



Ridge and Valley Charter School

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Health-Related School Re-Opening Plan

Revised 8.18.20

On June 26, 2020 the NJ Department of Education released [The Road Back](#) which outlines the guidelines for the re-opening of schools in the fall of 2020. These guidelines, which were developed in collaboration with the NJ Department of Health, include information on required health and safety procedures, as well as a statement that all NJ schools must provide in-person instruction, in some capacity. This plan incorporates all of the NJDOE requirements, as outlined in that document, as well as input from stakeholders via spring and summer surveys and virtual 'town meetings'. This plan will be revisited periodically and upon changes in the guidelines from the state.

1. General Health and Safety Guidelines

Ridge and Valley Charter School (RVCS) will comply with all CDC, state, and local guidelines. Accommodations such as remote teaching/instruction will be provided for staff and students at higher risk. Social distancing (minimum of six feet apart), frequent hand sanitizing and washing, use of face coverings and/or the use of barriers will be promoted and ensured. Social distancing will be implemented to the maximum extent practicable during all in-person school activities. Student face coverings will be required, indoors and outdoors, when social distancing is not practicable and/or a barrier is not in place. Face coverings will be required to be worn by all staff and visitors (except a visiting child under the age of 2) at all times. The sharing of objects will be minimized and/or items will be cleaned between uses.

Staff will be trained on healthy hygiene practices, so they can teach these to students. Staff will ensure the use of handwashing strategies including washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will be used. RVCS will provide adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissue) to support healthy hygiene practices.

All classrooms are equipped with their own bathrooms and handwashing stations. Outdoor handwashing stations will also be utilized. Stations will include soap, water, paper towels, and hand sanitizer.

On buses, social distancing and face coverings will be required.



2. Screening, PPE, and Response to Students/Staff Presenting Symptoms

RVCS will screen all staff and students, upon arrival, on a daily basis. A safe/respectful space will be available for isolating anyone who is symptomatic. The school will immediately notify the Warren County Department of Health (DOH) if someone on-site tests positive and will take direction from the DOH for further steps. When required, RVCS will conduct contact tracing in collaboration with the Warren County Department of Health.

3. Facilities Cleaning Practices

RVCS will develop a procedure manual/checklist and schedule for increased cleaning/disinfecting. Twice weekly cleanings of all facilities by our contracted cleaning company will continue as scheduled. In addition, classrooms/offices will be disinfected at the end of every day and after meals, using an EPA-approved disinfectant. High touch surfaces and objects will be cleaned/disinfected daily or between use by different cohorts. Bathrooms will be sanitized daily, or between use, as much as possible. If someone on-site has been confirmed as COVID-19 positive, RVCS will follow CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting.

The facilities committee will ensure ventilation systems are clean and operate properly, and increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, using windows, doors, and/or fans.

4. Meals

RVCS will not be including lunch in the daily schedule but will encourage proper hand washing, before and after eating and/or preparing food as part of curricular activities.

5. Recess/Physical Education

RVCS will include recess in the daily schedule. Cohorts will be staggered to ensure adequate space for social distancing. An inventory of outdoor spaces to ensure separation among students will be taken. RVCS will stagger use of and disinfect shared equipment between uses.

6. Extracurricular Activities and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

RVCS will not be offering extracurricular activities or facility use outside of school hours. If those are offered in the future, RVCS will comply with all social distancing and hygiene protocols.

7. Communication

Information will continue to be disseminated to families through the RVCS-News Google Group, Google Classroom RVCS Community Class, and One Call Now messaging system.



8. Instruction

All students, K-8, will be provided 20 hours weekly of differentiated and developmentally appropriate guided learning experiences, meetings, and assessments. Each trimester, all families will be allowed to choose either an in-person or remote instruction option, based on their families' circumstances and needs. A system will also be in place for families to request a change of instructional option during the trimester, if needed. The majority of in-person and remote instruction will take place Monday to Friday, 9am-1pm, with some potential for afternoon sessions for additional support, related services, etc. Most instruction will be offered within project-based learning units, which will run parallel and simultaneously in both options, allowing for a smooth transition between options, if necessary. If, due to increased COVID19 cases in the state and/or other directives, RVCS is ordered to go to an all remote experience, the remote option will be implemented for all students. Students participating in remote instruction will engage in guided learning experiences, assignments, and assessments using provided materials and/or available online resources as determined by their guides/teachers through Google Classroom, Zoom and other online, curriculum-based sites. Virtual instruction and support will be offered.

A survey was completed in order to measure the digital access and needs of families. Tablets, with data plans, will be provided to families in need. Digital needs will continue to be monitored, and IT support provided to families, as needed. Materials for guided learning experiences will be provided by the teaching staff, as needed.

9. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

To help reduce the impact of social isolation on both educators and students, students and staff will be provided the opportunity to connect with others through the continued implementation of circle work, team building experiences, and "I statements." Respectful language and experiences will be used to help students positively implement the social distancing and face covering requirements. Check-ins with guides/teachers and parents will continue to occur, in order to assist in identifying at-risk students who may need additional mental health support.

Electronic surveys and virtual community video conferences were held to promote family engagement and participation in the school opening planning. Families will continue to be encouraged to share their thoughts and concerns.

10. Special Learning Needs and Student Support Services

In conjunction with families and the school nurse, discussion regarding accommodations, modifications, and additional precautions necessary for medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments will be addressed.

To the greatest extent possible, all requirements and related services will continue to be provided in accordance with student IEPs, regardless of instructional setting. In a remote instruction setting, electronic platforms and/or print materials, as individually appropriate, will be used along with individual,



small group and large group video conferencing. The Child Study Team and guides/teachers will regularly review student progress, and communicate with families, to ensure that student needs are being met to the greatest extent possible. When possible, virtual IEP meetings will be held. CST evaluations will follow all mandated guidelines. A collaborative support model, which includes our I&RS team, will be utilized for any student who is reported to be struggling.

RVCS does not offer before/after care or preschool programs or currently offer a free and reduced lunch program. For any homeless, migrant LSE, or English Language Learners students, services will be provided.

11. Professional Learning

RVCS will offer professional development opportunities that will build staff capacity in providing highly effective instruction within a hybrid environment and addressing learning gaps, and that will better equip leaders, staff, substitutes, students and parents to adapt to altered environments and experiences.

12. Additional Information

This plan was created by the Crisis/Pandemic Response Team, with input from students, families, staff, Trustees and other community stakeholders via virtual 'town hall' events, online surveys and other means of communication.

Crisis Response Team members include:

- Lisa Masi, Integration Coordinator
- Traci Pannullo, Curriculum Coordinator
- Theresa Radline, Business Coordinator
- Susan Corcoran, School Psychologist
- Meaghan Manole, School Psychologist
- Toni Marek-Mazzariello, School Health Coordinator

For up-to-date information on coronavirus and other health issues, please go to the State of New Jersey's websites at <https://www.nj.gov/health/> OR <https://covid19.nj.gov/>. Feel free to contact the school office at 908-362-1114 or crisisresponseteam@ridgeandvalley.org if you have any questions or concerns.