



Forest Ranch Charter School

Plan for Safe Reopening

September 3, 2020

Introduction

According to the Center for Disease Control, COVID -19 is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The disease can be spread from person to person through air droplets expelled when a person coughs, sneezes or speaks, as well as through touching hard surfaces that are contaminated with the virus. Forest Ranch Charter (FRCS) has put multiple policies in place that dictate solid procedures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among students (when they return) and staff.

The following School Plan for Safe Reopening is based on the California Department of Education's (CDE) guidance publication, *Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools* as well as guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control, The California Department of Education, the California Department of Public Health, Butte County Office of Education and Butte County Public Health.

Due to the rapidly changing nature of the current health situation, FRCS will keep abreast and will implement changes in accordance with new or revised orders or guidance from local, county, state or federal authorities.

Forest Ranch Charter is applying for a waiver to allow for our school to open for in-person instruction in early October. We have attached the waiver application and a detailed reopening plan. Multiple board policies that support the information in the reopening plan are available by request. These include our Injury and Illness Prevention Plan COVID-19 Addendum, Health and Safety Policy for COVID-19 and our Distance Learning Policy and Procedures.

General Information

- FRCS is a small TK – 8th grade school with an average class size of 15 students
- Our administration meets regularly with county leadership groups, keeps abreast of public health and education information daily and works together with our board, to respond quickly to changing directives.

- We have solid communication and on-site emergency management team that is well trained and can respond rapidly to ensure we remain in compliance with board policies and any challenges that may arise.
- We have developed a plan for all classrooms and work areas to be directly accessed through the outside doors and have shut off enclosed spaces from use.
- Our campus allows for ample outdoor space and has many extra rooms including a large multi-purpose room to use in inclement weather.
- Each class has a small cohort that will not be rotating or mixing with other groups at this time.

Input from Stakeholders

Applying for a waiver has been discussed multiple times during our regular Advisory Council and weekly Parent Update meetings. We have also solicited information from families through an on-line survey and at a Special Town Hall Zoom meeting for families and the community.

Staff and teachers have been apprised of information and have been asked for input both at group meetings and individually. Teachers had the opportunity to fill out an anonymous survey.

Learning Options for 20/21 School Year

1. In-Person Learning that follows public health guidelines/board safety policy
2. Distance Learning using a combination of synchronous/asynchronous time and offers both on-line and paper materials dependent on individual circumstances
3. Independent Study through our preexisting Independent Study program – customized for each family but incorporating daily live interaction and weekly engagement logs to meet new legislative requirement

Promoting Healthy Hygiene Practices

Handwashing

- Students and Staff will wash or sanitize hands frequently, including upon arrival to campus, after using the restroom, after playing outside and returning to the classroom, before and after eating, and after coughing or sneezing.
- Sanitation routines will enable students and staff to regularly wash their hands at staggered intervals.
- Staff will teach and reinforce proper handwashing technique, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, using a tissue to wipe the nose, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Soap, tissues, no-touch trashcans, face coverings, water and paper towels or dryers for hand washing will be made available for use by students and staff. Students and staff should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application. Soap products marketed as "antimicrobial" are not necessary or recommended.
- If soap and water are not readily available, FRCS will provide fragrance-free, alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least sixty percent (60%) ethyl alcohol. (Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.)
- Children under age 9 should only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222.
- Posters will be placed around campus that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Cloth Face Coverings Required for Students and Staff

We will follow CDPH, CDE and CDC guidance and state and local health orders on the use of face coverings.

- Until such time as the statewide order is lifted, all adults must wear a cloth face covering at all times while on campus, except while eating or drinking.
 - Staff excluded from this requirement are those that require respiratory protection according to Cal/OSHA standards.
- Staff should wear a clean face mask to school every day.
- Staff should avoid touching the mask and should wash their hands frequently, including after removing the mask.
- Staff will teach and reinforce proper use of face coverings, and in limited circumstances, face shields.

- Teachers may use clear plastic face shields with an appropriate seal (cloth covering extending from the bottom edge of the shield and tucked into the shirt collar) in certain limited situations in the classroom to enable students to see their faces and avoid potential barriers to phonological instruction as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering when not wearing a face shield.
- FRCS will post signs regarding the proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings.
- All students who are not prevented from doing so by a breathing problem or disability (as documented by a medical note) shall wear a clean cloth face covering:
 - While waiting to enter the school campus.
 - In any area outside of the classroom (except when eating or drinking).
 - While leaving school.
 - While waiting for or riding on a school bus.
- **Elementary school students in grades TK-2 are strongly encouraged, but are not required, to wear a cloth face covering within their stable classroom cohort. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear a face mask properly.**
- Students in grades 3 and above are required use cloth face coverings when in the classroom even if they are in a stable classroom cohort.
- Staff shall educate students, particularly younger elementary school students, on the rationale and proper use of face coverings.
- A cloth face covering or face shield may be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or outdoor recreation, or when it needs to be replaced. When a cloth face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the student’s name and date) until it needs to be put on again.
- Staff will provide face coverings for students and staff who lose their face coverings or forget to bring them to school.

Protective Equipment

Forest Ranch Charter requires employees to wear gloves and other Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) in accordance with the following standards.

- FRCS will provide surgical masks, face shields, and disposable gloves for employees engaging in Wellness and Temperature Screenings.

- Staff handling or serving food will use gloves in addition to cloth face coverings.
- FRCS will provide a clear plastic barrier or face covering and disposable gloves for front office and food service employees.
- FRCS will provide equipment and PPE to custodial staff for cleaning and disinfecting.
- As required by Cal/OSHA, we will provide training on the proper use of PPE to protect employees from the hazards of the cleaning products used.
- Employees will wash hands after removing gloves.
- FRCS will make sure that adequate PPE supplies are maintained for students and staff at all times.

Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation

FRCS will incorporate the CDPH and CDC Guidance for Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation as appropriate to maintain a high level of cleanliness throughout the year and reduce the risk of exposure to and spread of COVID-19 at the school site.

- Custodial staff will perform thorough cleaning when students are not present. When cleaning, the space will be aired out before children arrive.
- Staff should wait twenty-four (24) hours before cleaning and disinfecting any area that was used by a person who was experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If it is not possible to wait twenty-four (24) hours, then staff should wait as long as possible.
- FRCS will ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Staff are encouraged to introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible, by opening windows and doors where practicable. On the bus, ventilation will be maximized by spacing and keeping windows down to the greatest extent possible.
- All frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as chairs, desks, tables, keyboards, telephones, handrails, light switches, sink handles, bathroom surfaces and door handles, will be routinely disinfected.
- Students and staff are discouraged from sharing desks, computers, books, phones, pens, art supplies, or other work tools and equipment, including playground equipment, when possible. When shared use is allowed, the items and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Staff will be trained as appropriate in the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe and correct application of

cleaning and disinfectant agents in accordance with the Healthy Schools Act guidance from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation and Cal/OSHA.

- When choosing disinfecting products, the Charter School will use those approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- approved list “N” and require staff to follow product instructions.
- Subject to available resources, disposable disinfecting wipes shall be made available so that staff can wipe down commonly used surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) before each use. Disinfectant wipes and sprays will be kept away from students.
- To the extent feasible, site resources that necessitate sharing or touching items (e.g., drinking fountains) will not be used and replacement items (e.g., reusable water bottles) will be used to the extent practicable.
- Each student’s belongings will be kept in an individually labeled storage container, cubby, or locker. Students are encouraged to take belongings home each day to be cleaned.

Physical Distancing

Arrival and Departure

- FRCS has designated multiple campus entry and exit routes and will assign students and staff to specific entry/exit groups to limit contact.
- Parent/Guardians dropping off or picking up students will wait in cars while student is checked in at one of the wellness stations or staff members bring students to car using physical distancing protocols.

Staff: FRCS has incorporated CDPH and CDE guidance with respect to physical distancing between employees, to include some or all of the following:

- FRCS has arranged work schedules and providing telework options to limit the total number of staff on campus each day.
- Staff breaks and lunches are staggered to ensure social distancing and staff have been assigned to areas of the school to ensure no more than 2-3 adults in a room at a time which allows for much more than 6ft of space between staff.

- Where possible, trainings and meetings are conducted virtually or in a manner that accommodates physical distancing.

Students: Forest Ranch Charter will incorporate CDE guidance with respect to physical distancing between students on campus, to include some or all of the following:

- We have created cohorts that are small enough to allow for a minimum of a six foot distance between students in each classroom. Desks have been arranged to minimize face-to-face contact and maintain a minimum of six (6) feet between students and teacher.
- To reduce possibilities for infection, students must remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch.
 - Ensure students and staff remain in stable classroom cohorts by keeping the same students and teacher or staff together for the entire school day. Students should not mix with other stable classroom cohorts.
 - Prioritize the use and maximization of outdoor space for activities where practicable
 - Minimize movement of students and teachers and staff as much as practicable.
- Redesign activities for smaller groups and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain separation.
 - FRCS will implement measures to maintain physical distancing while students move between classrooms that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate, including potentially one or more of the following recommendations.
 - Walkways: Minimize congregate movement on walkways as much as practicable. For example, establish more ways to enter and exit a campus, stagger passing times when necessary or when students cannot stay in one room, and establish designated one-way walking/passage areas.
 - Restrooms: Stagger restroom use by groups of students to the extent practicable, and/or assign certain groups of students to use certain restrooms.
 - Library: We will have a mobile library that comes to individual classrooms.
 - Outdoors: Recess activities will be staggered or in separated areas designated by class.

- Outdoor and large format spaces (e.g., auditoriums) will be used for instructional activities where physical distancing cannot be maintained in classrooms.
- Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets such as band and choir practice and performances are not permitted indoors.
- FRCS will implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact.
- FRCS will implement a plan to maintain physical distancing during meals (serving meals in the classroom or outdoors, staggering cafeteria use, etc.). Food will be distributed in single-service meals instead of buffet, salad bar or family-style formats.
- FRCS will implement appropriate physical distancing measures during physical activities.
 - Playgrounds and Recess: FRCS will consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class and/or staggered throughout the day, and limiting use of shared playground equipment in favor of physical activities that require less contact with surfaces and allow for greater physical distancing.
 - Physical Education: FRCS will consider conducting physical education classes outdoors whenever possible, maintaining separation of classes and with appropriate physical distancing within groups to the extent practicable.

Physical distancing (our bus): FRCS will incorporate CDE guidance with respect to physical distancing between students on the bus (when bus transportation is provided).

- FRCS will limit the total number of students on the bus. Students who can not afford or do not have alternate transportation will be given the highest priority.
- Seats on buses will be marked to require students to provide physical distancing on buses. Seating will be staggered in accordance with CDE guidance.

Staff Training and Family Education

Staff:

- All staff will receive training in;
 - Cleaning and disinfecting practices
 - Distancing guidelines and their purpose
 - Health screening practices for others and themselves
 - COVID-19 symptoms and how it is spread
 - Proper Handwashing procedures
 - Proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings
 - All other trainings applicable to carrying out the procedures listed in our reopening plan

Students:

- Upon returning to campus, students will receive training in;
 - Proper handwashing procedures and why it is important
 - Physical distancing procedures and why it is important
 - Proper use and removal of mask
 - Use of hand sanitizer
 - Personal hygiene practices including coughing/sneezing into tissue or elbow
 - All other new procedures related to Health/Safety Policy and reopening plan

Families:

- Prior to students returning to campus, all families will receive information on:
 - How COVID-19 is spread and it's symptoms
 - Proper screening practices and their importance
 - Proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings
 - The importance of community physical distancing measures, including discouraging students from gathering elsewhere
 - Drop off and pick up procedures at school or at the bus stop
 - A copy of the reopening plan and all other related policies

Health Screenings for Students and Staff

- *COVID-19 Symptoms.* Currently, the CDC has identified the following as potential symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- In-person wellness checks administered under this Policy shall:
 - Confirm that the subject has not experienced COVID-19 symptoms in the prior 24 hours or potentially been exposed to COVID-19, by soliciting the following information:
 - Have you had any one or more of these symptoms today or within the past 24 hours? Are these symptoms new or not explained by another reason? (see above symptoms)
 - Do you live in the same household with, or have you had close contact with, someone who in the past 14 days has been in isolation for COVID-19 or had a test confirming they have the virus? Close contact means being within six feet of someone, regardless of face covering use, for more than 15 minutes at one time.
 - Have you traveled outside of the country in the past 14 days?
 - Be conducted safely and respectfully, and in a manner that maintains physical distancing within lines, by providing multiple screening entries into the campus if possible.
- In-person wellness checks do not need to be performed by a nurse or other health professional.
- *Home Screening (Students)*. Parents shall be instructed to screen their student before leaving the house for school. Before leaving the house, a parent should confirm that the student has a temperature below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit and does not exhibit any other COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Any student who has a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms must stay home from school for at least 10 days after the onset of symptoms, or such period as required by local health order or directive.
- *Home Screening (Staff)*. All staff who report to work (in-person) are required to perform a self-administered wellness check for COVID-19 symptoms before leaving home for work. Active symptom screening shall be conducted at the worksite if required by local order.

- Any employee who has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or any of the COVID symptoms is directed to remain home, notify his or her supervisor and await instructions.
- If symptoms are secondary to an underlying condition (i.e., allergies or asthma) and have not worsened, then the employee can report to work and follow hygiene practices.
- *Campus Screening (Students)*. Staff shall actively monitor students for COVID-19 symptoms when the student enters the school site, which shall include a visual wellness check and a temperature check (confirming temperature below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) using a no-touch thermometer, to the extent feasible.
 - Complete an in-person wellness check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
 - If student answers “no” to all questions and appears well, student will be allowed to proceed onto campus
 - If the student answers “yes” to any question or upon visual check, and the screener feels the student may be exhibiting signs and symptoms of illness, the student’s temperature should be taken, preferably using a touchless infrared thermometer.
 - If the student’s temperature is 100.4 or above or they have verbally confirmed symptoms, students will return to the waiting vehicle that came to drop them off. If they came on the bus, students will go to the designated waiting area and office staff will contact parent/guardian to pick student up.
- *Campus Screening (Visitors)*. Each visitor to the school site shall be screened for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the school site.
 - The staff member who greets the visitor at the entrance shall administer an in-person wellness check prior to escorting the visitor to his or her destination:
 - If the visitor answers “no” to all questions, he or she may enter the school.
 - If the visitor answers “yes” to any of the questions, he or she may not enter the school.

Note: Access to campus will be very limited to parents and outside volunteers.

- *Bus Screening (Students)*. The bus operator, a staff member or a volunteer shall conduct a wellness check of each student prior to entering the bus, which should include a temperature check using a no-touch thermometer, if possible. In the event that a temperature or wellness check confirms that a student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, the student shall not be

permitted to ride.

- To prevent stigma and discrimination in the school setting, student and employee health screenings should be kept as private as possible to maintain the confidentiality of student and employee medical and student records. Race, nationality, country of origin and other protected characteristics should never be used as a basis for particularized health screening.
- FRCS will not penalize students and families for missing in-person instruction due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing and Reporting

- Consistent with CDPH Guidance, FRCS will implement surveillance testing based on local disease trends periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable, and if directed by the local public health order. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time.
- Provided that doing so is supported by a local public health order, FRCS expects students and staff to get tested as soon as possible after developing COVID-19 symptoms or if one or more household members or close contacts tested positive for COVID-19.
- In the event of a positive test result:
 - Forest Ranch Charter School requires that parents/guardians and staff notify school administration immediately if the student or staff tested positive for COVID-19 or if one of their household members or non-household close contacts tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Upon receiving notification that staff or a student has tested positive for COVID-19 or been in close contact with a COVID-19 case, FRCS will proceed to our COVID-19 Response Plan

Response to Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case and Close Contacts

- If the event of a suspected COVID-19 case(s):
 - FRCS will identify a secluded space and/or outdoor areas to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms.

- Any students or staff exhibiting symptoms should immediately be required to wear a face covering and wait in a separate, secluded area until they can be transported home or to a health care facility.
- In the event of one or more confirmed COVID-19 case(s) FRCS will follow the CDPH Framework for Reopening K-12 Schools, including implementation of the following practices:
 - Notify the Butte County Public Health Department immediately by calling (530) 552-3050.
 - Work with BCPH to notify all staff and families in the school community of any positive COVID-19 case while maintaining confidentiality as required by state and federal laws.
 - Close off areas used by any sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. Follow cleaning and ventilation procedures in Section 6 and 7.
 - Investigate the COVID-19 illness and exposures and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection.
 - Update protocols as needed to prevent further cases in accordance with CDPH Guidelines (“Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace”).
 - Implement communication plans for exposure at school and potential school closures to include outreach to students, parents, teachers, staff and the community.
 - Include information for staff regarding labor laws, information regarding Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave and Unemployment Insurance, as applicable to schools.
 - Provide guidance to parents, teachers and staff reminding them of the importance of community physical distancing measures while a school is closed, including discouraging students or staff from gathering elsewhere.
 - Develop a plan for continuity of education. Consider in that plan how to also continue nutrition and other services provided in the regular school setting to establish alternate mechanisms for these services to continue.
 - Maintain regular communications with the local public health department.
 - Where stable classroom cohorts have been maintained: All students and staff should be instructed to get COVID-19 testing and remain quarantined at home for 14 days.

- Where stable classroom cohorts have not been maintained: Utilize class seating rosters and consultation with teachers/staff to identify close contacts to the confirmed COVID-19 case in all classrooms and on-campus activities.
A “close contact”¹ is someone who has been within six feet of the person who tested positive for a prolonged period of time (at least 15 minutes) regardless of face covering use, or someone who had direct physical contact or shared eating or drinking utensils with that person, or if that person sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.
Close contacts should be instructed to get COVID-19 testing and should remain quarantined at home for 14 days.
 - For all settings: Provide information regarding close contacts to the county public health department via secure fax or email.
 - In consultation with the local public health department, the school director or lead teacher may decide whether school closure versus cleaning and quarantine of exposed persons or other intervention is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.
- Close contacts to confirmed COVID-19 case(s):
 - Close contacts (household or non-household) of confirmed COVID-19 cases should be sent home immediately, instructed to get COVID-19 testing immediately and ten (10) days after their last day of exposure to the case. Even if they test negative, they should remain in quarantine for a full 14 days after (1) date of last exposure to COVID-19 positive non-household contact or (2) date that COVID-19 positive household member completes their isolation.
 - No actions need to be taken for persons who have not had direct contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, and instead have had close contact with persons who were in direct contact.
 - Those who test positive should not return until they have met county health department criteria to discontinue home isolation.
 - Returning to school after home isolation:

¹A close contact also includes a situation in which a person provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.

- Symptomatic individuals who test negative for COVID-19 can return 3 days after resolution of fever (if any) and improvement in symptoms.
 - Documentation of a negative test result should be provided to school administrators.
 - In lieu of a negative test result, students and staff may return to work with a medical note by a physician that provides alternative explanation for symptoms and reason for not ordering COVID-19 testing.
- Symptomatic individuals who test positive for COVID-19 can return 10 days after symptom onset or test date.
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We have attached the flow chart (developed by BCOE) that will be used to support these procedures.

Plans for Partial or Total School Closure

- FRCS will follow CDC guidelines and Butte County Public Health guidance on when school closure is necessary and how to proceed.

Communication to the Charter School Community

- Our school administrator, Christia Marasco, is the acting liaison with Public Health and our school community for all COVID-19 related issues. Ms. Marasco will remain in regular contact with BCPH and our school community.
- Forest Ranch Charter will engage with families and staff to develop strategies to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 emergency, including guidelines for families about when to keep students home from school and other topics.
 - We will use regular e-mail, text, our school automated calling system and Class Dojo to keep staff and family apprised of school exposures, closures, or changes to our schedule. When possible we will have trained staff contact families so that questions can be answered.
- Prior to student's return to school, FRCS will communicate to staff, students, and parents about new, COVID-19-related protocols, including:
 - Enhanced sanitation practices
 - Physical distancing requirements and recommendations

- Proper use, removal and washing of face coverings.
- Screening practices.
- How COVID-19 is spread.
- COVID-19 specific symptom identification.
- Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, including the importance of not coming to work if staff members have symptoms, or if they or someone they live with has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Guidelines for employees regarding COVID-19 specific symptom identification and when to seek medical attention
- Guidelines for families about when to keep students home from school.
- Systems for self-reporting symptoms.
- Criteria and plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students.
- FRCS will train staff and students on protocols for physical distancing for both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Communications will be targeted to the most vulnerable members of the Charter School community.
- FRCS will work with BCPH if we have a positive COVID-19 case to communicate together in accordance with CDPH and CDE guidelines. We will follow public health directives if they should differ from our existing policy.