

Child Care COVID Response & Preparedness Plan

Program Information

Child care program name:

Battle Creek Public Schools GSRP

Introduction

Our Commitment to Health & Safety

Battle Creek Public Schools GSRP is committed to protecting the health of our children, families, staff, and community. The following policies were designed in response to guidance from the Michigan Departments of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and Health and Human Services, in accordance with best practices from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and with everyone's well-being in mind. To limit the potential spread of COVID-19, we will be making some temporary changes to our programming that include robust cleaning and disinfecting procedures and minimizing opportunities for person-to-person exposure (e.g., an infected person spreading respiratory droplets through actions such as coughing, sneezing, or talking). The following plan outlines the recommended practices and strategies will use to protect the health of our children, staff, and families while at the same time ensuring that children are experiencing developmentally appropriate and responsive interactions and environments.

Changes to Our Physical Spaces

We will use the following strategies in our classrooms and facilities to minimize the spread of illness:

1. Where possible, dividing large group spaces to allow more children to safely use the space (e.g., using child-sized furniture, such as rolling shelves and kitchenettes, to divide a room and prevent mixing between groups of children).
2. Rearranging classroom areas to seat children as far apart as reasonably possible and limiting the number of children sitting together.
3. Using touchless trash cans to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues and contaminants.
4. Ensuring ventilation systems operate properly and increasing circulation of outdoor air as much as possible (e.g., keeping windows and doors open to the extent that this does not pose safety risks).
5. Before re-opening we will ensure all water systems and drinking fountains are safe following CDC guidelines.
6. Where possible, limiting or eliminating use of common spaces in the classrooms/facility. When common spaces must be used, we will rotate use of the space and clean between groups.

Other policies related to our physical space include:

Class sizes have been reduced to 16 students maximum for GSRP.

Toys will be sanitized between use.

Student learning tools will be separated and designated for each student.

No use of auditoriums or other gathering spaces.

Availability of Toys and Classroom Materials

At this time, we will make the following changes to the toys and materials in our classrooms:

1. We will remove toys and objects which cannot be easily cleaned or sanitized between use.
2. We will temporarily suspend use of water and sensory tables.
3. Toys will be washed and sanitized before being moved from one group of children to another.
4. Given that cloth toys are not recommended at this time, we will remove these from classrooms.

Mealtimes

To limit opportunities for exposure during mealtimes, we will engage in the following recommended practices:

1. We will space seating as far apart as possible (ideally 6 feet apart) by limiting the number of children sitting together and rearranging seating.
2. We will modify our family-style meal service and have staff plate each child's meal so that multiple children are not using the same serving utensils.
3. Staff and children will wash hands before and immediately after children have eaten.

Naptime

To reduce potential for viral spread, we will engage in the following recommended practices:

1. Storing each child's bedding in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags.
2. Labeling each child's cot/mat.
3. When possible, children will be placed head-to-toe (i.e., one child with their head at the top of the mat, the next child over with their head at the bottom of the mat).
4. Ensuring that children's naptime mats/cots/cribs are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart.
5. Using bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed.

Items Brought From Home

During this time, we are trying to limit the number of items brought into the facility because this can be a way to transmit the virus, so we ask that families refrain from bringing items from home as much as possible. However, we recognize that placing limits on children's comfort items may increase stress for children and staff as they may be especially needed during this time of transition.

We ask that families and staff follow these guidelines with regard to children's comfort items:

1. To avoid these items coming into contact with many children, efforts will be made for these items to be placed in a cubby or bin and be used at naptime or as needed.
2. Items should be washed weekly (at our facility or the child's home) and daily if the comfort item is a soft material (e.g., blanket, stuffed animal, clothing).

Screening Families & Staff for COVID-19 Symptoms and Exposure

Upon arrival to the program, staff and families are required to report if they or anyone in their household:

- have received positive COVID-19 results;**
- been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19; and/or**
- have experienced symptoms such as persistent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, change in smell or taste, diarrhea, and/or vomiting.**

The procedures we will use to screen staff for symptoms and exposure include:

Staff and parents of students will conduct daily self-examinations, including a temperature check, prior to coming to work/school. Staff self report daily on the BCPS private online form. Temperature checks of students will be taken by the classroom staff and supported by the school nurse. Students will be visually checked for signs of illness (flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing, fatigue or extreme fussiness)

Students and staff experiencing any of the symptoms listed below are not to attend school or school events.

Staff and students should: **STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS:**

- Fever 100 degrees or higher
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Excessive fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache coupled with other symptoms
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Sign in will be conducted outside of the building and parents will be asked the following Questions: Has your child been in close contact with a person who has Covid-19?

Has your child had any of the listed symptoms in the last 24 hours

The procedures we will use to screen children/families for symptoms and exposure include:

A suggested amount of time for students and staff who develop symptoms to stay home, quarantine and monitor symptoms before returning to school.

Family members of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 to stay home, quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.

Proper procedures for students or staff who have recently come in contact with someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19.

Guidance in regards to COVID-19 testing and how a confirmed negative test result may shorten or remove some of these quarantine requirements.

If families or staff are absent or otherwise off-site but experience exposure or symptoms, they should contact:

Staff should report to building principal of reason for absence if experiencing symptoms

Parents of students can report to both the teacher and the principal. If reported to the teacher, then the teacher reports to the principal.

Daily Temperature Checks

Temperature Checks

As fever is the key indicator of COVID-19 in children, we will check each child's temperature upon daily arrival to the program. Staff will also be asked to take their own temperatures upon arrival to work. Staff will re-check children's temperatures throughout the day if they appear ill or "not themselves" (e.g., flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or extreme fussiness).

When children arrive to the program, temperature checks will occur

before children enter the building.

Each child's temperature will be taken by:

program staff.

The following staff members will be responsible for temperature checks:

GSRP classroom staff, school nurse or school secretary

To minimize potential spread of illness, staff will:

1. wear a face mask while taking the child's temperature.
2. wash their hands (using soap and water for 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol) between checks.
3. **disinfect non-disposable thermometers between uses (e.g., cleaned with an alcohol wipe or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab).**

Responding to Symptoms and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Responding to COVID-19 Symptoms On-Site

If a child or staff member has a temperature above 100.4 degrees and/or symptoms such as persistent cough, difficulty breathing, chills, diarrhea, or vomiting, they will be sent home immediately with the recommendation to contact their primary care physician/medical provider. If anyone shows emergency warning signs (e.g., trouble breathing, persistent pain/pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face), we will seek medical care immediately.

If a child develops symptoms during care hours:

- Parents will be contacted for prompt pick-up.
- The child will be isolated from other children and as many staff as possible (the child will not be left alone).
- The child will wait with the following designated staff member(s):: Designated school staff/nurse
- The child and designated staff will wait in the following safe, isolated location:: Specific location in each building

If a staff member develops symptoms during care hours:

- They will be asked to go home immediately.
 - If no other caregiver is immediately available to be with children, the staff member will put on a cloth face covering (if not already on) and limit close interactions with children until they can be relieved by another staff member.
 - Children may need to be picked up if no other caregiver is available.
 - If the ill staff member needs to be picked up or otherwise cannot leave the facility immediately, they will wait in the following safe, isolated location: Care room designated
- Other procedures include: All in care room will social distance and wear masks

Reporting Exposure

Reporting Exposure

If a child, staff member, family member, or visitor to our program shows COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for the virus, we will contact our local health department and licensing consultant. Based on the guidance of the local health department, we will determine whether to close individual classrooms or our facility, the duration of the closure, and other next steps. When communicating with families and staff about any COVID-19 cases, we will respect the privacy of individuals and not share health information of a specific person.

Our local health department can be contacted at:

269-969-6370

Returning to the Program After Experiencing Symptoms and/or a Positive COVID Test

If a staff member or child has a fever OR a cough (but no other symptoms):

In order to return to school, a student must:

Be fever free without medication for 24 hours and have not been exposed to anyone with Covid-19 or probable Covid -19

Have extra masks brought or provided in order to contain the cough and be able to change into clean masks if needed and must not have been exposed to anyone with Covid-19 or a probable Covid -19 cases.

If a staff member or child exhibits multiple symptoms of COVID-19, possible exposure is expected, OR an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual must stay home until:

They have been fever-free for at least 72 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND
Other symptoms have improved AND
At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

As per [Executive Order 2020-36](#), if staff or their close contacts have possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19, staff will be allowed to remain home without penalty of discharge, discipline, or other retaliation.

To accommodate for the potential need to quarantine staff or allow for longer absences from work than normal, we will implement the following staffing plan to ensure we can meet staff to child ratios:

A roster of substitutes will be established. As a last measure, other staff with the Comprehensive background approval will be used to ensure staff ratio.

Because child care staff members are part of Michigan's essential workforce, they are eligible to be tested for COVID-19.

Staff can visit [this resource](#) to locate a nearby test site.

Other policies related to returning to care and work include:

BCPS employees and students with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should only return to the work/school after they are no longer infectious, using the most current guidelines from CCPHD for this determination.

Maintaining Consistent Groups

During this time, we will maintain the following group sizes:

Leave blank if this age group does not apply to your program.

Infants and Toddlers, birth until 30 months of age

Preschoolers, 30 months until 3 years of age

Preschoolers, 3 years of age until 4 years of age

Preschoolers, 4 years of age until school-age

16

School-agers

To support these smaller group sizes, we will implement the following policies:

We have capped enrollment at 16 and will adhere to a 1:8 adult/child ratio. We will spread out table time for meals and table activities to keep close groupings smaller.

To minimize potential spread of COVID-19, we will engage in the following best practices:

1. To the extent possible, classrooms will include the same group of children and providers each day.
2. We will limit the mixing of children across groups by staggering times for outdoor play and other activities where children from multiple classrooms are typically combined.
3. Canceling or postponing field trips and special events that convene larger groups of children and families.
4. Limiting non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities including groups of children or adults.

Other policies related to minimizing exposure risks include:

Staff meetings will be held virtually, no visitors allowed in the building.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

We will use the following recommended practices during drop-off and pick-up times to protect the health of children, families, and staff.

1. Only one adult per family should be present at drop-off/pick-up. Ideally, this would be the same parent or designated person every day, though we recognize this is not always possible.
2. Staff will greet children and families curbside or outside the building and walk children in and out of the building.
3. We will have a hand hygiene station at the entrance to our building so children and parents can clean their hands.
4. We will provide hand sanitizer or wipes at the sign-in station for parents/guardians to clean pens/keypads between each use.
5. We ask that parents avoid congregating in a single space or a large group.

Other policies related to drop-off and pick-up include:

Staff will document sign-in and out times and authorized adult on the printed class list.

Transportation

We will use the following CDC-recommended practices to ensure the safety of children and staff during transportation:

1. We will limit non-essential work-related travel and have staff participate in training and technical assistance virtually whenever possible.
2. Cloth face coverings should be worn by everyone in the vehicle to the extent possible.
3. We will clean commonly touched surfaces in vehicles between transporting passengers (e.g., seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, etc.) with appropriate cleaning products if visibly dirty followed by disinfectant.
4. Staff will use disposable gloves while performing cleaning and disinfecting and leave doors and windows open for ventilation.

Other policies related to transportation include:

Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance of the bus and students are socially distancing as much as possible.

Hand Washing

We will reinforce regular health and safety practices with children and staff and continue to comply with licensing regulations and CDC hand washing guidelines as follows:

- Staff and children will wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. Staff and children should cover all surfaces of their hands with hand sanitizer, rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Staff should assist children with hand washing (especially infants who cannot wash hands alone) and use of hand sanitizer to ensure proper use and prevent ingestion.
- Staff and children (with frequent reminders and support) will cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve and wash hands immediately after.
- Wearing gloves does not replace appropriate hand hygiene.
- Hand hygiene is especially important after blowing one's nose, going to the bathroom, before eating or preparing food (or helping children do any of these actions).

Other policies related to hand washing include:

Handwashing will be taught and handwashing posters will be placed by all sinks.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and Disinfecting Surfaces

We will engage in the following cleaning and disinfecting practices in accordance with CDC recommendations:

1. Daily cleaning/disinfecting of **high-touch surfaces** (e.g., sinks, toilets, light switches, door knobs, counter and tabletops, chairs).
2. Use of a **schedule** for regular cleaning and disinfecting tasks.
3. Ensuring staff wear **disposable gloves** to perform cleaning, disinfecting, laundry, and trash pick-up, followed by hand washing.
4. Cleaning **dirty surfaces** using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
5. Use of **CDC-recommended disinfectants** such as EPA-registered household disinfectants, diluted bleach solution, and/or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol
6. Keeping cleaning products **secure and out of reach** of children, **avoiding use near children**, and ensuring **proper ventilation** during use to prevent inhalation of toxic fumes.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Toys

We will engage in the following best practices to clean and disinfect toys:

1. We will clean toys frequently, especially items that have been in a child's mouth.
2. We will set aside toys that need to be cleaned (e.g., out of children's reach in a dish pan with soapy water or separate container marked for "soiled toys").
3. We will clean toys with soapy water, rinse them, sanitize them with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry.

Other policies related to cleaning and disinfecting include:

We will continue to use the three part cleaning for table and the use of disinfectant. Mats will be disinfected and stored in a way that they do not touch on the sides that are used.

Safety Equipment

Face Mask/Coverings for Staff

Our plan for staff around face masks/coverings is as follows:

Staff are required to wear face coverings at all times on-site.

Use of Gloves

Staff will wear gloves in a manner consistent with existing licensing rules (for example, gloves should be worn when handling contaminants, changing diapers, cleaning or when serving food). Staff members should wash hands before putting gloves on and immediately after gloves are removed. Gloves are not recommended for broader use and do not replace hand washing..

Face Masks/Coverings for Children

Our plan regarding children wearing cloth face coverings during care is:

All students are expected to wear face masks upon entering the building and throughout the day as directed by the Governor's Executive Order. Students are not expected to wear are mask on the playground but will be monitored for social distancing.

Partnering and Communicating with Families & Staff

Communicating with Staff and Families

We will actively communicate with staff and families to determine when they will return to work/care if they have been out, discuss concerns or questions, share new policies and expectations, and confidentially discuss any extenuating circumstances that have emerged and/or any health concerns/conditions that may elevate risk for complications if exposed to COVID-19.

The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for **staff** is : Patricia McCann, Human Resources

The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for **families** is : Monique Cheeks, Student Services

Training Staff

To support staff in effectively engaging in best practices and making personal decisions, we will provide learning opportunities to help all of us understand how COVID-19 is transmitted, the distance the virus can travel, how long the virus remains viable in the air and on surfaces, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and our new policies and procedures as outlined in this plan.

Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Needs

Staff and families will partner together to support the needs and emotional reactions of children during this time. We anticipate that children will experience a wide range of feelings during this transition period. Some children will be relieved, some will have initial challenges with separation from their parent(s), some may demonstrate anger at the "disappearance" of their child care provider, and some may act out toward other children. Whatever the reactions, we acknowledge that staff and families may need some new tools in their toolkit to assist the child with emotional regulation and we will work together to support all caregivers.

We commit to supporting our children in the following ways:

BCPS has aligned their philosophy with CASEL's SEL Roadmap for Reopening Schools. Within this plan schools will look to SEL as a transformative foundation for reopening as this year's return to school will be unlike any other in our history and will be emotionally charged for students and adults. This moment will call on all stakeholders to deepen their SEL competencies and create equitable learning environments where all students and adults process, heal, and thrive.

All students will be receiving social and emotional support and instruction focused on the following 5 competencies and will be embedded throughout their learning experience as a BCPS student.

Self-Awareness

Self-Management

Social Awareness

Relationship Skills

Responsible Decision-Making

Teachers will foster supportive classroom environments (virtually and/or face-to-face instruction) that provide opportunities for both explicit SEL skill instruction as well as integration of SEL throughout daily lessons. A safe, supportive and equitable learning environment calls on adults to:

Engage in practices that affirm diverse social and cultural identities

Cultivate a sense of belonging and community

Provide structures for physical and emotional safety

Use engaging, relevant, and culturally responsive instruction built on an understanding of how children and adolescents grow and develop socially, emotionally and academically

Offer frequent opportunities for students to discuss and practice anti-racism and develop collaborative solutions to address inequities

Provide tiered supports that meet the needs of all students

We will make the following resources available for staff and families to support children:

[Crisis Parent and Caregiver Guide](#), from the Michigan Children's Trust Fund

[Talking with Children about COVID-19](#), from the CDC

[Helping Young Children Through COVID-19](#), from Zero to Thrive (includes Arabic and Spanish translations)

[Georgie and the Giant Germ](#), from Zero to Thrive and Tender Press Books

Supporting Staff Members' Social-Emotional Needs

To ensure the well-being of the children, it is also imperative to ensure the well-being of their teachers and caregivers, and to provide them with the emotional and administrative supports necessary during this time of re-integration, and in the months ahead. As essential workers in the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand our staff may have worries about their own physical or psychological health, and the potential risk to their family members at home. Because young children internalize the stress of the adults who care for them, we know it is vitally important to provide supports and services to ensure the emotional well-being of our staff.

We commit to supporting our staff in the following ways:

Wellness Resources

A comprehensive list of wellness resources available to both staff and students will be regularly updated and provided on the BCPS website in conjunction with screening activities that reference school and community-based resources. The Student Services Department and the Human Resources Department will update the list regularly to ensure accurate and timely information is available to all stakeholders.

Resources are available for all BCPS staff for self-care and promoting resiliency strategies through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with HelpNet. HelpNet EAP provides support to teachers, staff, administrators, their partners/spouses and dependents to enable self-care, resilience and support the wellbeing of the "whole" person. Preventative resources such as webinars and other virtual resources are available to all staff including ancillary staff to promote emotional wellbeing.

In addition to the HelpNet EAP program, all staff can send a confidential email to the Human Resources Department at HR@battle-creek.k12.mi.us for support with accessing or requesting additional resources and support. The HR Department will provide a timely, confidential response to connect staff to available services to support overall wellbeing and emotional/physical health.

Contact Information

Email address

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