



June 15, 2021
Updated 8/16/2021
Updated 10/1/2021

Discovery Charter School Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan

As the 2021-2022 school year gets underway, Discovery Charter School will continue to update and manage safety protocol and procedures for students every four weeks. The following plan is a review of what is currently in place, along with changes made to accommodate for the returning distant learners. The Discovery Leadership Team has been active in helping to create the plan, and in revisiting discussions to make changes. Changes are shared with the Discovery Advisory Committee and the staff for feedback before posting.

Masks

- Students in grades K-6 will be required to wear masks indoors during the day. Teachers will make the most of our outdoor learning spaces, in order to give students breaks from masking. Phy Ed classes will also be held outside for the first 3 weeks of school, when the grass is not wet. If Phy Ed classes are inside, masks will be worn during interactive games. Masks may be taken off when students are doing individual drills, passing, or participating in teacher-led exercises (and distanced). Students are always given the option to stop activity and take a mask break.
- Students in grades 7-8 will have the option to wear a mask downstairs in the middle school but will need to mask up in the hallways and common areas.
- ALL students riding the bus are required to wear a mask (federal requirement). Students will need to follow mask requirements on the bus or use alternative transportation.

This plan will help to avoid distance learning and maximize teacher effectiveness. Distance learning will not be an option this year and will only be used in the case of classroom or grade level quarantine due to close contact/prolonged exposure.

Quarantine Changes for November

Discovery Charter School staff have proven to be able to keep spaces cleaned and students distanced. We have been successful in minimizing any spread of Covid-19, *therefore we will not be quarantining an entire class with one positive case*. Please read the following guidelines for positive cases and exposures:

- *Students who test positive will be quarantined for the normal 14 days.* A letter to families of that class will be given notice that a positive case was reported in their child's classroom.

- Student exposure in that classroom will be determined by the proximity he/she has to the student who tests positive. Students who are within the three feet of space from the positive case for more than 15 minutes will be considered exposed. (This should be minimal if teachers are keeping students spaced!) Families will be notified and those students will begin a shorter quarantine period.
- *Students who are exposed will quarantine for five days.* On the fifth day, parents may have their students tested. With individual negative tests, students may return to school, as the incubation period will be over. Untested students will need to quarantine for 14 days.
- Students who have been considered exposed and have had Covid-19 in the previous 90 days are not considered at a high risk for getting the illness again. With a note from the student's physician stating as such, that child may return to school the next day.
- Students will be assigned physical packets of work for the days they will be out of school. Teachers may communicate with families to make additional arrangements, if necessary.

Daily Cleaning

- In addition to regular custodial cleaning of classrooms and common spaces, teachers and office staff will wipe down high touch surfaces.
- Disinfecting sprays may be used, but only after students have left areas being cleaned.
- Electromagnetic spraying will take place as needed, and only when students are not present in the building.

Entry Into the Building

- Signage indicates that masks are required to enter the building.
- Signage in the front vestibule prompts all to reflect on whether they are experiencing any symptoms.
- Covid Coordinator's name and contact information are posted: Shannon Benalshaikh
- All students and adults are screened for temperature.
- All educational consultants and any guests who are picking up a student must sign in while in the vestibule. Only school related personnel are allowed to enter the office area. Office personnel will call classroom teachers to send students who are being checked out early.
- Currently, no visitors are permitted in the building.

Classrooms/lockers

- Discovery Charter School will maintain smaller classroom sizes (15-20 students).
- Students will remain in individual desks. If tables are used, students will all be faced in the same direction, have plastic dividers, or they will be spaced 3-6 feet apart.
- Students will wipe down their own spaces each day.

Hallways

- All students and staff will keep to the right to ensure 3-6 feet of distance from oncoming foot traffic.

- Students in classroom lines will follow and stop on yellow and blue tape lines that space them appropriately.
- Recess and lunch schedules have been staggered to minimize traffic.
- Classrooms have been assigned to use specific doors to exit and enter the building to maximize space with one-way traffic.

Specialists

- Art and STEM specialists are back in their classrooms! They have incorporated efficient strategies to move students, share materials, and clean spaces for each class. This allows for those teachers to be able to utilize their spaces and materials for richer learning experiences.
- P.E. classes are being held outside when possible. We have slowly introduced a number of easy-to-clean equipment that students can wipe down before returning or exchanging.
- P.E. classes have their own space on the field, away from the classes who are out for recess.

Lunch

- Tape has been placed on every other seat (diagonally) in the cafeteria. Tables have been added to accommodate spaced seating. In the fall of 2021, DCS may need to add another lunch period or add more tables if there are not enough spaces for students.

Dismissal/Bus

- The gymnasium and lobby are set up for parent-pick-up with clearly marked spots that are 6 feet apart. Siblings must be seated together to maximize the space available.
- Currently only siblings are seated together in a seat on the bus. All students are required to wear a mask on the bus. Discovery Charter School will continue to follow MDE/MDH guidance for student transportation.

Student Illness and/or Absence

- All students in school reporting symptoms of Covid-19 will be screened by the Covid Coordinator.
- Covid Coordinator will follow up with families reporting symptoms or positive cases.
- Staff testing for Covid-19 is conducted every other Monday.
- Grade levels are quarantined if the decision tree (MDH) indicates a need. Parents will be notified and instructional materials including Chromebooks will be scheduled for pick-up. Drive-through service is offered for this.
- DCS is currently organizing a program for Covid-19 student testing. This would be a free service at Discovery for parents who wish to use that service. We will not be testing students without a request from parents or guardians.