

Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan 2022 (Updated 6_1_22)

Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls returned to hybrid education for part of the student body in November of 2020 after having our *Operational Guidelines and Procedures for Infectious Diseases Plan* approved by Dr. Fredrick Echols, Acting Director for the Department of Health for the City of St. Louis. This board approved plan addressed all Communicable Diseases and guided our safe return to school last year. The plan lives on our school website at hawthornschooll.org.

This document, our *Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan 2021* is a fine tuning of our previous plan and specifically addresses COVID 19 prevention and mitigation strategies. Given Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls' intention to open fully in-person for the 2021-2022 school year, this document seeks to offer further clarity and guidance. As per SRSCSP requirements, our administration will update this plan on a six-month basis.

Coronavirus/COVID-19 Overview

While we now have COVID-19 vaccines available, students and staff are encouraged to receive the vaccination and/or the booster that has now been approved by the FDA. Our prevention and mitigation strategies are based on the Coronavirus being a respiratory virus that is transmitted from person-to-person, even by those who may be asymptomatic. All efforts will be made to accommodate students and staff with disabilities with respect to all our health and safety policies.

Prevention

Hawthorn will advocate these everyday preventive actions to help minimize the spread of respiratory diseases, including COVID-19:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash hands with soap frequently.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth (because viruses can remain on frequently touched objects such as doorknobs and cell phones for quite some time. If you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face, you can transfer the germs, which can lead to illness).
- Stay home if you are sick, especially if you have a fever.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Or cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow rather than your hands.
- Wear a mask/face covering.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Practice distancing from other people and avoid large groups.

To meet Department of Health requirements, a pre-entrance health check – students and parents may use the questionnaire available through our Student Information System – is to be conducted prior to entering the building as part of Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls Infectious Disease Policy. In addition, each staff member should ask themselves the following questions prior to arriving at school:

- Have you had a fever in the last 24 hours?
- Do you have a new or worsening cough or trouble breathing?
- Have you had a sudden loss of taste or smell?
- Are you experiencing a headache, muscle aches or sore throat?

If a student has a fever, she should stay home, contact the school administration, and consider contacting her doctor for additional guidance regarding next steps and possible testing.

If a student becomes ill during the day and has a temperature > 100.4 the nurse or designated staff member will call the family to pick up the student within 30 minutes.

Masks

All students, staff, visitors, and vendors are required to wear a mask that covers both the nose and the mouth while inside Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls with the following exceptions:

- Masks are not required when providing outdoor instruction and students and staff are able to maintain six feet of physical distance between others.
- Masks may be removed to eat or drink during lunch but must be replaced if not actively eating or drinking.
- Masks need not be worn by students with medical conditions that prohibit them from being able to wear face covering if they have a document from their medical provider.

Hawthorn students and staff will be reminded of the proper way a mask/face covering should be worn. Extra face coverings will be available for students and staff to replace face coverings as needed during the school day.

Hand washing

All students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer frequently throughout the day. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed throughout the building.

Gloves

- The school nurse, and any other staff member who works with sick or suspected sick individuals, will wear gloves. A fresh pair of gloves should be worn when working with each

new individuals and hands should be washed or hand sanitizer used before putting on gloves and then once again after removing gloves.

- Custodial staff will follow the procedures under “Standard Precautions for Contact with Bodily Fluids” in the school’s *Operational Guidelines and Procedures for Infectious Diseases*.

Social distancing

Hawthorn has implemented the following social distancing strategies:

To minimize contact and social mixing during school hours by separating students into small cohorts and limiting movement throughout the building.

- Modify class sizes and classroom arrangements to comply with St. Louis City guidance on social distancing, which currently requires, at a minimum, a 3ft radius around each student’s desk in the classroom.
- Staggering lunch periods and using alternative locations for lunch.
- Avoid large-group gatherings and school assemblies, unless approved by the DOH.

Visitors

- Visitors and vendors are required to have their temperature checked and sign in with their current temperature and answer our health screening questions upon entrance to the building.
- Parents and guardians must remain in the school lobby when checking students in/out during the school day. If others are waiting to check their student in/out, it is best if they can wait outside so there is a limited number of individuals in the lobby area.

Health Procedures

- Hawthorn staff shall be alert to signs and symptoms of flu and COVID-19.
- All staff shall follow the protocols for managing any student or staff member who falls ill at school, considering the various types of illnesses referenced in the school’s general *Operational Guidelines and Procedures for Infectious Diseases* as well as the specific circumstances and known preexisting health conditions of the student/staff member.

- Hawthorn has established an isolation area in the nurse's office, which will be used to remove an ill student/staff member from the school's general population until she can be picked up by a family member within 30 minutes.
- If the Head of School or other staff member determines that a student needs to leave the school building for health reasons, then the school staff will notify the student's contacts and the student must be picked up within 30 minutes.
- The school nurse will track and report pertinent public health or COVID-related information to the DOH (in accordance with 19 CSR 20-20.020).
- Families will be notified immediately if their student had close contact with anyone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, but due to legal reasons, the school will be unable to provide the ill person's name. Hawthorn will follow the guidance of the DOH in making decisions to quarantine specific groups of students, or staff or to close classrooms for a period.
- The school will also maintain a list of local facilities to provide COVID-19 testing for students and staff as well as locations for voluntary COVID-19 vaccination.
- The school will support the continued education of the student at home during quarantine periods through distance learning.

Communications by Hawthorn:

- Hawthorn will provide to students, staff and families information and procedures established by DOH and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- Hawthorn's website at www.hawthornschool.org includes information regarding COVID-19 for community viewing.
- The Head of School is the designated individual to issue information and updates on school community health matters and school dismissals to students, staff, families, and the community.
- While the school is restricted by privacy laws from divulging the name of any person who is diagnosed or suspected to have Covid-19, the school will follow DOH guidelines to identify who an ill individual was in close contact with and to notify student's families and staff members and tell them the required next steps (such as self-quarantine and/or testing).

Communications by Hawthorn Families

- In the spirit of safe partnership between the school and families, families will be requested to confidentially inform the school of a student's and/or a family member's diagnosis of COVID-19 or exposure to an infected person so that the school can follow its procedures and coordinate with the DOH.
- If self-quarantine recommendations (due to travel or specified activities) are adopted by the DOH or the school, families will be requested to communicate with the school about such travel or activities and the school may ask students to quarantine.

School Building Closure

- Hawthorn will work closely with the DOH in deciding whether a voluntary short-term or longer-term school closure is warranted due to a health threat.
- In the event of a serious health situation, a governmental order may decree that Hawthorn (and other schools) must be closed.
- The school will support continued education of students at home during quarantine periods through distance, staff will communicate class assignments to students electronically through the school's learning management system.
- The spreading of respiratory illnesses including COVID-19 could necessitate the closing of schools to help break the spread of disease. The nature of the disease will be important to a decision that schools be closed and the following questions should be considered:
 1. Can someone spread the disease without showing symptoms?
 2. What are the ways in which the disease can be transmitted to/between persons?
 3. What is the incubation period for the disease?
 4. Are the numbers of students and staff getting sick increasing day-to-day?

School Operations

Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls contracts with two main vendors to provide

custodial/maintenance services and food services. *Corvus* and *Fresh Ideas* have protocols in place to daily “self-check” staff prior to each day’s work.

Building Cleaning Protocols

The building will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly at the end of each school day. Surfaces that have “high touch” hand contact, such as doorknobs, desktops, tabletops, faucets, and handrails, will be cleaned frequently during the school day.

Staff to follow guidelines set forth by *Corvus*, our custodial vendor, and the CDC regarding cleaning and disinfecting buildings, and will be trained by corporate on how to safely execute and complete their daily duties to minimize risk while cleaning and using disinfectant.

Recommendations to follow:

- Staff to wear rubber gloves when cleaning
- Wash hands often
- While face shields are not required, custodial staff are encouraged to wear face shields
- Wipe down of hard surfaces with disinfectant following the manufacturer’s directions
- All classrooms will be treated with disinfectant spray in the evening. Again, following the manufacturer’s directions.

A *Corvus* staff member will disinfect the most frequently used areas and touchpoints within the building including:

- Entryway doors – push bars, glass, door frames, door handles
- Handrails
- Elevator buttons – Interior and Exterior (where applicable)
- Restrooms – Door handles, locks, light switches, fixtures, paper dispensers, soap dispensers, floors

Additional cleaning of all surfaces and items that have frequent hand contact (like doorknobs, desks, faucets, handrails, and cell phones) are being managed, particularly areas that are visibly soiled. Custodial and cafeteria staff have access to cleaning agents that all staff can use in between regular cleanings as needed.

Cafeteria Protocols

Fresh Ideas, our food service vendor will implement the following:

- Each cafeteria will have a hand sanitizer station located at the entry point.
- All staff will wear face coverings and gloves.
- Only pre-packaged salads and food items will be available. (No public salad bars / food selections).
- Lunch times will be staggered to limit the number of students in the café serving, eating areas.
- Students will have assigned seats so physical distancing guidelines can be followed.

Health Room Procedures

- School nurses are required to wear a mask.
- Staff are required to notify the school nurse's office before sending students to ensure social distancing.
- In case of emergencies, staff will contact the nurse immediately and students will return to their assigned classroom.
- Students will practice social distancing while in the school nurse's office.
- School Nurses will take the temperature of students referred with a no-touch/infrared thermometer.
- The school nurse or designee will contact the parent/guardian of the student for pick-up if symptoms warrant the student to be removed from school.

Stakeholder Feedback and Inclusion

Stakeholder feedback from parents, the Board of Directors, and staff was sought via email and was sought and incorporated in the current version of the Safe Return to School Plan as of 6_1_.