Products

- Only products purchased by the school will be used in the building
- All products that may potentially come into contact with students or staff will meet the safety requirements
- Products will be Green Seal Certified where possible.

Links for More Information/Resources Referenced:

[State of NH School & Childcare Toolkit: Rev. 9.17.2021](#)

[NH COVID Dashboard](#) including maps of transmission and school data: Continuously updated

[CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

[Learning Pod info provided by the NH Dept. of Ed.](#)

[NH COVID-19 Resources](#) including what to do if exposed, if test positive, or other related info.