



Propel Schools Health and Safety Plan for School Closure, Recovery and Safe Return

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The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our society as a whole. We have learned how small our world really is and how a virus can change the ways we live and engage with each other. It has shown us the importance of strength, resilience and unity. We, as a global society, have united against this virus that threatens our most vulnerable populations including our underserved communities.

Since 2003, Propel Schools' mission has guided us as we bring equity and excellence to educational endeavors. We are proud to provide support in creative and inspiring ways to the communities and families that we serve.

The path to reopening Propel school buildings is based on public health frameworks, guidance from experts such as the Governor's team, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The following plan outlines the necessary steps for a safe and healthy return to school for us all — staff, scholars and families. It is vital to understand that this plan is flexible, agile and will evolve as we receive updated, science-based information.

In formulating this plan, Propel thoughtfully and intentionally investigated a wide variety of scenarios and circumstances. One thing became very clear — that it is impossible to utilize a “one size fits all” approach to reopening our buildings. Our plan takes into account our ‘people first’ value and will best meet the needs of our scholars and staff.

Pandemic Coordinator and Team

Pandemic Coordinator: Dr. Tina Chekan - CEO/Superintendent

Pandemic Team Responsible for Health and Safety Plan Development and Pandemic Crisis Response

- Jaclyn Hoover - Senior Director of Human Resources
- Sonya Toler - Senior Director of Strategic Communication and Enrollment
- Danielle Parson - Senior Director of Community Affairs
- Richard Snyder - Director of Operations
- Sandra Madden - Senior Director of Data, Reporting and Compliance

In addition to the Pandemic Team, Propel solicited feedback from school leaders via survey and plan feedback, from family members via survey, and from educators via survey and focus groups. Other Propel teams including but not limited to the Academic Team, Technology Team, Communications and Operations Team provided vital input and planning when preparing for the 2020-21 school year.

Health and Safety Plan Inspector

In order to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety steps below, Propel will designate an individual outside of the Pandemic team as the Health and Safety Plan Inspector. The Pandemic Team will use the inspection reports to support and ensure all items in this plan are in compliance.

Key Factors

The following key factors provide the framework for Propel's reopening plan:

1. This public health emergency requires adaptive planning that can evolve as new information emerges.
2. School buildings remained closed during the end of the 2019-20 academic year to scholars but will reopen in the 2020-21 academic year when directed. Future infection rate increases may warrant waves of short-term school building closures, rolling building closures or partial and/or staggered school reopenings.
3. Reopened school buildings and schedules require health and safety modifications based on guidance from national, state, and local health officials.
4. Health-related accommodations will be necessary for educators, administrators, school staff, and scholars who may have pre-existing medical conditions that could be exacerbated by infection with COVID-19 in accordance with the interactive process for ADA for staff and homebound instruction or other remote accommodations for scholars.
5. A vaccine might not be available for 18 months or more. This plan will be our northstar for both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years.
6. School policies — including attendance policies — may need review/revision (in conjunction with regulations outlined by PDE) to align with new circumstances.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles will inform and shape our decision-making process:

1. Propel Schools will make good-faith decisions based upon what is best for our scholars, staff and families.
2. Propel is responsible for meeting the needs of all scholars, including the unique needs of scholars from distressed circumstances, scholars with disabilities, and English language learners.
3. Propel is responsible to serve all scholars, even — and especially — during times of social disruption when remote learning is the primary educational delivery mechanism requiring scholars to connect from home to online instruction and resources.
4. State and federal officials are responsible to provide financial resources that schools need to cover the additional costs of operating during a shutdown or in accord with public health recommendations.

Propel's Commitment to Physical, Mental, and Emotional Wellness

Propel Schools remain committed to the physical, mental and emotional health of our staff and our scholars. We are accountable for following best practices in workplace and educational space safety, when planning for staff and scholars to return to school. These best practices will include, but not be limited to:

- Maintaining social distance
- Sanitizing and cleaning
- Utilizing and providing safety equipment access including face coverings and gloves
- Conducting routine, regular health checks including processes for ensuring safety and wellness
- Maintaining medical privacy while following CDC guidelines for pandemics

Additional supports as school buildings and administrative offices reopen may include:

- Addressing concerns, fears, and anxieties
- Managing refusals to return
- Professional development and virtual Absorb courses regarding health and wellness

Path Forward Specific to COVID-19

For the current COVID-19 pandemic, Propel has outlined steps for the following 3 methods of instructional-delivery:

- In-Person Learning Protocol: All scholars and educators will be in their school buildings and classes daily, following CDC safety guidelines.
- Hybrid Learning Protocol: School takes place through staggered in-person instruction with approximately 50% of scholars attending in-person each day. The other 50% of scholars will participate in remote learning.
- Remote Learning Protocol: Scholars participate in planned instruction that is delivered remotely.

Propel will follow Governor Wolf's plan on the [Process to Reopen Pennsylvania](#) together with PDE's [Phased Reopening of Schools guidelines](#) and CDC guidance when deciding to transition between scenarios.

Core Response Protocol

The following steps will be taken during the 2020/21 school year as soon as staff return to the administrative office and school buildings regardless of the learning scenario outlined above.

Communication

Propel is committed to keeping all members of our school community informed in a timely manner. The CEO/Superintendent will provide regular updates to staff and families via email, newsletters, Connect 5 and the Propel Schools website. The Propel Schools website has a devoted pandemic news and information section linked on the homepage that will include all updated procedures that address the pandemic, and social and traditional media will be used to keep the community informed.

Universal Face Coverings

On July 1, 2020, the Secretary of the DOH announced an [Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#), and on July 6, 2020, PDE shared school-specific information regarding [universal face coverings](#). That guidance was amended on August 17, 2020 as indicated below.

Any staff member, scholar or other individual aged two or older entering a Propel school building or administrative office will be required to wear a face covering until further notice.

Per the PDE guidance, a "face covering" means:

"A covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and, for the purposes of the order, can include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth. "Face coverings" may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. While procedural and surgical masks intended for health care providers and first responders, such as N95 respirators, would meet these requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care settings."

Scholars are permitted to remove their face coverings under the following scenarios:

- Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task
- During "face-covering breaks" to last no longer than 10 minutes when spaced at least 6 feet apart

Propel has **secured** lanyards with clips for scholars so that scholars can keep track of their own masks, be discouraged from sharing masks, and do not have to place masks on desks when they are not being worn in the above scenarios.

On November 17, 2020, the Secretary of the DOH announced an [Updated Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#). According to this updated order, all staff members shall wear a face

covering when:

- Indoors or in an enclosed space, where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance.
- Outdoors with others who are not members of a person's household and unable to maintain sustained physical distance of six feet or more.

The Order grants an exception for staff members working alone inside an office or room with four walls and a door but indicates that "All alternatives to wearing a face covering, including the use of a face shield, should be exhausted before an individual is excepted from this Order."

Social Distancing

According to the CDC, social distancing means "keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household." Propel staff and scholars are expected to practice social distancing of at least 6 feet throughout the day to the extent possible in order to limit the spread of respiratory droplets that spread COVID-19.

Staff and Scholar Personal Travel

Per the [Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation Relating to Travel](#) effective on November 20, 2020, all staff or scholars "traveling into and returning to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from any other State or Commonwealth or an international location, must produce evidence of a negative SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) test from a specimen collected within 72 hours prior to entering the Commonwealth, or quarantine for 14 days upon entering."

Propel urges staff to be cautious when traveling on their personal time. If quarantine is required by state or county officials, staff will be required to use [time off](#) after traveling.

Should Propel be made aware that any scholar travelled outside of Pennsylvania and did not receive a negative COVID-19 test, the scholar will be required to participate in 100% remote learning for 14 days upon returning to Pennsylvania.

Scholar and Staff Hygiene and Disease Prevention

Members of the Propel community are to follow the below essential steps to help prevent the spread of this (and other) respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home. Practice social distancing of at least 6 feet away from others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth or disposable face covering or mask while in public.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home when sick. Staff members must follow [PTO policy](#).

All Propel educators and staff members are expected to set a good example for scholars by



modeling behaviors around social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene. Staff, scholars and family members should reference the CDC document "[How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)."

Wellness for Scholars, Families and Staff

This pandemic may have been a traumatic event for some scholars, families and staff. We must assure that our scholars and staff are feeling safe and supported to return to school and work.

Restorative Practices training will be offered virtually for scholars, staff and families with an emphasis on restorative circles. Restorative Practices training for staff will be part of a broader Social Emotional Learning curriculum delivered during summer professional development.

Grief counseling will be made available to offer support for individuals who lost loved ones during the stay at home orders and were not able to gather or grieve as normal.

Propel is partnering with UPMC to make vaccinations, including the flu vaccine, easier and more accessible through Propel Northside Community Wellness Center and UPMC mobile. Wellness checks will also be available for scholars, staff, families and community members at the Propel Northside Community Wellness Center. Dental services will be made available via a mobile dental center through partnerships with UPMC and Pittsburgh Pirates beginning in December 2020.

Scholars: Propel is committed to whole-scholar wellness, and the Propel Partners in Wellness (PPIW) program and Crew classes will be leveraged to ensure that scholars are receiving the supports that they need. PPIW classroom lessons will be delivered by Prevention Specialists at all grade levels. The existing backpack feeding program is being evaluated for expansion beyond elementary school scholars to ensure that all scholars have access to nutritious meals. Additional partners are being identified to build a uniform stockpile at all schools with the awareness that families may experience economic challenges as a result of the pandemic that prevents them from purchasing scholar uniforms.

Families and Community: Virtual family and community engagement will continue to occur in the form of virtual coffee talks, lunch and learns with state, local and medical leaders (starting virtual and transitioning to in-person if possible with limits on attendance and social distancing guidelines in place) and School Community Council (SCC) meetings.

Staff: Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available. All staff have access to Life Solutions which allows for up to 6 sessions for each concern the staff member, or any member of their household, has. In addition to individual sessions, Life Solutions has many courses available online for staff covering over 40 different topics. The telephone number and information to access Life Solutions can be found on this document: [Life Solutions](#). Staff can also access Life Solutions programming through the Northside Wellness Center. Propel will be offering a two pronged "Propel Your Health!" Wellness Initiative during the 2020/21 school year that will focus on both activity and mental health.

Privacy Protection

Propel will continue to follow existing policies regarding Privacy Protection including the Personally



Identifiable Information Policy, FERPA requirements as outlined in the Scholar and Family Handbooks and [HIPAA Medical Privacy Policy](#).

Academics

Our learning community is prepared to ensure that scholars continue to receive excellence in their educational experience while recognizing that the school closure has the potential to create significant learning losses. Propel has developed a Plan for Accelerated Learning, based on guidance by The New Teacher Project (TNTP), that is a roadmap to ensure our approach to Academics aligns with our vision and research to combat those learning losses.

Protecting Staff and Scholar At Higher Risk for Severe Illness

Propel remains committed to the health and wellness of both staff and scholars. Staff members should contact their direct supervisor if there is an additional request due to extenuating or unusual circumstances. The request will follow specific process steps and must finally be approved by the CEO/Superintendent. Families of scholars who have an additional request due to extenuating or unusual circumstances should contact their Principal. The request will follow specific process steps and must finally be approved by the CEO/Superintendent.

Athletics Health and Safety Plan

Staff Considerations

Staff Work Schedules

All staff are expected to work in-person at their school building or designated office unless otherwise indicated by the CEO/Superintendent.

Refusals to Return and Staff Options

Our return to in-person work will allow us to resume the team collaboration that is vital for us to continue the work that supports our central mission -- to educate our scholars. The path to reopening is based on public health frameworks, guidance from experts such as the Governor's team, PDE and CDC.

Staff members who are not comfortable returning to work during the school year have the following options:

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) is available for qualified leave
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is available for qualified leave
- PTO is available
- Certain school-based employees may apply for one year unpaid leave
 - Pending Board approval of the plan, certain school-based employees with at least one year of experience may apply for one year unpaid leave with no benefits. In the event that this option is selected, an employee's term with Propel will freeze. At the close of the year, the staff member will be guaranteed a position within the LEA but may support different grade levels.



The CEO/Superintendent is the only person who may grant approved additional time off for very serious circumstances.

New Staff Onboarding

The Propel Human Resources team is adjusting the onboarding process to ensure that all new staff members, particularly educators and school leaders, have access to standard systems and technology such as a laptop, Jive software for telephones, Zoom meeting software, learning software such as Google Classroom and Seesaw and a cell phone when appropriate. Additionally, all new staff will be required to participate in the Professional Development activities outlined in the next section.

Professional Development

Summer Professional Development activities for school leaders will be deployed virtually via Zoom meetings, Google Hangouts and Absorb training sessions.

The 2020 Professional Development calendar will be updated to account for Health and Safety Plan training.

Staff Professional Travel

Propel will limit professional travel to within the state of Pennsylvania. Propel will not sponsor professional travel outside of the state through **March 1, 2021**. The CEO/Superintendent will reevaluate travel in **early 2021**.

Educator Evaluation

In the event that any school is closed for six weeks or more, the educator and school staff evaluation process will be modified to account for fewer observation opportunities. The Senior Director of HR will provide more information in this event, but the “Do No Harm” concept and the expectations [linked here](#) will be taken into account for evaluations that result from remote learning.

Essential Staff

Essential staff ensure the equitable provision of multiple life-sustaining services to scholars and families. Propel defines the following as essential staff: Operations including Food Service and Custodial staff, Information Technology, Senior Leaders, Directors, School Leadership Teams and other designated staff as approved by the Pandemic Response Team. Essential staff can be called to work a full schedule on-site depending on the circumstances to support scholar nutrition, facility maintenance, remote instruction, and other critically required functions.

Flexible Care Days

Propel will implement the addition of two additional days off to all full time employees for the 2020/21 school year only. These flexible-use days are meant to help alleviate concerns regarding potential personal quarantine situations, illness, and childcare concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employees hired before November 1, 2020, will receive 2 full days (8 hours each, 16 hours total), employees hired between November 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021 will receive 1.5 days, employees



hired between February 1, 2021 and April 1, 2021 will receive 1 additional day. Employees hired after April 1, 2021 will not receive any additional days.

Hire Date	Total Hours
Prior to 11/1/2020	16
11/1/2020 - 1/31/2021	12
2/1/2021 - 4/1/2021	8
4/2/21 and After	0

Employees have the flexibility to use the additional hours under the same conditions as the current PTO plan. This time off may be used in hour-long increments.

These two days are available for use only after the employee uses all of their Personal Days granted for the 2020/21 school year. Employees have the choice to use these Flexible Care days before any sick time that the employee has accrued and before FFCRA. These two Flexible Care days will be available in UltiPro for the employee to request and can be used in hourly increments. HR will monitor their use and if the employee uses these days before personal days, HR will automatically change the day to a personal day in UltiPro.

Flexible Care days will not roll over and will not be paid out if they are unused. If the employee does not use these days by July 31, 2021, the days are lost. Propel will not provide these days for the 2021/22 school year.

Technology

Devices

Propel will have 1:1 devices during the 2020/21 school year with chromebooks for 3rd-12th graders and tablets for KG-2nd graders. Families with scholars in 3rd-12th will be required to agree to the Chromebook Lending Agreement and sign off digitally using DocuSign. KG-2nd families will have a separate iPad Agreement (creation pending) that will be signed digitally using DocuSign. Electronic signature can be completed on a smartphone in the event that the family lacks access to a computer. If the family is unable to access a smartphone, the family will be connected with a member of the Technology Team for next steps. Signed Technology Loan Agreements will be saved by the Director of Technology with viewable access for school staff members. A plan for device deployment in accordance with social distancing guidelines will be developed in collaboration with Senior Leaders, the Technology Team, the Operations Team, and School Leadership Teams.

Device expectations will be outlined in the Chromebook Lending Agreement and iPad Agreement. All scholars grades KG through 12th grade will be expected to take their devices home after school every day for charging. Those scholars will be expected to arrive at school the next day with a fully charged device.

Software

The Technology Team will collaborate with the Academic and K-12 Schools Teams to ensure that Google Classroom rosters are set up and that all other software tools can be rostered through



Clever, including Seesaw for K-2nd grade scholars. This will provide seamless access for scholars and remove potential technical barriers to learning.

An audit of Zoom access will occur to determine if education accounts will continue to be free or if paid, contracted accounts will be required. Either way, Propel will continue to use Zoom as the primary tool for scholar, staff, and family connectivity.

Scholar and Family Home Connectivity

Propel recognizes the importance of Internet connectivity at home for family and scholars to ensure that planned instruction can be delivered remotely. Propel will work to develop a relationship with an Internet service provider to ensure that all families have Internet access at home either via network access in the home or WiFi hotspot.

Additional Considerations

New Scholar and Family Orientation

The Enrollment and Communications teams will develop virtual onboarding materials in partnership with each school's Principal to welcome new scholars virtually to Propel and to offer an opportunity for relationship building and for explaining the Scholar and Family Handbook and other school-related expectations. Online learning platforms will be explained during this time.

School Calendar

The 2020-21 school calendar is posted on the Propel Schools website [here](#), and instruction is planned to begin on August 19, 2020. Propel will identify a planned high school graduation date and will devise a contingency graduation plan in the event that scholars are remote in Spring 2021.

Flexible Instructional Days

Propel will complete a 2020/21 Flexible Instructional Days (FID) application by the deadline of September 1, 2020. Upon PDE approval, these days may be used as part of Propel's "return to school" plan or for other school closure reasons such as weather.

Nurse Pathways and Dual Enrollment

Propel is waiting for additional information from the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) and Point Park University for dual enrollment programs for 2020/21 next steps regarding in-person or remote instruction. Scholars in the first cohort of the Nursing Pathway program will take classes at CCAC in fall 2020. Depending on the mode of instruction, Propel may choose not to proceed with dual enrollment for the 2020/21 school year.

In-Person Learning Protocol

All scholars and educators will be in their school buildings and classes daily, following CDC safety guidelines.

Building Operations, Logistics and Social Distancing

Ventilation

Propel's school building ventilation systems utilize fresh air recirculation in the use of our HVAC systems.

Entering the School or Administrative Office Premises

Everyone, including staff and scholars, entering a Propel building will:

- Have completed the [COVID-19 Screening Questions](#) prior to entering the building (scholars should complete the COVID-19 Screening Questions verbally with their family prior to boarding the school bus or other school transportation).
- Be required to wear a face covering over both nose and mouth at all times.
- Be checked via thermal imaging camera for a fever (temperature of 100.4°F or greater).

[COVID-19 Screening Questions](#) should be posted near the thermal camera. They should be visible to all staff. Individuals should be 'silently' answering those questions prior to moving past the thermal check point. It is up to each individual to support the overall health and safety collectively.

In the event that a scholar or family member on a scholar's behalf receives the "Stay Home" response as a result of the [COVID-19 Screening Questions](#), that family member is expected to call the administrative assistant at their school and that scholar must remain at home. The administrative assistant will ask several follow up questions, and then alert the principal. Any families who contact an educator or other staff member should be directed to immediately contact the administrative assistant.

In the event that a staff member receives the "Stay Home" response as a result of the [COVID-19 Screening Questions](#), that staff member should contact their HR representative and Principal and should stay home utilizing one of the [time off options](#).

Specific opening and closing times will be identified for all buildings to ensure that all individuals undergo these screenings. In the event that a scholar or staff member is identified with a fever via the thermal imaging camera, an alert will be sent to designated Leadership Team Members, the nurse, and other key staff members for next steps. Further screening will take place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all. In the event that a staff member or scholar is confirmed to have a fever:

- Scholar: Moved immediately to the isolation room with all of his or her belongings. Reference the additional steps in the [Isolation Room for Scholars and Staff Section](#).
- Staff: Must not enter the building any further and must return home immediately utilizing one of the [time off options](#). If the staff member is unable to get themselves home, the staff member should be moved immediately to the [Isolation Room for Scholars and Staff](#).

All employees must swipe their individual badge when they enter the building. Staff should not hold the door, even for a fellow coworker. Propel will use the swipes at the door and in the UltiPro time clock to assist with any contact tracing, should that be necessary.

School visitors should be limited during this time, but in the event that a school does have a visitor, someone from the School Leadership Team needs to administer the [COVID-19 Screening Questions](#) before the visitor is permitted entry to the school.



Scholar and Staff Greetings

Propel is encouraging the school communities and administrative office to develop unique physical greetings, such as elbow bumps or foot taps in lieu of handshakes and hugs to support social distancing efforts while maintaining a welcoming, friendly environment.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival: Sidewalks will be marked to accommodate social distancing requirements. Scholars will be required to stay on the bus until a Propel staff member dismisses them from the bus to line up on marks accordingly. Scholars and staff will enter the school in line while observing the [Entering the School or Administrative Office Premises](#) steps. Scholars will be sent directly to the cafeteria to pick up breakfast and then will walk to their homeroom or first period classroom to eat breakfast. Principals will determine any required adjustments to schedules based on social distanced arrival.

Dismissal: Scholars will be dismissed from their last class of the day. Buses will be called via the intercom upon arrival and scholars will exit while observing social distancing requirements. The hallways will be supervised to ensure social distancing. Scholars who walk home or who are picked up by a family member will be released in separate waves via intercom.

Signage in Schools

Signs will be ordered or printed for all schools to communicate proper hygiene techniques and to clearly mark hallway flow in order to abide by social distancing.

Additional signage will be ordered as needed, for instance to clearly mark cafeteria seating, classroom spacing, and more.

Class Rotations and Transitions

In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines and limited staff and scholar mixing, classes in Propel's K-8 and middle school buildings will not transition classrooms. Instead, educators will travel between classrooms with carts and materials for each scholar. Propel's high school classes will continue to transition between classes, with clear and required social distancing requirements.

When transitions are required, such as for scholars to pick up lunches, scholars are to maintain 6 feet of distance between one another while in a single file line. If possible, hallways should be designated as one way lanes so that groups of scholars are not passing in the hall. Staff will be expected to take on additional hall duty and hall monitor roles as assigned by their Principal to enforce social distancing and bathroom policies.

Classroom Seating Arrangements and Chairs

Classroom educators will follow standardized seating requirements when arranging classrooms including maintaining desk distance and facing all scholars in the same direction with the goal of accommodating social distancing guidelines. Room and school-specific configurations will be decided by school leadership to account for irregular spaces. Any soft seating, such as bean bag chairs, will not be permitted in schools until further notice. In the event that K-2 scholars share a table, plexiglass barriers will be installed.

Scholar Bathroom Processes

One scholar will be permitted to use the bathroom at a time. Signage will be ordered that scholars will be directed to use to ensure that bathroom occupancy is noted. As part of the increased disinfecting processes, bathrooms will be cleaned every two hours.

Paper towel dispensers **have been installed in all bathrooms.**

Scholar Supply Kits

Standard supply kits per grade will be provided to each Propel scholar for use both in school and at home. This will serve the dual purpose of providing scholars with materials to use at home during remote instruction and limiting the number of individuals handling a set of supplies. Scholars are expected to bring their kits to and from school every day. Some additional materials will be available at the school in the event that a scholar forgets their kit at home.

Technology - Administrative Office Device Carts

One cart of shared Chromebooks and iPads will be available at each building in the event that a scholar forgets their device at home. Educators must check out the device on behalf of the scholar at the beginning of the school day and return it to the office at the end of the school day. The device will be sanitized before being returned to the cart.

Locker Use

KG -12th grade scholars will use individual lockers to align with CDC guidelines to "keep each child's belongings separated from others." Lockers will be accessed upon arrival and dismissal each day.

Transportation

Resident districts and transportation companies will be following the recommendations from the CDC, and [PDE](#) regarding cleaning and social distancing measures, and these plans will have been reviewed and approved by the school boards. Propel's Assistant Director of Student Affairs will work together with the resident districts and transportation companies to ensure strong communication between all parties, including sharing with resident districts any plans that may impact transportation, such as a staggered in-person schedule.

Visitor Policy

In order to prevent unnecessary exposure, Propel will not be permitting visitor access to buildings through **March 1, 2021**. Exceptions will be made for visitors who are essential to the health and safety of our scholars or to repair and maintenance of facilities. Propel will evaluate a potential extension of this moratorium **during the beginning of 2021**. Propel's Communications and Foundation teams will develop virtual school tours that can be used for promotional purposes.

Staff Travel Between Buildings

Propel staff are expected to meet virtually via Google Hangouts, Zoom, or teleconference in order to limit exposure to staff and scholars. Any staff member visiting a school must have a specific purpose related either to supporting scholars or new staff directly, and that individual's direct supervisor should be aware of and approve the meeting. Upon entering a building, staff members



will be required to follow the guidance set forth in the [Entering the School or Administrative Office Premises](#) section.

All employees must swipe their individual badge when they enter the building. Staff should not hold the door, even for a fellow coworker. Propel will use the swipes at the door and in the UltiPro time clock to assist with any contract tracing, should that be necessary.

Substitute Educators

HR has been in contact with Precision to review their Pandemic Plan. Precision is committed to notifying Propel if there is an exposure, and Propel will do the same with Precision. An additional building substitute has been added at each school to help ensure coverage.

Food Distribution and Nutrition

Prior to breakfast and lunch, scholars will be required to either wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. Scholars will eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms. Scholars will walk to the cafeteria while maintaining social distancing guidelines, pick up breakfast and/or lunch, and return to the classroom to eat.

Recess

Small groups of scholars will be released for recess at one time. Any equipment will be wiped down between use.

Fitness and Wellness Classes

Scholars in kindergarten through 8th grade will receive movement arts courses in their homeroom in accordance with the [Class Rotations and Transitions](#) section. High School scholars will participate in Fitness and Wellness in accordance with social distancing guidelines and while limiting shared equipment. Any equipment will be wiped down between use.

Staff and Scholar Preparation for Short Notice Closure

Staff and scholars are expected to be prepared for a short notice school closure as a result of the pandemic. Staff and scholars should take computers, tablets and chargers home every evening. Food that can spoil such as produce should not be left in lockers or desks.

Field Trips

Propel is instituting a moratorium on field trips through **March 1, 2021**. Propel will evaluate a potential extension of this moratorium **during the beginning of 2021**. Propel's Scholar Opportunities and Innovation Team will develop a list of virtual field trips that can be delivered to scholars during the school day together with other Propel teams. Propel recognizes that closing the experience gap is a key aspect of programming, and to that end, virtual field trips and opportunities are strongly encouraged for scholars during this time.

Celebrations of Learning and Other School-Wide Activities

Celebrations of Learning and other school-wide activities that require all scholars to assemble in one room are on hold through **March 1, 2021** or until deemed safe as directed by the CEO/Superintendent. Small classroom groups may be brought together for performances or events

that may be filmed and delivered virtually to families. Any scholars without a photo permission form will not be permitted to participate in recorded or live-streamed performance or school-wide activities.

Afterschool Program

Propel Schools will begin offering Afterschool Magic programming in September 2020. All safety measures in place for the traditional school day will continue. Additional measures will include:

- **Arrival:** Afterschool scholars will be dismissed directly to their afterschool homeroom. Scholars will stay in this room for the entire afterschool day.
- **Dismissal:** Afterschool staff will coordinate a staggered dismissal. Parents will be asked to stay 6 feet away from entrance and 6 feet away from each other. Parents/guardians will enter building entrances/vestibules at minimum capacity based on entrance size.
- **Visiting Artist/Partners:** Afterschool staff will rotate to afterschool classrooms. Scholars will not rotate.
- **Supper:** Meals will be provided by staff and delivered to individual classrooms. Supper will only be provided for Propel students, and no outside visitors will be allowed to take part in Supper service.
- **Cleaning and Sanitization:** Staff will provide additional sanitizing materials for use by staff and scholars.

Summer Programming

All summer programming will be required to incorporate the social distancing, entry and other guidelines of this plan.

Cleaning and Sanitization

Cleaning Procedures at School and Administrative Office Facilities

Propel's school facilities were treated by Firewater Restoration with a 100% botanical fog disinfectant and sanitizer during mid-March 2020. Propel East and Propel Montour Middle and High School were treated again after election day in early June 2020. Additionally, the Propel Operations Team has implemented an updated and robust custodial cleaning/sanitizing program to ensure that our buildings are ready to receive scholars each day in a safe and nurturing environment. This updated plan is based on CDC guidance for "[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)."

Custodial Staff will use hospital grade, CDC-approved disinfectants and color coded cleaning tool systems to prevent cross contamination when cleaning. Custodial Staff will ensure:

- All restroom soap and paper towel holders are in good working condition and are supplied - [Restroom Cleaning Log template](#)
- All hand sanitizer units are full
- All high-touch areas such as door knobs, railings, bathrooms and others will be cleaned every 2 hours
- Cleaning checklist is completed and signed - [School Custodian's Job Description/Duties](#) are outlined here and include cleaning frequency by room

Classroom educators and other Propel staff will be provided with disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer. Commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) will be wiped down

twice per school day or more often as needed by educators and staff.

3rd party custodial staff may be hired as needed to support increased cleaning and sanitization methods.

Safety and Cleaning Supplies

Propel Schools will ensure that a three months supply of all cleaning materials and PPE will be kept in stock and available for distribution to every Propel building. The school supplies form is linked [here](#). A stockpile of hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, gloves and face coverings including masks and shields has been ordered and distributed among the school buildings and administrative office.

Hands-free drinking water stations (with foot pumps) have been installed in every school building eliminating the need to distribute bottled water daily. Water fountains and coffee machines may be used by staff at their own risk. Staff members are encouraged to get water from the new hands-free drinking water stations or bring water or coffee from home.

Propel has ordered face coverings for use by both staff and scholars. Staff will be permitted to wear their own individually purchased or hand-made face coverings, but if one is required one will be provided.

Propel currently has 17 infrared thermometers in stock to verify staff and scholar temperatures if necessary.

Plexiglass shield barriers will be installed for all schools that lack a window or barrier in the main school office. Additional portable barriers are being ordered for use elsewhere in the buildings.

Training and Professional Development for Staff and Scholars

Staff Professional Development

Additional required professional development will be deployed to train all staff on hygiene including:

- Proper classroom, office and common space hygiene
- Communicating hygiene standards to scholars
- Properly wearing and cleaning face coverings
- Identifying the signs of COVID-19
- Guidance on in-person and one on one instruction

Scholar Training

The school nursing team will visit all classrooms to conduct training on proper hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, and other important health topics related to the pandemic. The lesson plan is [linked here](#).

Staff and Scholar Illness

Isolation Room for Scholars and Staff

Each school must identify an isolation room to be used by scholars or staff presenting symptoms of COVID-19. The recommended room will be reviewed and approved by the CEO/Superintendent. Any scholar exhibiting the symptoms indicated in the table below and any other scholars residing at

the same household will be sent to the isolation room separate from other scholars and staff members.

Group A - 1 or more symptoms	Group B - 2 or more symptoms
Fever (100.4 or higher)	Cough
Shortness of breath	Chills
Difficulty breathing	Rigors (feeling cold and shivery)
New olfactory disorder	Myalgia (muscle pain)
New taste disorder	Headache
Nausea or vomiting	Sore throat
Diarrhea	Fatigue
	Congestion or runny nose

The isolation room will be monitored by the nurse, unless there is another scholar in the nurse's office or unless a medication must be administered. In those instances, the nurse should use the walkie-talkie to call for another team member to watch the isolation room until the nurse can return. Dividers will be used in the event that there are two or more scholars requiring the isolation room at one time.

The scholar's family member will be called for immediate pickup. Family members will be allotted 90 minutes from the time of initial call to pick up their child. In the event that the family member does not show up at the school in 90 minutes and does not provide a satisfactory reason, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the hospital. Any other scholars residing at the same household as a scholar sent home due to COVID-19 symptoms will also be sent home and will be directed to quarantine and follow the guidance in the section below.

Staff will be directed to return home immediately upon identification of fever. If the staff member is unable to drive home on their own or must wait for a ride, the staff member will stay in the isolation room.

Staff and Scholar Illness and Expectations Regarding Staying Home

The Scholar and Family Handbook provides guidance on "When to Keep Your Child Home from School." Both staff and scholars are expected to follow this guidance.

The Allegheny County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided the following guidelines:

- Your child should not be sent to school hoping that he or she will feel better after arriving.
- Your child should be kept home following an overnight bout of nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea and watched for further symptoms.
- Your child should remain home if he/she has had a temperature of 100 degrees or higher. A child should have a normal temperature for 24 hours or as long as outlined in current CDC guidance without fever reducing medicines before returning to school.

If a school building has a high number of staff absences and is unable to staff the building to safely accept scholars, the CEO/Superintendent will make a decision about a building closure and the length of the closure.

Additionally, staff and scholars are required to have completed the [COVID-19 Screening Questions](#)

prior to boarding school transportation or entering the building.

Responding to Confirmed or Probable COVID-19 Cases

Propel Schools will rely upon PDE's guidance with regards to "[Responding to Confirmed or Probable Cases](#)." DOH or Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) should notify Propel immediately upon learning that a person with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 was present at the school while infectious. DOH and ACHD staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations. **In addition, Propel will notify ACHD when made aware by staff, scholar, or family or any confirmed COVID-19 cases.**

It is the responsibility of DOH or ACHD staff to contact a scholar or staff person with COVID-19, inform close contacts of their possible exposure, and give instructions to those involved, including siblings and other household members, regarding self-quarantine and exclusions. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications from DOH or ACHD to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the DOH or ACHD staff. Propel Schools will contact ACHD before acting in response to a known or suspected case of COVID-19, and either DOH and ACHD will provide guidance regarding disease information, appropriate letters and communications, identification of high-risk individuals, appropriate action and treatment, and on-going support and assistance. **Propel Schools will offer assistance in the contact tracing process by interviewing relevant staff or scholars, gathering facts, and sharing that information with ACHD.**

In the event that the scholar or staff member is at school at the time of the confirmation of diagnosis, arrangements will be made with parents/guardians for immediate dismissal to home, and the scholar will be moved to the designated isolation room as outlined in a previous section to limit contact with other scholars and staff. Staff will be dismissed immediately. The entire building will not be evacuated.

The following outlined procedures will be used for time off for staff: [Time off options](#)

Deep Cleaning as a Result of a Confirmed or Probable COVID-19 Case and School Closure Decisions

If seven days have passed since the sick individual was in the school building, cleaning is not needed. Otherwise, Propel will close off areas used by the infected person and will not use those areas again before cleaning and disinfecting. A period of 24 hours shall pass before cleaning and disinfecting takes place. Propel Schools has secured an external certified remediation company to disinfect and sanitize classrooms and/or entire buildings with a 100% botanical fog.

Depending on the extent of the cleaning required, a closure may include a single or a group of classrooms, a single school building or the entire Propel network. In the event that a school building is closed, that school will move into [Remote Learning Protocol](#). See section below for guidance. Propel will take into account the size of school buildings, circumstances regarding cases, and [PDE Recommendations for Pre-K to 12 Schools Following Identification of a Case\(s\) of COVID-19](#) when making school closure decisions.

Returning to School After Exhibiting Symptoms of or Having a Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Staff and scholars with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions before returning to school. Staff and scholars with fever or symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19 and no known direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 may return to school when they are asymptomatic and have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine or have confirmation of an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that explains the COVID-19-like symptom(s).

Staff or scholars with symptoms who have had a direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 will be considered probable cases and should remain excluded from school/work until release from isolation criteria has been met. Propel Schools will follow the latest [CDC guidance on release from isolation](#) for both staff and scholars. Test results and/or doctor's notes for scholars must be shared with the school nurse, and the school nurse will communicate with the Principal. Test results and/or doctor's notes for staff members must be shared with the appropriate HR representative. **If a family or scholar refuses to visit a doctor and receive a COVID-19 test, that scholar must stay at home for 10 days since symptom onset. That scholar may participate in 100% remote learning during that time.**

A student or staff member who is quarantined following close contact with a case may not return to school until cleared to do so by DOH or ACHD. A negative test obtained prior to the end of quarantine does not clear an individual for return. The entire quarantine period must be completed. [CDC guidance on quarantining](#) will be followed.

Staff Time Off Options

If a staff member is exposed to COVID-19 at school/in the workplace (and Propel determines that the staff member should quarantine or stay home until a deep cleaning of the building can occur), then staff members will be paid during that time and will not be required to use PTO. For example, if a classroom, school building floor or entire school building is closed due to a positive COVID-19 case — to allow for deep cleaning — staff members will be asked to teach from home during the time of the closure. If the educator is feeling ill at the time (or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms) they will not be required to teach during that time.

If the staff member is exposed to COVID-19 outside of the school/workplace, the staff member must take FFCRA (upon approval) or use PTO. In this scenario, staff members will not be permitted to work from home while quarantining. A substitute educator (if needed) will be placed in the classroom while the staff member is out for quarantine.

Scenarios will be reviewed on a case-by-case-basis by our HR team. COVID-19 protocols are complex and we want to be sure that we are examining all facts thoroughly and taking proper health and safety precautions. All staff members have received training regarding the protocol mapping via Absorb.

For expectant mothers, most healthcare facilities and providers are requiring a 2 week quarantine prior to giving birth. As of September 1, 2020, FFCRA has been updated to include a fully-paid 2 week quarantine period for expecting mothers prior to giving birth. FFCRA is currently available through the end of December 2020.

Hybrid Learning Protocol

School takes place through staggered in-person instruction with approximately 50% of scholars attending in-person each day. The other 50% of scholars will participate in remote learning.

All items outlined in the [In-Person Learning Protocol](#) section apply when scholars are receiving education in the school building in addition to the refined and new points below.

Instructional Delivery

Educators will be expected to keep their Google Classroom, Google Site or Seesaw up to date with rosters and assignments, which will allow educators to deliver materials remotely to scholars on the staggered schedule. Attendance will be taken and grades will be issued for assignments for all scholars regardless of if they are at school receiving instruction or on a staggered remote week receiving instruction at home. School Leadership Teams should continually emphasize the importance of prepared Google Sites and Classrooms during staff meetings, assuring that new educators have supports in place to create these virtual learning environments.

Food Distribution and Nutrition

Propel will continue to offer 'Grab and Go' meals to scholars on a staggered schedule during the weeks that they receive education at home. Times and locations will be determined and shared with families.

Afterschool Program

Propel Schools will begin offering Afterschool Magic programming in September 2020. All safety measures in place for the traditional school day will continue. Additional measures will include:

- Staff will offer both virtual and in-person afterschool support Monday-Thursday.
- Scholars will attend in-person programming based on their assigned school attendance day, and scholars participating in remote instruction will be given virtual afterschool support opportunities.

For those scholars participating in-person, the [Afterschool Program section](#) above will apply.

Remote Learning Protocol

Scholars participate in planned instruction that is delivered remotely.

Instructional Delivery

Educators will be expected to keep their Google Classroom, Google Site or Seesaw up to date with rosters and assignments, which will allow educators to deliver materials remotely to scholars on the staggered schedule. Attendance will be taken and grades will be issued for assignments for all scholars regardless of if they are at school receiving instruction or on a staggered remote week receiving instruction at home. School Leadership Teams should continually emphasize the importance of prepared Google Sites and Classrooms during staff meetings, assuring that new educators have supports in place to create these virtual learning environments.

Food Distribution and Nutrition

Propel will continue to offer 'Grab and Go' meals to scholars receiving remote instruction. Times and



locations will be determined and shared with families.

Counseling and Propel Partners in Wellness

Propel in partnership with Mon Yough Community Services will continue to offer scholars remote Student Assistance Program (SAP) services through online webinars.

Afterschool

Afterschool programs will transition to remote offerings that will be run similarly to the Spring 2020 school closures.

Phased School Reopening For Scholars and Staff as of November 17, 2020

Phase 1: On **August 19-21, 2020**, scholars will pick up technology and other learning materials. From **August 24, 2020 to October 2, 2020** and from **November 30, 2020 through January 1, 2021**, all scholars will engage in Remote Learning Protocol.

Phase 2: From **October 5, 2020 through November 24, 2020**, Propel will utilize the Hybrid Learning Protocol for those families selecting Option 1 (A/B week in-person learning rotation) or Option 2 (100% remote learning).

Phase 3: A full reopening as outlined in accordance with local, state and federal guidance. Phase 3 is outlined in Propel School's Health and Safety Plan - In-Person Learning Protocol.

We will continually monitor COVID-19 transmission in our community and reevaluate our plans every 30 days OR when new guidance is received. Any changes will be communicated to staff in a timely manner.

Expectations

- We are taking a measured and deliberate approach to support scholars both virtually and in our classrooms. The Governor has indicated that the targeted mitigation does NOT apply to classroom settings, having staff in buildings for professional development or for teaching children. It does, however, apply to athletic or other school activities, held indoors, that are not related to educational instruction.
- Staff will be expected to report for in-person professional development, to prepare materials for scholar pick-up and for safety/wellness training from **August 10-21, 2020**. All professional development will be building specific. 200 day employees will also start on August 10, but follow the original calendar for days expected.
- On **August 24, 2020** scholars will begin the initial 6 weeks of the Remote Learning Protocol.
- Simultaneously on **August 24, 2020**, all staff will report on-site Mondays through Thursdays with Fridays being utilized for deep cleaning of buildings. Staff will use time on Fridays for telework and virtual student learning. Continuing into Hybrid Learning Protocol on **October 5, 2020 through November 24, 2020**, all school based staff are expected to be on site Monday - Thursday and working virtually on Fridays. Deep cleaning protocols will occur in all buildings on Fridays.
- The Southside building is open 5 days per week. The custodian deep cleans the building during the evening hours. **During the Hybrid Learning Protocol**, just as school based staff are, all Southside employees are accountable for spending 4 days on site.
- **Propel will transition back to our Remote Learning Protocol beginning November 30, 2020. There will be adjustments to the learning schedules starting November 30, 2020 through the last day of winter break on January 1, 2021.**
- **Scholars will return to the Hybrid Learning Protocol on January 6, 2021.**
- **Employees with the exception of operational staff will have a choice to work on site or remotely starting November 30, 2020 through January 1, 2021. For employees choosing to**

work on site, the school buildings will remain open Monday through Thursday, and the Southside Office will remain open Monday through Friday.

- Principals will work collaboratively with educators and staff to develop a creative, non-traditional approach for learning schedules that will make Propel a more agile and effective organization.
- A unique and exciting element of our approach will be to pair schools and work collaboratively, leveraging our many talents. These school pairings will support the development of common, flexible and agile schedules. Long term, these pairings will open the door to more creativity and consistency for scholars. Although this is a unique and challenging time in education, our team has the knowledge, skills and ability to thrive and truly make a difference for our scholars. We know what our scholars need and we take special pride in being able to meet scholars where they are and support them as they grow into their full potential.
- Families will have an option to make a change to their scholars learning protocol for Trimester 2 for K-8 scholars or mid point in Semester 1 for High School scholars.