Fall 2020   
Back to School PLan

Cardinal Cushing Centers Hanover, Ma

Introduction

This handbook outlines the major areas where we have updated our policies, procedures and protocols to adapt to conditions in a pandemic to maintain the health and safety of all community members while striving to meet the educational, social/emotional, and behavioral needs of all its students. As this pandemic is an ever evolving, so too are the policies and procedures within this handbook.



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# **Introductory Letter**

August 10th, 2020

Dear Parent, Families and Guardians:

We have been working diligently on the return to full in person instruction following the Fall 2020 Guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The Cardinal Cushing leadership team has been reviewing this guidance carefully in order to put forth our best effort in determining the three plans we have submitted to DESE. Like all things related to this pandemic and unprecedented time, the guidance and requirements are complicated and we sometimes have to wait for DESE clarifications as it is a fluid situation. We are working on creating more spaces for full instruction to happen, given that our cohorts of students must continue to remain separate. We are also increasing our staffing to help support and maintain our ratios while in these cohorts. We are also upgrading our technology and live streaming capabilities.

With this in mind, Cardinal Cushing School’s Hanover Campus will begin Fall services in a temporary **two-week** hybrid model:

**DAY** students:

Tuesday 1st September and Wednesday 2nd September – in person instruction at Cardinal Cushing School. Remote instruction Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September.

Tuesday 8th September and Wednesday 9th September – in person instruction at Cardinal Cushing School. Remote instruction Thursday 10th and Friday 11th September.

**RESIDENTIAL** students:

Tuesday 1st September and Wednesday 2nd September – remote instruction at the residences. In person instruction Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September at Cardinal Cushing School

Tuesday 8th September and Wednesday 9th September – remote instruction at the residences. In person instruction Thursday 10th and Friday 11th September at Cardinal Cushing School.

**Monday 14th September, 2020** Cardinal Cushing Centers will be full in-person instruction 5 days a week. There will be live streaming remote classes for those students who remain off campus.

Cardinal Cushing staff members wish more than anything to welcome all students back to their learning environments in the school setting. The health and safety of our students, parents/guardians, and school personnel remain our top priorities. Your school district has received this information. We want to thank everyone for your dedication, patience, and commitment to our students, staff, and school.

Respectfully,

Amy Purkis Jude Morgan

Vice President of Student Services Director of Academic Services

# **Executive Summary**

The last several months have truly been unprecedented. Over the course of the summer the school’s leadership team has had time to evaluate the guidance put forth by DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) as well as the CDC and Department of Public Health. In reviewing this guidance, as well as our experiences during summer session, we believe that we are able to meet all of the expectations for the upcoming school year.

In our proposed plan you will find 3 learning models. All of these models are designed to provide a robust learning environment for our students. They also allow our students to access all of their IEP goals, including therapies as indicated. During all modalities students will have access to educational assessments by qualified professionals. During remote and hybrid learning Cardinal Cushing Centers will send home adaptive equipment as needed for our students to access the curriculum.

Our programs provide special education services to students 11-22 years old. All of our students have complex needs. While the families of some of our students may choose to keep them home, our students meet the criteria set forth in the DESE guidance and will all be welcomed to attend on site when we are engaging in in-person learning.

At present we have 12 weeks of PPE and 8 weeks of cleaning supplies on site. This was factored using the recommendations put forth by DESE as well as our own usage during the summer session. Sourcing PPE continues to be difficult. Our ability to remain open for students will be contingent on our ability to continue to do so.

Staff training is a key component to the health and safety of our staff and students. As our programs were open for a hybrid model during the summer session, staff received intensive training in COVID related safety, new protocols, and the special circumstances surrounding our students in July prior to the start of the session. All of the DESE identified training criteria were met. These protocols are reviewed with new staff prior to working with our students. Our training calendar has days built in at the start of the school year. Any changes and/or updates will be reviewed with staff at that time.

Equally as important is student health and wellbeing. During the summer session students received regular lessons on COVID related health issues such as mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing. These lessons will continue throughout the school year. The pandemic has proven difficult for many of our students. Our agency continues to employ licensed mental health counselors who will be available to our students.

# **Corona Virus Statement**

The novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) is extremely contagious and believed to be spread from person-to-person contact, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another. To prevent the spread, federal, state, and local governments, as well as federal and state health agencies, recommend several health and safety protective measures. Included in these measures are washing hands, maintaining distance between oneself and others, covering mouth and nose with a mask or face covering when around others, covering coughing and sneezing, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces frequently, and monitoring one’s health daily.

Cardinal Cushing Centers has put in place preventative measures, new procedures, protocols, and policies, undergone trainings, and purchased necessary protective safety equipment to reduce the spread of COVID-19. However, due to the contagious nature of COVID-19, your child may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 while attending Cardinal Cushing. As with any setting where individuals will be in contact with other individuals, the risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists. Though significant preventative measures are being taken, the contagious nature of this virus prevents elimination of risk of exposure.

We will continue to follow local, state and federal guidance to ensure safety and preventative measures are up to date and implemented as efficiently and effectively as possible.

# **Full Remote Model**

The plan below outlines our Remote Learning Plan. While all of our students are considered high needs and are eligible for in person learning, students may be engaged in remote learning due to an overall program closure, due to a quarantine/isolation, or due to family choice or medical concerns. This plan includes input from MAAPS, CCC administration and stakeholders, teachers, and auxiliary services.

Our Remote Learning Plan is organized into five sections: Guiding Principles, Teacher and Staff Expectations, Learner Expectations, Support for Learners, and Accountability.

**Guiding Principles:**

1. **We prioritize the physical and emotional health of students, staff, and community.** Staying healthy and connected are essential during this crisis. We recognize this Remote Learning Plan is a “best case scenario” that can be implemented when students, staff, and family are away from school and healthy. When students, staff, or families are ill or caring for one another, we recognize that schoolwork takes a back seat to physical and emotional health. We commit to working flexibly with students, staff, and families when people in our community are sick or assisting someone who is sick.

2. **Remote learning will not replace the in-person experience for students and staff.** Remote learning will focus on reinforcing skills already taught this school year and applying and deepening these skills. We will also include new topics of curriculum to continue the students’ education. Our goal is also to help students stay connected to their learning community during the pandemic closure, but acknowledge that remote learning is not the same as going to school.

3. **Equity is strained when students are learning remotely.** We recognize adult support, access to technology, access to resources, learning supports, all vary for our students. Staff will work hard to support all students, but we acknowledge that all students do not approach the work with the same resources and ability to access assignments. We commit to flexibility with students and increased support and communication for those students who need more.

4. **Remote learning does not mean online learning only.** Technology assists teachers to create learning experiences for students. Learning is human-centered, and technology is assisting us to keep the human connection when we cannot be in the same physical space together. Teachers should work to design experiences that prioritize resources in students’ everyday lives and in the natural world around them. There should be time each day for physical activity based on recommendations from educators.

5. **We have to be reflective during this crisis, learn from it, and adapt as we go.** We recognize uncertainties lie ahead for students, staff and families. We will continue to communicate new guidance from federal and state agencies as it becomes available.

6. **Students benefit from both seeing teachers, instructors, therapists and other students in real time through synchronous tools.** These online communication platforms will be CCC approved, COPPA, and FERPA compliant. Remote learning experiences will look different in different contexts and might work best when they are kicked off by the teacher, involve some self-directed work by the student, and then products are shared with teachers and classmates at the end. This structure will keep students connected, but also allow them to work at times that fit their schedules and routines in their families.

**Teacher and Staff Expectations:**

1. Now more than ever, we see the value and power of community. **To maintain connections to students and cohesion among learning communities, teachers and support staff are expected to connect with their students and families several times a day.** To safeguard confidentiality and maintain privacy, teachers need to use C.C.C. communication platforms like Cushing school email, Google Classroom, Google Meet, and other approved platforms to connect with students.

2. We recommend teachers and support staff schedule blocks of time to teach new concepts/reinforce previously taught concepts. This can take the form of video conferencing. If you have not received work or correspondence from a student or family, the student’s SPC should be notified. If teachers/support staff do not hear back from a student or family, they should share that information with the SPC or C.C.C. administrator so a plan can be made to make sure all students can access remote learning opportunities.

3. Teachers, instructors and therapists will support students by engaging in meaningful and productive learning activities daily. We expect these activities to take place via a combination of educator-directed learning and student self-directed learning. This scope of work aligns with DESE learning standards and guidance and takes into consideration the flexibility required for remote learning to work. IEPs must be considered when assigning work for students.

4. Teachers and support staff should continue to meet and collaborate, but these meetings should happen virtually. During meeting and collaboration times, teachers are encouraged to work with co-teachers, and team members to design high-quality, consistent learning experiences for students. We recognize that some teachers and staff may not be able to attend every virtual collaboration meeting, so meeting notes and follow-up documents should be shared with the full group.

5. Tasks and assignments should focus on applying and deepening skills that have already been taught and introducing new concepts. Learning activities should support reinforcement and practice of previously taught content and skills, or provide enrichment activities that go deeper with these skills and content. New curriculum should also be built on prior skills. Teachers and support staff need to be mindful of accommodations and modifications that individual students may have per their IEPs when assigning tasks and assignments. Lessons presented in person will be streamed live for students off campus.

6. Teachers and support staff are encouraged to design engaging learning experiences that give students choice and push them to chase their personal interests while building on the skills and standards they are learning. Learning activities are encouraged to be shared by students throughout the week for teacher feedback. This format should give students the flexibility and options to work at times that reflect differing circumstances.

7. Teachers and support staff are expected to provide regular feedback to students on submitted work. Students need incentives to stay connected and learn, so teachers will be providing feedback on students’ work. Students need to know that teachers care about their work and that their work counts. PBIS points can still be earned and banked for their School Store incentives.

8. Student teams should focus on progress towards IEP goals and modifying curriculum in a remote learning environment.

9. Attendance will be taken during remote learning sessions and marked as “D” for distance learning. Absences will be recorded. Absences will continue to be reported to home school districts in the same manner as was done pre-pandemic.

**Learner Expectations:**

1. We expect and hope that all students will engage in remote learning during the extended closure. Students or parents should connect with student classes/teachers when they have questions or need clarification. This can be done through one of the approved communication platforms including email and phone message to the school. C.C.C. staff will be working to design activities that are engaging and provide students with voice and choice.

2. To keep students connected to adults and part of the learning community, students should make every effort they can to attend remote class sessions or “office hour” opportunities. Students should keep in mind that remote learning is still school, and school-appropriate behavior is expected in online communication and meetings. If students cannot attend an online class or meeting, students and teachers should follow up with one another to help move forward with learning.

3. Tasks and activities will be organized on a daily basis, with tasks and activities provided by teachers, instructors and therapies and typically shared throughout the week. Students should be encouraged to complete work and turn it when it’s due. IEPs should be considered when making plans to complete work. Students or parents should email teachers and ask for help if they are having trouble with an assignment, don’t understand something, or if they are in a situation where they need more time.

4. Learners should expect daily classes and work activities.

5. Students will be provided with learning activities that deepen and apply their skills.

6. Students will be getting feedback from teachers based on learning activities they have submitted. Students should use this feedback to make their work better, celebrate their work, and/or adjust their performance based on feedback. Teachers, instructors, and support staff will help students who need additional support to be successful.

7. Students who need technical support with C.C.C. platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, and/or Zoom should contact the SPC who will relay the concern and seek ways to fix/support the issue.

**Supports for Learners:**

1. Questions are good and communication is encouraged. All parents, guardians, or students who have questions, need academic support, or need emotional support should contact their teacher, SPC, or counselor. During these times, we know students and families need more support, and we are here to help. Questions are good so reach out to us. Families who are struggling to access the online supports should contact their SPC to gain access to low tech classroom supports (e.g., file folders, printed version of work assigned, table top activities).

2. As stated in the Guiding Principles, remote learning does not replicate what happens in school. Remote learning does not provide a level playing field because students have differing levels of access to technology, Wi-Fi, academic help, and social emotional support. We are committed to providing support for all of our students to reduce inequities when it comes to remote learning. We invite any input on how we can support your student if they need it. Please communicate with your child’s C.C.C. team about what your child needs to be successful.

**C.C.C. Approved Communication Platforms:**

The following educational communications platforms have been approved for use by C.C.C.

These tools are COPPA and FERPA compliant: GSuite for Education Apps and Services, including Classroom, Docs/Sheets/Slides, Groups, Jamboard, Mail, and Meet

**Expectations for Use of Technology:**

The following expectations for the use of technology during remote learning include:

1. The prohibition by students and families of screenshots, pictures, audio/video recording and distribution of any virtual educational experience in order to protect student privacy, proactively prevent potential cyberbullying, prevent the distribution of copyrighted materials and comply with Massachusetts law.

2. Related code of conduct expectations as outlined in school handbooks including dress and language are expected. Students, and where appropriate parents/guardians, agree to engage in virtual educational experiences in a quiet, private area to the extent practicable given the circumstances, in order to minimize background noise and distractions and to protect the integrity of student engagement as well as student confidentiality. Parents/guardians and other household members who normally are not privy to day-to-day classroom and group service discussions agree to respect and keep confidential any personal or private information (e.g. disability status) inadvertently discovered about other students due to proximity of virtual education.

# **Hybrid Model**

Hybrid instruction will begin on September 1st with a plan to move to full in person on September 14th.

Please note that as conditions change it may be necessary to return to a hybrid model. Should that happen, days of attendance in person and virtually may be reassigned based on staffing and cohort needs.

* Students have been placed in cohorts based primarily on their day and residential status. Residential students will mix only with students within their initial residence or peers within a ‘buddy’ residence. Day students will be grouped with other day students that are within their academic/vocational abilities.

Students will all have a licensed teacher assigned to them. Many classrooms may have a co-teacher assigned to help facilitate scheduling needs.

* Lunches: lunches will be provided by the culinary department. Day students may bring their own lunch if they desire but no food that requires reheating to reduce the risk of contamination opportunities. Lunches will NOT be eaten in the student dining room. They can be eaten either in the classroom or outside (weather permitting). Specialists will provide scheduled services within the classroom and/or small groups. We have purchased several tents which will be erected in several areas of campus to provide opportunities for outside learning and recreational activities in the shade, also expanding the usable square footage of our campus.
* We highly recommend that parents take their child’s temperature in the morning before leaving the house and boarding his/her AM transport.
* Staff will have their temperature taken each day in the morning and will be sent home if they have a 100 degree or plus temperature. Staff temperatures will be taken when they arrive for work.

**Staying home if sick:** As part of the social compact of re-opening, students and staff must stay home if they are feeling sick or have any symptom associated with COVID-19.

**Face coverings and masks:**

**Students and staff must wear face coverings or masks, with exceptions only for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical conditions, or other** **considerations.** In cases in which face coverings or masks are not possible, strict social distancing of 6 feet is required. **Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks**. Cardinal Cushing will have backup disposable masks available for students who need them. Staff may choose to wear their own mask or one provided by the school. Face shields will be provided to staff but are optional dependent on the staff’s role. Face masks and other PPE will be required to be worn by staff in conditions of risk/exposure to COVID-19.

**Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing:** All students and staff must engage in frequent handwashing, including upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, after coughing or sneezing, and before dismissal.

**Maintaining 3-6 feet of separation at all times**. All students and staff must maintain a social distance of 6 feet to the greatest extent possible. Desks will be spaced at least 3-6 feet apart and facing the same direction.

**Isolation and discharge protocols for students who may become ill during the day:** A room has been identified as an isolation room for a student suspected of possibly having COVID-19. This is a separate area from the Health Center. If a student is identified as having COVID-19 symptoms their parent/family member will be called with expectation that the parent arrives for pick up within 60 minutes of being called.

**Off Campus Activities:** Due to DESE guidelines, there can be no off-campus activities for Cardinal Cushing students. This includes field trips, off-campus work - employment, vocational training and visits to community stores and/or community activities.

**Please remember this is a proposed/tentative plan for our Fall 2020 program. As the pandemic information and guidelines are always changing, this plan will be further developed and updated in accordance with guidelines from DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education), DPH (Department of Public Health) and the Governor’s Office.**

# **Full In Person Model**

Prior to the start of full in person learning, staff will attend COVID-19, PPE, and general health education trainings based on DESE and other state agency guidelines. This will include moving classroom locations to better suit cohorts, implementing strict 3-6ft physical distancing of desks and furniture, curriculum preparation, lesson planning, and scheduling.

Below are our scheduled days where students will receive in person teacher/instructor classes:

* **DAY** students assigned to ED, CORE and Vocational will receive in person instruction: **Monday** through **Friday** – 8:30 am – 2:45pm
* **RESIDENTIAL** students assigned to ED, CORE and Vocational will receive in person instruction: **Monday** through **Friday** – 8:15 am – 2:30pm

**The 15 minutes staggered start time at the beginning and end of each day is to allow for one set of students to enter or vacate the building to avoid cross contamination.**

* Students have been placed in cohorts based primarily on their day and residential status. Residential students will mix only with students within their initial residence or peers within a ‘buddy’ residence. Day students will be grouped with other day students that are within their academic/vocational abilities.
* Students will all have a licensed teacher assigned to them. Many classrooms may have a co-teacher assigned to help facilitate scheduling needs.
* Lunches: lunches will be provided by the culinary department. Day students may bring their own lunch if they desire but no food that requires reheating to reduce the risk of contamination opportunities. Lunches will NOT be eaten in the student dining room. They can be eaten either in the classroom or outside (weather permitting). Specialists will provide scheduled services within the classroom and/or small groups. We have purchased several tents which will be erected in several areas of campus to provide opportunities for outside learning and recreational activities in the shade, also expanding the usable square footage of our campus.
* Students arriving to school with symptoms will not be permitted to participate in the day program. A room has been identified as an isolation room for a student suspected of possibly having COVID-19. This is a separate area from the Health Center. If a student is identified as having COVID-19 symptoms their parent/family member will be called with expectation that the parent arrives for pick up within 60 minutes of being called.
* We highly recommend that parents take their child’s temperature in the morning before leaving the house and boarding his/her AM transport.
* Staff will have their temperature taken each day in the morning and will be sent home if they have a 100 degree or plus temperature. Staff temperatures will be taken when they arrive for work.

**Staying home if sick:** As part of the social compact of re-opening, students and staff must stay home if they are feeling sick or have any symptom associated with COVID-19.

**Face coverings and masks:**

**Students and staff must wear face coverings or masks, with exceptions only for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical conditions, or other** **considerations.** In cases in which face coverings or masks are not possible, strict social distancing of 6 feet is required. **Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks**. Cardinal Cushing will have backup disposable masks available for students who need them. Staff may choose to wear their own mask or one provided by the school. Face shields will be provided to staff but are optional dependent on the staff’s role. Face masks and other PPE will be required to be worn by staff in conditions of risk/exposure to COVID-19.

**Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing:** All students and staff must engage in frequent handwashing, including upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, after coughing or sneezing, and before dismissal.

**Maintaining 3-6 feet of separation at all times**. All students and staff must maintain a social distance of 6 feet to the greatest extent possible. Desks will be spaced at least 3-6 feet apart and facing the same direction.

**Isolation and discharge protocols for students who may become ill during the day:** A room has been identified as an isolation room for a student suspected of possibly having COVID-19. This is a separate area from the Health Center. If a student is identified as having COVID-19 symptoms their parent/family member will be called with expectation that the parent arrives for pick up within 60 minutes of being called.

**Off Campus Activities:** Due to DESE guidelines, there can be no off-campus activities for Cardinal Cushing students. This includes field trips, off-campus work - employment, vocational training and visits to community stores and/or community activities.

**Please remember this is a proposed/tentative plan for our Full in-person Fall 2020 program. As the pandemic information and guidelines are always changing, this plan will be further developed and updated in accordance with guidelines from DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education), DPH (Department of Public Health) and the Governor’s Office.**

# **Guidance for staying home**

Any staff or student with illness is asked to stay home. Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal symptoms, new loss of taste/smell, muscle aches, or any other symptoms that feel like a cold, or a temperature of 100.0°F or above is asked to stay home.

Staff and students are also asked to stay home when instructed to quarantine or isolate due to potential exposure for COVID-19 or travel.

Those with questions as to whether or not they meet these criteria are asked to contact their healthcare provider or the school nurse.

# **Staff and Student Illness**

Due to the ever-changing guidance from government agencies on how to respond to staff or student illness this policy will not be placed in the handbook. It should be noted that the agency will continue to adhere to all published guidelines. The most recent guidelines are available for any staff or family upon request. Those with questions are welcome to reach out to our school nursing director Danielle Silverberg, or Amy Purkis, our onsite COVID Leader.

Below you will find a link to the Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios as shared by the CDC and Department of Education.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dO3vzOPpTWxHbqge983lCPpImZWPL2P9/view>

# **COVID Testing**

Cardinal Cushing Centers does not provide testing for students or staff. However, we do have a list of testing facilities available. Please contact the nursing department or your student’s program coordinator for this list.

# **Health Screening at Arrival**

All families must self-screen at home, prior to a student coming to the program for the day.

1. Self-screening shall include checking for symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal symptoms, new loss of taste/smell, muscle aches, or any other symptoms that feel like a cold. Anyone with a fever of 100.0°F or above or any other signs of illness must not be permitted to enter the program.
2. Parents and staff must sign written attestations daily regarding any household contacts with COVID-19, symptoms (e.g., fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, or diarrhea), or if they have given children medicine to lower a fever. Student and staff daily attestation forms will be filed in individual student or employee records.
3. Individuals who decline to complete the screening will not be permitted to enter the program space.

Staff must make a visual inspection of each child for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. Confirm that the child is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath. In the event a child is experiencing shortness of breath or extreme difficulty breathing, call emergency medical services immediately.

# **Isolation Area**

A room has been identified as an isolation room for a student suspected of possibly having COVID-19. This is a separate area from the Health Center. If a student is identified as having COVID-19 symptoms their parent/family member will be called with expectation that the parent arrives for pick up within 60 minutes of being called. Please note that ill students MUST be picked up. Per DESE they may not be placed on a bus or cab.

Staff in the area with this student will wear full PPE.

# **Transportation**

Cardinal Cushing Centers is not providing transportation for students during school hours.

# **Arrival on campus (day staff)**

During staff morning arrival, staff will enter in the lobby outside the gym.

Staff screening will be conducted in the gym lobby. An administrator or designee will perform the screening. Staff will have their temperatures taken. Any staff with a temperature of 100.0 or higher will be evaluated by a nurse. Staff will also complete the staff attestation form.

All staff will wear masks and follow physical distancing guidelines.

# **Student Drop Off and Pick Up**

Drop off and pick up times will be staggered to limit contact with day and residential students and to prevent a large gathering.

Students will be assigned an entry/exit door. These doors will be propped open during arrival and dismissal to limit touching.

**Drop off**

* Families and transportation companies will form a line outside of the front door
* A cab duty staff will come to the door and collect parent attestation.
* To expedite the process please have the attestation completed before arrival.
* Students who have a temperature over 100.0 degrees, answer affirmatively to the questions on the screening tool, or do not have a completed parent attestation will be sent home.
* Students who are able will go to their classrooms/sites independently.
* Students who require supervision for the transition will move from their vehicle to the staging area (under the large tent for education students and under the small tent next to culinary for vocational students).
* Staff members will meet the students in the staging area and bring them to class/assigned site.

**Pick Up**

* Families and transportation companies will form a line outside of the front door
* Students will wait in their classrooms/assigned areas. When all of the vehicles for a particular room have arrived, the classroom will be notified.
* Staff will walk the assigned student directly to their vehicle. (Students with independence will also be accompanied to the drop off area by their staff).

\*Note: in the event that the front door cannot be used due to suspected illness, students will enter/exit through the gym lobby and/or the back door.

# **Cohorts**

Students have been placed in cohorts based primarily on their day and residential status. Residential students will mix only with students within their initial residence or peers within a ‘buddy’ residence. Day students will be grouped with other day students that are within their academic/vocational abilities.

Students will all have a licensed teacher assigned to them. Many classrooms may have a co-teacher assigned to help facilitate scheduling needs.

Student movement is limited to those in their cohort.

When possible staff are also assigned to the same cohort of students. Itinerant staff and those that work with more than one group (e.g., Nursing) will wear N95 or KN95 masks when with students.

# **Student Lockers/Personal Items**

While the specific storage modality differs from classroom to classroom, students’ personal belongings such as backpacks and coats will be stored in such a way that they do not touch.

# **Lunch and Snacks**

Lunches and snacks will be provided by the culinary department. Day students may bring their own lunch if they desire but no food that requires reheating to reduce the risk of contamination opportunities. Lunches will NOT be eaten in the student dining room. They can be eaten either in the classroom or outside (weather permitting). Specialists will provide scheduled services within the classroom and/or small groups. We have purchased several tents which will be erected in several areas of campus to provide opportunities for outside learning and recreational activities in the shade, also expanding the usable square footage of our campus.

Food may not be shared between students and/or staff.

Students will take off their masks while eating, following mask removal guidelines.

# **Bathrooms and Toileting**

Staff must change students’ clothing and their own clothing when soiled with secretions or bodily fluids. Students’ soiled clothing must be bagged and sent home in a sealed plastic container or bag.

Toileting or diapering areas (including tables, pails, countertops, toileting chairs, sinks/faucets, toilets, floors, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected if soiled. Otherwise, they are cleaned and disinfected a minimum of 4 times throughout the day. Surfaces should be dry by the time the students use the area.

Toileting/diaper procedures are posted in the bathroom changing area.

To ensure the students’ safety, and to make the change more efficient and reduce opportunities for contamination all necessary supplies are assembled before bringing the student to the changing area.

To reduce contamination, staff and students must wash their hands after toileting/diaper changes.

# **Water Fountains**

All communal water fountains have been shut off. Each classroom is provided with water. Students will have free access to water throughout the day, including during meals.

Water will be poured into individual container prior to consumption. Only single use containers/cups may be used. Refillable water bottles may not be used at this time.

# **Hallways and Stairwells**

Hallways are labeled to indicate directionality.

Staff and students are expected to wear a mask and practice social distancing when in hallways and stairwells.

# **Within a classroom**

Staff and students must wear masks within the classroom and maintain a social distance of at least 3 feet. Students or staff who are unable to wear a mask, or who are eating, must be a minimum of 6 feet apart.

When indoors windows will be open, as much as possible, to allow for air circulation.

Students will be discouraged from sharing supplies. Any supplies that must be shared will be disinfected between uses. Items that cannot be properly cleaned/disinfected have been removed from classrooms.

Student seating will be assigned, with all desks facing in the same direction.

# **Arts and Adaptive Physical Education**

Cardinal Cushing Centers will continue to provide its students with access to education in the areas of the arts and adaptive physical education with the following health and safety modifications.

Arts

* Singing must take place outdoors, wearing masks, with students spaced a minimum of 10 feet apart
* Shared materials should be limited. Any material shared between students must be cleaned and disinfected before and after uses. Students should wash/sanitize their hands before touching shared materials.
* Materials that cannot be easily disinfected, such as fabrics, clay, and items with irregular surfaces may not be shared.
* Any item that touches a student’s eye or mouth, such as a musical instrument or camera, may not be shared.

Adaptive Physical Education

* Whenever possible physical education will take place outdoors. Students will wash/sanitize their hands prior to class.
* Physical activity can take place outdoors, without masks, if students are 10 feet apart.
* If students will be closer than 10 feet, or indoors, they are required to wear a mask to participate in adaptive physical education.
* Activities that involve close physical contact are not allowed.
* Sharing of personal athletic equipment such as harness, mitts, and pads is not allowed.
* Non-personal equipment, such as bats or balls, can be used if it is cleaned and disinfected before and after uses. Students should wash/sanitize their hands before handling equipment.

# **Recreation**

Students will remain in their cohorts when accessing the recreation area. They will wash their hands/use hand sanitizer when coming and going from the recreation area. Any materials used, such as, picnic tables or swings, will be disinfected by the staff present between cohorts.

# **Main Office**

At this time the main office is only accessed by staff, and when necessary, visitors. All packages are left outside of the door.

# **Personal protection: Masks**

Students and staff must wear face coverings or masks, with exceptions only for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical conditions, or other considerations. Staff and students who are unable to wear a mask may wear a face shield if feasible. In cases in which face coverings or masks are not possible, strict social distancing of 6 feet is required. As wearing a mask is a new experience for many of our students, teachers along with occupational therapists and behavioral services staff will continue to work with students to develop this skill.

Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. Cardinal Cushing will have backup disposable masks available for students who need them. Staff may choose to wear their own mask or one provided by the school. Face shields will be provided to staff but are optional dependent on the staff’s role. Face masks and other PPE will be required to be worn by staff in conditions of risk/exposure to COVID-19.

Students and staff will be provided with mask breaks. During these breaks students and staff will take off their masks safely. While eating, masks should be placed on a napkin, paper towel, or container on the table with the inside facing up. Care should be taken not to touch the outside or inside of the mask when removing it (only touching the ear loops).

# **Handwashing protocol**

In addition to visuals by all sinks, staff members regularly review with students the proper handwashing technique. In situations where sinks/ handwashing stations are not available hand sanitizer, meeting DESE guidelines, will be available.

Handwashing and/or hand sanitizing is available in stairwell exits, at all entrances, bathrooms, classrooms, shared activity spaces, the culinary center for use before meal pick up, and in mask break areas.

All students and staff must engage in frequent handwashing, including upon arrival, before and after eating, after bathroom use, after coughing or sneezing, when taking off or putting on their masks, and before dismissal.

# **Cleaning Protocols**

Cleaning parameters were developed in order to maintain the health and safety of our students and staff and limit the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

These health and safety checklists should be completed and signed hourly/daily/weekly as is noted, as we conduct our summer services to meet the needs of our students. For clarity and accountability, program based checklists have been developed in accordance with federal and state mandated COVID-19 regulations which were based on current health and safety guidelines. Each area of service has department specific cleaning routines, to ensure proper cleaning, sanitization and disinfecting practices. Cleaning supplies and protective materials comply with recommendations of DPH and state entities.

Staff is responsible for the areas in which they are assigned to work (ex. personal offices and classrooms). Additionally, staff may be assigned to a “cleaning crew” to supplement cleaning in common areas. All high touch areas will be cleaned at the start and end of each staffing shift.

In addition to regular cleaning custodial staff will, on a regular schedule, sanitize and disinfect all student areas such as residences, classrooms, bathrooms, and hallways. Classroom space used by more than 1 cohort will be sanitized and disinfected between the cohorts, when students are not present.

Custodial staff will regularly disinfect all areas with an EPA approved electrostatic spray.

**How to Clean and Disinfect**

Cleaning and Disinfecting are separate requirements.

* Cleaningrefers to the removal of germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces. Cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
* Disinfectingrefers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface *after* cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Community members can practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product, including precautions you should take when applying the product such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes. Consult the manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning and disinfection products used.

Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.

* If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
* For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
* For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
  + Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely, or:
  + Use products with the EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims that are suitable for porous surfaces.

# **Procuring cleaning & PPE supplies**

Cardinal Cushing is working with a variety of vendors to procure appropriate cleaning supplies PPE. At the time of writing Cardinal Cushing had, based on previous usage, an emergency reserve of 12 weeks of PPE and cleaning supplies on hand.

# **Off Campus Activities**

Due to DESE guidelines, there can be no off-campus activities for Cardinal Cushing students. This includes field trips, off-campus work - employment, vocational training and visits to community stores and/or community activities.

# **After-school program**

The after school program is currently not running. Additional guidelines will be put into effect when the program returns.

# **Visitors in the building**

Visitors are not allowed in the program at this time.

When a visitor is deemed essential, such as a repair person, every effort is made for that person to come outside of school hours. In the event that is not possible all entrants to the building must enter through the front door. Once inside staff will instruct them to use hand sanitizer, ensure they are wearing a mask and take their temperature. They will also be asked to review and sign a visitor attestation.

# **Volunteers**

In an effort to limit exposure, volunteers are not permitted at this time.

# **Expectations for remote learning**

Students may be engaged in remote learning due to an overall program closure, due to a quarantine/isolation, or due to individual choice.

1. We expect and hope that all students will engage in remote learning during any extended closure. Students or parents should connect with student classes/teachers when they have questions or need clarification. This can be done through one of the approved communication platforms including email and phone message to the school. C.C.C. staff will be working to design activities that are engaging and provide students with voice and choice.

2. To keep students connected to adults and part of the learning community, students should make every effort they can to attend remote class session opportunities. Students should keep in mind that remote learning is still school, and school-appropriate behavior is expected in online communication and meetings. If students cannot attend an online class, students and teachers should follow up with one another to help move forward with learning.

3. Tasks and activities will be organized on a daily basis to support the online classes, with tasks and activities provided by teachers, instructors and therapies and typically shared throughout the week. Students should be encouraged to complete work and turn it when it’s due. IEPs and academic progress should be considered when making plans to complete work. Students or parents should email teachers and ask for help if they are having trouble with an assignment, don’t understand something, or if they are in a situation where they need more time.

4. Learners should expect daily online classes. Reinforcement work will also be posted.

5. Students will be provided with learning activities that deepen and apply their skills.

6. Students will be getting feedback from teachers based on learning activities they have submitted. Students should use this feedback to make their work better, celebrate their work, and/or adjust their performance based on feedback. Teachers, instructors, and support staff will help students who need additional support to be successful.

7. Students who need technical support with C.C.C. platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, and/or Zoom should contact the SPC who will relay the concern and seek ways to fix/support the issue.

# **Grading**

Cardinal Cushing Centers is a non-transcript program. Progress reports will continue to be issued on a quarterly basis.

# **Cleaning / Inventory of technology**

Technology needed during the academic day is distributed out in the morning. All technology is identified for each student. Technology items are cleaned regularly when in the classrooms. Technology items are returned to the computer lab at the end of the academic day and disinfected.

# **Physical Management**

Direct Support providers should be mindful that seeing staff putting on PPE or being approached by staff wearing PPE can create anxiety in students. Use a student-centered approach and offer reassurance through interactions. As always the use of emergency physical management, is just that, an emergency. Only trained staff, following Safety Care procedures and internal policies may physically intervene with a student.

**Limiting Risk of Infection Prior to Emergency Physical Management**

* Plastic protective gowns that can be easily ripped off or torn are not advised, as they may become a hazard.
* Staff should be wearing disposable gloves, disposable masks, face shields and long sleeves to the maximum extent possible.
* Only staff required for emergency physical management should be involved; one additional staff member should monitor and address protective equipment needs for those staff who are involved in the event that PPE needs to be altered or adjusted.

**Limiting Risk of Infection During Emergency Physical Management**

* Keep hands clear of eyes, mouth and nose of self and others.
* First responders should be relieved as soon as possible if not wearing proper PPE.
* Staff should have long hair tied up
* Given the risk of COVID-19, it is even more important than usual to try to avoid long and extended restraints.

**Limiting Risk of Infection After Emergency Physical Management**

* Remove and dispose of and/or clean PPE immediately in the manner that you were trained.
* Avoid touching your face and limit contact with hard surfaces before immediately washing hands.
* To minimize exposure, it is recommended that staff have a change of clothes available in cases where their clothes become contaminated.
* Once all health and safety issues have been addressed, follow debriefing and reporting procedures for the restraint.

# **Assessment and Progress Monitoring**

Progress reports will continue to be issued on a quarterly basis. In concert with the home district, all three-year and other assessments will be completed, as needed, for individualized education plans.

# **Virtual IEP Meetings**

At this time all IEP meetings will be held remotely. Cardinal Cushing Centers is currently using the Google Classroom platform. However, we are open to using the platform provided by the sending school district if that is preferred.

# **Staff and Student Education**

Below is a list of COVID specific required trainings. Staff are encouraged to share with their supervisor any area in which they feel they need additional training. The leadership team will regularly discuss trainings as well as the effectiveness of the protocols put in place and adjust on an ongoing basis as needed.

* Staff will complete the CCC Student Services Return To Work Training
* Staff will review the CDC videos on the donning/doffing of PPE. Nursing staff will be available to answer additional questions
* Staff will receive a “return to work” packet containing updated protocols. This will be reviewed with staff by school leadership during morning meetings.

Equally as important is providing education to our students about COVID and related changes.

During remote learning teachers discussed changes to routines and school practices. This was supported by the use of visuals, social stories, and other learning aides as is appropriate to the students. This continued when students returned for in person learning and will remain part of the curricula for the foreseeable future.

Topics covered include:

* Mask wearing for staff and students
* Proper technique for handwashing and sanitizing
* Routines for entering and exiting the building
* Moving through the building, passing in the halls
* Staying in one location, gathering as a group
* Accessing the bathroom
* Staff using PPE
* Cleaning and disinfecting
* Students use of PPE (when to use, how to take it off and put it on, how to dispose and store it)

# **Parent Engagement Plan**

Student Program Coordinators reach out regularly via email and phone to update parents/guardians and districts on the latest policy and procedure updates for Cardinal Cushing as they are constantly evolving throughout the Covid-19 crisis. The parent/guardian can contact or inform the Program Coordinator of any need arising from the current change in school access. The Program Coordinator can coordinate additional supports for each student with the Cardinal Cushing therapists and staff during the health care crisis. The Program Coordinator will help facilitate resources with parents/guardians and districts to ensure that the educational opportunities of the student are being accessed to the best of the students’ ability during the period of remote learning. Program Coordinators are working collaboratively with their Out of District Liaisons to utilize translation services and translation of documents for families whom English may not be their first language.

Individualized Remote Learning Plans exist for each student and are updated as service delivery abilities evolve. The contact information for the student’s Team as well as their office hours are documented within this document. As the educational model pivots from remote to in person or a hybrid variation of both the plan is updated. The Individualized Remote Learning Plan is then shared with the district and parent/guardian via email and US mail if necessary.

Routine Cardinal Cushing information, forms, parent feedback surveys and updates are emailed by the Student Program Coordinator to the parents/legal guardians and school districts. The Student Program Coordinators identify families who do not utilize email reliably and follow up with a phone call and hard copy through the postal service if necessary. Parents/legal guardians and school districts can reach out as needed via phone or email to the assigned Student Program Coordinator for clarification or with any concerns.

Emergency information (i.e. significant medical concerns, physical management, injury) will be followed up by the Health Center staff, Supervisor, or Teacher (dependent on who is most appropriate) in conjunction with the Student Program Coordinator. Weekly emails or communication logs are submitted to the parents/legal guardian by the Teacher and House Manager to provide information about progress and alert to upcoming events.

The parents/guardians are provided an informational packet by the Student Program Coordinators addressing the following protocols: current health and safety, appropriate use of mask and PPE, cleaning and disinfecting, and changes to our arrival and dismissal procedures. Additionally, a school wide community update authored by our Leadership Team is provided via email to all of our parents/guardians and districts as guidelines shift and subsequent decisions are made.