Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Health and Safety Protocols Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The CREC Council ("Council") recognizes the importance of developing health and safety protocols to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council thus directs the Administration to develop health and safety protocols consistent with applicable laws, rules, regulations, requirements, and current guidance.

Compliance with such health and safety protocols shall be mandatory for all individuals while on CREC property or participating in a CREC-sponsored activity, unless a legally recognized exemption or exception applies. Failure to comply with such health and safety protocols may lead to disciplinary action for students and staff, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and/or CREC policies.

The Administration shall provide notice of such health and safety protocols, by way of electronic mail, regular mail, website posting, student handbooks, employee handbooks, and/or any other appropriate methods.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures

Other

Policy adopted: October 14, 2020
CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL
Hartford, Connecticut
Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Health and Safety Protocols Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The following health and safety protocols are issued consistent with applicable laws, rules, regulations, requirements, and current guidance, in order to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Compliance with these health and safety protocols shall be mandatory for all individuals while on CREC property or participating in a CREC-sponsored activity, unless a legally recognized exemption or exception applies. Failure to comply with such health and safety protocols may lead to disciplinary action for students and staff, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and/or CREC policies and regulations.

Applicable laws, rules, regulations, requirements and guidance may change rapidly in response to the pandemic. Any updates or changes to these health and safety protocols will be posted on the CREC website and will be available at each school/program.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Liaison

David Cusick, Managing Director of Health Services, will serve as the COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. He will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 and to provide information on public health policies and protocols.

Temporary restrictions of visits to school/program facilities

In accordance with the recommendations of the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) visitors will not be allowed access to school/program facilities before, during, or after the school day when school is in session.

Parents/guardians and school/program employees will arrange conference calls or use other electronic means to conduct conferences and meetings about a student’s educational program.

Face masks/coverings

All students in grades Pre-K through 12 and all staff are required to wear face masks or face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth at all times that they are inside school/program buildings or grounds, and while riding in school/program transportation vehicles, even when physical distancing is maintained. The wearing of face masks or face coverings does not replace other preventative practices recommended by the appropriate authorities, such as physical distancing and frequent washing of hands.

A supply of face masks or face coverings will be maintained for use in the event that a staff member or student does not have one.
A student or staff member will be excused from wearing a face mask or face covering, if the student or staff member: has trouble breathing; is unconscious; is incapacitated; cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance; or has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering, provided written documentation is submitted that states the medical reason for the requested exemption. Parents/guardians may not excuse their child from the face mask or face covering requirement.

Individuals who are excused from wearing a face mask or face covering shall wear a face shield. Face shields are not as effective for controlling virus spread, and thus their use must be with the understanding of their limitations and a heightened need for strict adherence to physical distancing.

When other and appropriate mitigating practices are in place, such as physical distancing, students will not be required to wear face masks or face coverings while eating or drinking, during physical education classes, or when they are outside.

Breaks from wearing face masks or face coverings may be scheduled throughout the school day by the teacher, provided that strict physical distancing requirements are maintained and limitations are enforced regarding student and staff mobility.

Violations of the face mask or face covering requirement, whether by students or staff, shall be handled in the same manner as other violations of applicable CREC policies and regulations.

**Physical distancing**

All efforts will be made to maximize physical distancing between student workstations, achieving 6 feet when feasible, when determining the classroom layout. Desks should face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or students should sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart. Where necessary, other spaces may be repurposed for instruction in the school/program. The space between the teacher and students will be maximized, due to the risk of increased droplets from teachers during instruction.

All efforts will be made to maximize physical distancing in school/program hallways.

CDC, state and local guidelines for physical distancing for physical education and physical activity, including recess, will be followed.

**Facilities**

All school/program facilities; areas and equipment used for physical education, physical activity, including recess; will be cleaned, disinfected and maintained in accordance with DPH guidance, including Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting of Schools; Return to Service Guidelines; and Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems.
**Staying at home**

Students and staff must inform the school/program if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population. They must stay home when they are sick, especially if they have COVID-19 symptoms, such as: 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.

**Self-quarantine /Regional travel advisory**

Students and staff who are traveling or who have traveled to an area identified in Connecticut’s travel advisory, (see https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-Knowledge-Base/Travel-In-or-Out-of-CT) or whose household members are returning from those areas, even if asymptomatic, may not return to any CREC school/program until a period of self-quarantine for 14-days has elapsed; or unless they provide written proof of a negative test for COVID-19 in the 72 hours prior to arrival in Connecticut.

**Containment**

If an individual in the school/program community has signs or symptoms of COVID-19; known exposure; or has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the school/program must:

- immediately coordinate with the local health department, school/program nurse and district medical advisor, and be ready to comply with requests for information from the DPH to assist with contact tracing.
- place students who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in an isolation room until a parent or guardian arrives. Students must remain supervised in the isolation room, and a log of all persons who entered the room must be kept for purposes of contact tracing. The individual supervising the isolation room must be equipped with proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- initiate recommended CDC cleaning procedures following a confirmed COVID-19 case.
- review CDC guidance to ensure compliance with most up to date information regarding containment.

Regulation issued: September 16, 2020  CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL  Hartford, Connecticut