

## Brass City Charter School

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

2021-2022

#### Health and Safety Strategies

*Describe how the LEA plan includes (or will be modified to include) the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed below:*

Brass City Charter School's Board of Directors formally adopted a policy requiring all unvaccinated staff to undergo Covid testing before returning to school and then weekly testing throughout the school year. The reopening plan was circulated and approved prior to the start of school in September 2020. Modifications to the plan for the 2021-22 school year will be brought before the Board for approval in August 2021.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Universal and correct wearing of masks*

**LEA Response:**

- All students, staff, and visitors must wear face coverings when they are inside the school building.
- Masks will be provided for any student, staff member, or visitor who does not have one.
- Masks may be removed for eating, drinking, or when outdoors and effectively practicing social distancing.
- Teachers will monitor for correct wearing of masks.
- Signs regarding proper mask wearing are posted throughout the campus, including at each building entrance.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)*

**LEA Response:**

- Students will be placed in cohorts as much as possible.
- Interaction between cohorts will be restricted to the extent possible.
- Distance between workstations (including student desks) will be maximized to the extent possible.
- Recess times will be staggered.
- Staff supervising outside time will provide increased supervision to monitor social distancing, as appropriate.
- Assemblies and large gatherings will not be held at this time.
- Signs regarding physical distancing are posted throughout the campus, including at each building entrance.
- As much as possible, outside people will not be allowed in the school during the school day.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Handwashing and respiratory etiquette*

**LEA Response:**

- Students will be instructed in proper handwashing technique and respiratory etiquette.
- Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance to each classroom and office, as well as at building entrances.

- Tissues are available in classrooms.
- Signs regarding handwashing are posted at all sinks, including in classrooms that have sinks.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation*

**LEA Response:**

- Custodial staff will monitor levels of paper towels, sanitizer, and soap throughout the day to ensure that supplies do not run out.
- Buildings will be cleaned and disinfected in compliance with DPH Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting of Schools during COVID-19. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Coronavirus/20200622-DPH-Guidance-for-the-Cleaning-and-Disinfection-of-Schools.pdf>
- Door handles and other high-touch surfaces will be disinfected throughout the school day.
- All classrooms and offices have air purifiers which have been tested 99% effective at filtering COVID-19.
- New windows will be installed in 2 buildings this summer to improve ventilation.
- Stale indoor air will be refreshed by opening windows.
- Window A/C units will be adjusted to maximize fresh-air intake. Blower fans will be set on low speed and pointed away from room occupants to the extent possible.
- Free-standing fans will not be used.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments*

**LEA Response:**

- All visitors must sign in and provide contact information at the main office.
- An isolation room for students/staff exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms has been established.
- Students and staff must stay home when sick, especially if they have COVID-19 symptoms such as fever and cough.
- Students and staff must notify the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.
- BCCS will follow the CT Department of Public Health indicators and their approach to appropriate decision-making regarding quarantining, school class cancellations, and reopening.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Diagnostic screening and testing*

**LEA Response:**

- This fall, Brass City Charter School will begin a voluntary, free, weekly COVID-19 testing program for students in grades K-6 and mandated testing program for unvaccinated faculty/staff.

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible*

**LEA Response:**

- BCCS participated in the City of Waterbury vaccination clinics for educators and informed all staff of available dates and times for these clinics, as well as other venues for getting vaccines.
- BCCS has paid staff for time off if their vaccine appointment is during the school day, and we will continue to do so.
- Administration has encouraged and will continue to encourage all staff to get vaccinated.
- We will make every effort to work with our school-based clinic to have vaccines available on site for staff and students when that option becomes available.
- BCCS will disseminate DPH information on vaccines to families via the schoolwide information system (Alma).

**Mitigation Strategy:** *Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies.*

**LEA Response:**

- All supports, including paraprofessionals, will remain in place.
- If medically required or where services provided pursuant to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) would require it, including but not limited to for speech and language services, evaluations, language acquisition activities, etc., students and/or staff may wear face shields or remove masks when face coverings/masks are not appropriate for the activity. Any other possible mitigating strategy should be implemented in these cases, including but not limited to maximum social distancing.
- Related services (speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social skill instruction) will take place outside the classroom with necessary face masks and/or shields when possible.

## **Continuity of Services**

*Describe how the LEA plan will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services:*

**Academic:**

- We will be reducing class size in 3 elementary grades from 18 to 12-13 students per classroom to enable teachers to target academic recovery needs.
- The reading consultant will take on a more hands-on role in the day-to-day teaching of reading, providing teachers with guidance and support in identifying gaps and diagnosing issues as well as specific strategies for remediation or acceleration.
- There will be an assistant teacher in each PK-grade 2 classroom; our normal model has assistants only in grades PK-1.
- The master schedule will be changed to enable more time for data analysis, planning for differentiation in response to data, and cooperative lesson planning.
- A new intervention model will be introduced, and additional intervention teachers for both ELA and Math will be hired.

**Social/Emotional/Mental Health:**

- We will ease the transition back to school relying on our social-emotional RULER program, the on-site health/mental health clinic, and student support office. We recognize that a child's social-emotional wellbeing is critical to their academic development. We are committed to seeing every child as an individual and will use our resources to support their social-emotional needs.
- Staff have access to counseling through our employee assistance program.
- Administration is also committed to continuing our staff appreciation program which consists of events and small treats throughout the school year.

**Food Services:**

- Breakfast and lunch will be available to students during the month of July.
- School breakfast and lunch are served daily during the school year at no cost through participation in the Community Eligibility Provision of the National School Lunch Program.
- Meals will be served in the classrooms.

**Public Comment**

*Describe how the LEA plans to provide the public the opportunity to provide input and for public comment in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the LEA took such input into account:*

BCCS sent this draft plan to staff, families, and Board members through the school information system. All comments were considered and the draft was revised prior to submission to CSDE to reflect said comments.

This draft plan will be posted on the school website and comments received will be considered when the plan is revised later this summer.

Virtual Town Hall information sessions/Q & A will be offered prior to the opening of school in August. BCCS held several such sessions last year for both in-person and remote families, and they were well-attended and well-received, so we plan to offer them again this year, once the plan has been updated to reflect summer guidance from DPH.

**Understandable and Uniform Format**

The written plan will be translated into Spanish. Bilingual office staff is available to answer questions, and will participate in virtual Town Hall meetings to translate as necessary.