



Safe Return to Learning 2022-23

Laura Jeffrey Academy's Safe Return to Learning 2022-2023

August 2022 - Laura Jeffrey Academy is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for each employee, student, parent and visitor to our buildings. This operational plan identifies and explains the practices and protocols to help ensure we have a safe and healthy learning environment, and help mitigate transmission of COVID-19 in our school communities during the 2022-23 school year.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change rapidly, this plan will be updated to reflect any shift in protocol, guidance and/or requirements.

Our primary focus continues to be the education of our students, while integrating health and safety responses into our existing pre-pandemic public health support. LJA looks forward to our continued partnership during this school year, and we remain committed to educational success and keeping our learning communities safe.

Our COVID-19 Operational Plan is rooted in prevention strategies based on community spread, vaccination coverage, populations at risk and efficacy of mitigation steps. It is important to remember that the **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) asserts high vaccination numbers combined with low community spread lessen the need for masking and other prevention strategies.**

The CDC also identifies face coverings and the vaccine as effective preventative strategies that can lessen the time a person should be in isolation or quarantine, and can influence the trajectory of transmission.

Along with CDC and the Minnesota Department of (MDH), we strongly recommend people to get vaccinated, when eligible. For more information about vaccinations and to schedule an appointment, [visit the MDH website](#).

LJA also strongly recommends families and students to get tested every week or when exposed to a positive COVID-19 case or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. [Find a testing site near you by visiting MDH website](#). Scholars who participate in sports and extracurricular events are encouraged to test more often.

LJA asks that every student and family regularly review the following:

1. This COVID-19 operational plan and take responsibility to follow its recommendations and requirements
2. The [Minnesota Department of Health COVID-19 website](#) for updated guidance, and
3. The [Minnesota Department of Health Best Practice Recommendations](#).

This plan will be updated as needed, and follows all applicable executive orders, and current guidance and standards from the MDH, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the CDC, and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). If you have questions about the plan, contact LJA's Leadership Team



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Assessing and Handling Illness

Public health agencies will continue to guide our decision-making process and [Minnesota Department of Health Recommendations for Handling a Confirmed Case of COVID-19](#) will act as guidance to help determine protocol and next steps related to monitoring, quarantining and notification. LJA will comply with any MDH reporting requirements. All LJA families are required to report their student(s) positive test results to LJA's Main Office.

All staff and students are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** to get tested for COVID-19 regularly. [Review the MDH COVID-19 Testing Recommendations](#) to help determine when/if you need to be tested. [Find a testing site near you by visiting MDH website](#). While supplies are available, LJA will provide at home rapid tests to any family who may have hardships in securing testing materials. As of January 15, 2022, costs for at home tests are reimbursable by insurance. Check [here](#) and with your insurance company for more details.

Experiencing Symptoms

Anyone experiencing illness should follow the above [decision tree](#), stay home and get tested.

- Symptoms of COVID-19 can include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, fatigue, congestion or runny nose, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

However, if a person has had lab-confirmed COVID-19 in the past 90 days and is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the person should follow the above decision tree and remain home until symptoms have improved and they have been fever-free for 24 hours. Siblings and other household members can continue to attend in-person school and activities.

If a student is symptomatic at school, LJA will notify a parent/guardian and perform a COVID-19 rapid test. If the scholar is positive they will be asked to be picked up from school immediately and will not be allowed to take public transportation home. While they wait for transportation home, they will be required to be isolated in a designated space. Students will remain under the supervision of a staff member while in isolation while on school property. If they are negative, the family will be given the choice to go home for the day or return to class.

Positive COVID-19 Test

For people who are sick or test positive.

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/youthiso.pdf

If a person tests positive for COVID-19 and has symptoms, they are **REQUIRED** to stay home and isolate for at least 5 days. If the person's symptoms have improved and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication they may return on day 6. Once returning they may return to LJA while wearing a well-fitting mask until 10 days have passed since their isolation period began. If symptoms have not improved or are not fever-free, they must remain in quarantine until 10 days have passed since their isolation period began. LJA will remain in communication with the family and notify the family as to when the student may return to in person learning. All families are required to report their student(s) positive test results to LJA's Office. LJA will report positive cases as required by MDH.

If the person tests positive for COVID-19 and does not have symptoms, they are **REQUIRED** to stay home for 5 days beginning the day they were tested. If the person continues to be asymptomatic and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication they may return on day 6. Once returning they



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may return to LJA while wearing a well-fitting mask until 10 days have passed since their isolation period began. LJA will remain in communication with the family and notify the family as to when the student may return to in person learning. Community members are encouraged to reach out to those people they determine to be close contacts when they are the positive case. All families are required to report their student(s) positive test results to LJA's Office. LJA will report positive cases as required by MDH

Additional mitigation strategies may be implemented in the classroom in which the positive case was identified.

If a school learns of a positive COVID-19 test during school hours, LJA will notify a parent/guardian for the student to be picked up and the student will be REQUIRED to wear a mask while waiting. If the student is unable to be picked up, they will be REQUIRED to quarantine until they are picked up. The student will not be allowed to take public transportation home.

Close Contact

For people who are in close contact (exposed) to a person with COVID-19.

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/youthquar.pdf

Students and staff can be excluded as a close contact if they were correctly wearing a well-fitting face covering near the positive case AND prevention strategies (e.g. ventilation, cleaning and disinfection, respiratory etiquette and hygiene) were in place. Everyone is to test weekly and more often if participating in sports and/or extracurricular programs.

Students and staff who are fully vaccinated and have been identified as a close contact to a positive case (whether in school or not) do not need to stay home or quarantine but are to get tested five days after exposure. Close contacts are also to wear a face covering indoors when at home, for 14 days, following exposure OR until the test result is negative.

Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated and have been identified as a close contact to a positive case are to get tested and stay home for 5 days after their last exposure to a person with COVID-19. They should be tested five days after your exposure, even if they do not have any symptoms. If negative, they may return to LJA while wearing a well-fitting mask for 10 days whenever you are around other people, even at home.

Everyone is encouraged to reach out to those people they determine to be close contacts when they are the positive case. All families are required to report their student(s) positive test results to LJA's Office. LJA will report positive cases as required by MDH.

Notification

Program/classroom participants and their families will be notified of a positive case with a general notification letter when participants were considered a close contact.

All families are required to report their student(s) positive test results to LJA's Office. LJA will report positive cases as required by MDH.



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Face Coverings

Masks are no longer required during times of low to medium community levels of COVID-19 in Ramsey County. Masks will be required when community levels of COVID-19 in Ramsey County are high.

LJA does strongly recommend wearing masks for those in the below situations, regardless of community levels:

- Those who are unvaccinated or not eligible for the vaccine
- People who are immunocompromised or at high risk for a severe reaction to COVID-19
- Staff working with immunocompromised individuals and those ineligible for the vaccine
- Ill students being evaluated by the health office or waiting to be picked up to reduce potential spread
- Students riding SPPS Transportation and other vehicles as part of instructional programming to and from school.

Community levels for COVID-19 are updated by the CDC every Thursday by 8 p.m. Face masks are optional at LJA and on SPPS school transportation when Ramsey County's COVID-19 community levels are low or medium. LJA families and staff will be notified if community levels are high and face masks are required. LJA will text all families on Friday morning before school if masks are required. LJA will also post an update in the weekly newsblast for the following week.

When face coverings are REQUIRED due to High Levels of transmission rate within Ramsey County the mask will need to cover the nose and mouth, while indoors by all individuals. And outdoors by all individuals, who are unable to maintain 3 feet distance between participants. This applies to and includes students, staff and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. Any scholar or staff member who is medically, physically or behaviorally unable to wear a face covering must provide documentation and will then be required to wear a face shield.

Face coverings must be worn at all times during physical activity (e.g., when exercising in a gym, fitness center, or during recess), regardless of the level of physical exertion.

If LJA is not under a required masking event, face coverings will not be required by staff or students riding buses or other vehicles during school field trips. If LJA is within a required masking event, face coverings will be REQUIRED to be worn by all staff and students riding busing or other vehicles during school field trips.

The following face coverings are acceptable:

- Paper or disposable mask;
- Cloth face mask; and
- Medical-grade masks and respirators.

Masks may not have work or logos, other than LJA's logo. LJA will have disposable masks available to students and staff who are in need of one during the day.

When staff are serving students in settings where seeing a person's lips is necessary, staff will be asked to wear a clear facemask. If staff do not have access to a clear facemask, they can choose to only wear the required face shield if fully vaccinated.

Reinforcement of use will be treated with the same approach as addressing students experiencing any behavior; reminder of desired behavior, visuals as appropriate, advisory lessons, and daily reminders.

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Staff, students, and other people present at LJA may temporarily remove their face covering and/or face shield in the following situations:

- Face coverings may be temporarily removed to eat or drink, but care should be taken to maintain as much space as possible between people.
- During indoor practices or performances involving singing, acting, or playing musical instruments where face coverings cannot be worn or are impractical to wear while playing the instrument or participating in the activity scholars and staff will rapid test prior to practice or the performance.
- While teachers and students may temporarily remove their face coverings when public speaking (for example, in a debate or speech team competition or in an assembly), lecturing, or engaging in classroom instruction, face coverings should only be removed in such situations when 12 feet of distance from others can be consistently maintained. If a face covering would impede these activities but 12 feet of social distancing cannot be consistently maintained (for example, due to classroom size), a face shield should be considered as an alternative.
- Staff working in a space ALONE with no other staff, students or visitors may remove masks while working at their individual desk space.
- When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with a face covering difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent possible. In these situations, a transparent, physical barrier (e.g., plexiglass) may be considered as an additional mitigation strategy.

Social Distancing

Social distancing (also called physical distancing) means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. Social distancing continues to be a critical tool in decreasing the spread of COVID-19. LJA, as feasibly able, will work to maintain at least 3 feet of physical distancing between students within a classroom. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, we may layer additional mitigation strategies (masking when exposed to COVID-19, screening testing, and staying home when sick with symptoms of infectious illness) to help reduce transmission risk. All persons in the building and on district transportation must do their best to provide as much space as possible between themselves and other people.

LJA bus and alley supervisors will greet scholars to ensure social distancing is reinforced. Staff will supervise hallways and common areas during arrival and departure times to curtail congregating. (e.g., during lunch, arrival and dismissal, restrooms)

Whenever possible, classes and lunch will be held outside and scholars will be encouraged to spread out.

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

Students and staff who self-identify as high risk for illness due to COVID-19 should email LJA's Leadership Team.

LJA's School Nurse, SpEd Coordinator, and Leadership member will evaluate all current plans (healthcare plans, IEP's, 504s) to ensure accommodations are being provided for students with special health care needs and continue to update them as needed to decrease risk for exposure to COVID-19.

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Hygiene and Cleaning Practices

Proper hygiene practices such as frequent handwashing with soap and water, cleaning hands using hand sanitizer and disinfecting surfaces will be implemented and taught at LJA.

- Appropriate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant) will be available and strategically placed in areas where they may be/are frequently used (entrance areas, cafeteria, bathroom and classrooms) encouraging students to use upon entrance. LJA will offer foot handles on bathroom doors for contact less entrance/exit.
- LJA will build routines of hand hygiene into the daily school schedule for all students and staff.
- HEPA filters will remain in all instructional spaces and buildings.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of our learning spaces and vehicles will continue, and they will be cleaned and disinfected regularly using disinfectant products that are approved and effective against the COVID-19 virus.

- Before school and at the end of day - LJA staff will disinfect.
- Cleaning products will not be used near children, but will wait until they have left the space to ensure there is adequate ventilation when using these products.
- LJA will securely store products away from children.

All staff will be responsible for handling antimicrobial products (sterilizers, disinfectants, and sanitizers) and be provided with initial and ongoing training so staff understand and follow all product label directions and precautions appearing on (or included within) product containers.

Water and ventilation systems

LJA will run and flush all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains) to ensure water is safe to use after our prolonged facility shutdown. Drinking fountains will be cleaned and sanitized daily. LJA will encourage staff and students to bring their own water, use cups, or other alternative procedures to minimize use and touching of water fountains.

LJA will ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors, running window fans and keeping on portable ventilation equipment during the school day. Portable ventilation equipment (window fans and HEPA Filter Fans) are both installed in each classroom. LJA will take steps to minimize air from them blowing from one person directly at another person to reduce the potential spread of any airborne or aerosolized viruses.

Technology and Internet Access

If your scholar needs to quarantine, LJA will provide an LJA device if needed. This will support your scholar in accessing assignments from home. LJA will assist families who need access to the internet.

Hot spots are available for students who do not have reliable access to the internet. Contact LJA's Office directly to submit a request for a free hotspot.



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Academic Considerations

LJA will work to engage students in their academic learning by providing social emotional support and academic work that builds on their interests and requires the application of multiple skills and modalities.

LJA educators will use formative assessments to analyze students' learning needs, and provide fine tuned support where needed, prioritizing math and reading skills.

Student and Family Support

LJA will hold virtual or in-person home visits with each family. Advisor teachers will serve as the primary point of contact for students and families.

LJA will connect families with LJA's social workers to help address concerns, fears and any mental health needs. When needed or requested, LJA will connect families with outside providers to expand their care network.

Homelessness Supports

LJA will be in contact with families affected by homelessness and will continue to support them with their individual needs. LJA will be periodically checking in with families to see if their status has changed. LJA also offers an open door for families to reach out on a daily basis to receive support on their individual needs.

Students experiencing homelessness will be given priority for devices with hotspots if needed.

LJA scholars who self identify for desired additional food will have access to Sheridan Story.

Homeless youth will have access to taxi service if experiencing homelessness and do not have access to our bussing service.

Mental Health and Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing a tremendous amount of stress, fear and anxiety for many people. It's normal to be experiencing these feelings right now. And it is important to be gentle with yourself and others, and to take steps to support both your own and your family's mental well-being. LJA staff is available to guide you to additional available resources, both within school and within the community. LJA is committed to:

- Provide staff, families, and students (age-appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness.
- Increase capacity to offer social support services by increasing the number of professionals on-site.
- Encourage staff, students, and families to talk with people they trust about their feelings and concerns regarding COVID-19

Students will have access to student support groups or one-on-one support with LJA's school social workers and dean of students along with our AmeriCorps Promise Fellow.

Staff will have access to each other regularly through daily staff meetings, weekly committee meetings, weekly student focus meetings. At any time staff will be encouraged to address concerns with the immediate community. Additionally, the school social worker will be available when necessary to address staff needs.



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Mental Health Resources

[Supporting Mental Wellbeing During COVID-19](#)

[Mental Health Support](#)

[Tips and Resources for Children and Parents During COVID-19](#)

[Helping Children Cope](#)

[Find Your Happy Place](#)

Athletics, Activities and Enrichment

Engaging, enriching and inspiring opportunities for students during non-school hours is an important component of a well-rounded education. Therefore:

- LJA will work to provide opportunities outdoors.
- When inside, provide as much space as possible between participants.
- Personal protective equipment, HEPA filters in instructional space, and sanitizers and cleaning products, will be available.

Students are able to participate in athletics and activities according to guidelines set forth by the Minnesota State High School League and MDH.

All visitors will follow face covering rules based on the current Ramsey Transmission Levels while also promoting COVID screening prior to coming onto campus and social distancing while on campus.

Transportation

All staff and students riding buses are RECOMMENDED to wear a face covering/mask. SPPS transportation will follow CDC guidelines to ensure recommendations are followed.

Bus ride recommendations will include boarding, seating and school arrival:

- Students from the same household are encouraged to sit together.
- Windows and roof hatches will be opened to the extent weather permits to increase airflow and circulation.
- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected regularly using disinfectant products that are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for effective use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The cleaning will focus on frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle.
- Doors and windows will be open when cleaning the vehicle and between trips to let the vehicles thoroughly air out.

Onsite Volunteers and/or Visitors

Visitors or volunteers, regardless of vaccination status, that come into the LJA building, with the intention to stay longer than 15 minutes, will be asked to present a negative COVID-19 test prior. The results from the COVID-19 test should not be more than 48 hours prior to the time of coming onto campus. If the volunteer intends to visit weekly, they must participate in bi-weekly testing to ensure a negative COVID-19 status during their duration with LJA staff and scholars.

Communication

A physical copy of this plan is available at LJA's front office. All staff, students, families and visitors are expected to



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comply with and follow the established guidelines and protocols in this plan for the health and safety of our community. LJA's Leadership Team is expected to ensure compliance with these provisions and support employees as needed.

* As MN Department of Education and MN Department of Health update guidance throughout the 2022/23 school year, LJA will be following implementation of additional requirements or recommendations. If any changes to LJA's Safe Return to Learning occur, the LJA community will be updated.