



ECO Charter School
ENVIRONMENT · COMMUNITY · OPPORTUNITY

2020 – 2021 SCHOOL RE-ENTRY PLAN

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RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | JULY 30, 2020

SCHOOL RE-ENTRY & PANDEMIC RESPONSE TASK FORCE

The purpose of the ECO Pandemic Response and School Re-Entry Taskforce is to centralize, expedite, and implement COVID-19-related decision-making and programming. Representatives include families, teachers, administrators, Board members, and community partners. The ECO Charter School Re-Entry and Pandemic Response Task Force Members are:

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The ECO Charter School 2020-2021 School Re-Entry Plan presents a detailed description of the action steps the school has implemented over the past few months and will continue to perform as our community stakeholders return to our buildings. Included are best practices our community will implement now and in the future to re-establish and sustain a safe, healthy, dynamic, and connected learning environment across the school community and within our buildings. This plan was developed based on guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) *The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education* as well as standards outlined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as other resources. A full list of resources is provided at the end of this document. Given the complex nature of and inter and intra connectedness of the featured action areas, readers will find information repeated in and across our plan.

SCHOOL RE-ENTRY AND PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

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COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

Operational Adjustments

Sanitation & Hygiene – All cleaning procedures have been enhanced to ensure full compliance with CDC guidelines, NJDOE expectations, as well as New Jersey Department of Health requirements. Facility upgrades and cleaning practices are as follows:

- Converting toilet flush mechanisms, urinal handles, sink faucets, soap and hand towel dispensers to touchless systems
- Increased custodial staff and extension of duties to include a minimum of thrice daily cleaning and disinfection of high touchpoints in all common areas (handrails, door opening pulls and push panels, bathroom toilet seats, stall doors, light switches, sinks and water coolers)
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all high touchpoints in ECO facilities including classrooms, conference rooms, offices, appliance exteriors, café tables (including but not limited to: light switches, student tables, teacher desk, chairs, etc.)
- Using of CDC approved cleaning and disinfecting products
- Ensure all cleaning staff are fully trained in all cleaning procedures, including safe storage of cleaning products, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Daily use of electrostatic disinfection tools with environmentally-safe and safe-to-humans vapor mist in classrooms
- Installing twenty sanitation stations deployed across all facilities including entry/exit ways

Notable Changes to Customary Practices

- The same enhanced cleaning procedures will be practiced across ECO Charter School facilities
- Student use of water coolers is suspended; instead, in addition to beverages with meals, each student will receive a bottle of water daily, upon request; families are welcome to send students to school with a bottle of water
- Per our school bus contracts, buses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily; highly specialized cleaning procedures will be executed by the bus company should someone exhibit symptoms of illness
- Communal use of supplies and sharing of objects and equipment is suspended until further notice. When shared use is unavoidable and necessary, items will be cleaned and disinfected between uses
- Additional cleaning protocols will be implemented if a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19; these protocols include but are not limited to:
 - In consultation with the local public health department, the Board of Trustees or designee 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 off the classroom or office where the patient was based and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
 - Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection.

Heating & Ventilation – ECO's HVAC systems have been continuously operating with routine preventive maintenance being performed daily. In addition, we are:

- Cleaning and disinfecting the HVAC ductwork in all ECO facilities
- Manually-increasing the amount of airflow in facilities and adding air purifiers (to scrub air within a designated area or room five times per hour) throughout all ECO buildings per CDC recommendations
- Implementing more frequent inspections of all systems for high-performance operation

Community Sanitation Practices

Cleanliness – All ECO Charter School community members are required to engage newly-implemented practices as follows:

- Staff will teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff
- Staff will teach students and remind adult peers to use tissue to wipe their nose and to cough/sneeze inside a tissue or their elbow
- Students and staff will be required to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, including before and after eating; after coughing or sneezing, and before and after using the restroom
- Students and staff will wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application.
- Staff will model and practice handwashing
- Students and staff will use hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practicable. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry
- The administrative team will establish routines enabling students and staff to regularly wash their hands at staggered intervals
- The administrative team will ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including touchless soap, hand towel dispensers and trashcans, tissues, masks (for faculty only), and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer
- Meals at ECO Charter School will be individualized and single served

Visitors, Delivery Workers & Contractors – All ECO Charter School visitors are required to honor ECO Charter School sanitation and hygiene practices and adhere to the following:

- Prior to building admission, all visitors are notified of our expectations related to their work and the requirement of following CDC and government regulations
- All deliveries must be pre-scheduled and cleared by a school leader in advance of the delivery to ensure adequate space is available for safe receiving and retrieval
- All mail and packages are to be delivered to the main office and immediately placed in the Board Room
- Prior to the visit, any ECO employee aware of a prospective visitor arriving on campus must provide the administrative staff with the information that follows:
 - Visitor or family member name;
 - Visit purpose;
 - Date and time of proposed visit;
 - Anticipated duration of visit;
 - Confirmation that ECO's COVID-19 policies and practices have been communicated to the prospective visitor.

Wellness

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to this COVID-19 as well as slowing its spread locally and across the country and world. COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) for a prolonged period. Spread happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are launched into the air and land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. The droplets

can also be inhaled into the lungs. Recent studies indicate that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also play a role in the spread of COVID-19. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. COVID-19 can live for hours or days on a surface, depending on factors such as sunlight and humidity.

Physical Health – ECO Charter School’s focus on personal safety measures aims to effectively implement practices that underscore the mitigation of germ dispersal. As CDC guidelines and government regulations evolve, we will communicate with and train ECO staff on the latest best practices and safety measures. In the interim, we have or will:

- Post health-related safety practice signage throughout all ECO facilities
- Where applicable, place floor markings or stanchions in the main office, café, hallway, and common areas to facilitate social distancing
- Place signage restrictions in common areas to limit occupancy to fewer people
- Place Safe-T-Guards at restroom doors so doors remain open at all times
- Implement protocols for communication and disinfection per the CDC guidelines if and/or when there is notification of an exposure to or diagnosed case of COVID-19 in the ECO school community
- Train all staff and students in the use of wearing masks and following safe practices
- Implement procedures for daily symptom screening for all students, staff, and visitors
- Reduce on-site student population by 50% to ensure adherence to social distancing practices
- Install clear acrylic barriers to classroom tables and in bathrooms between sinks as an additional safety precaution
- Actively encourage staff and students who are sick or who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Develop policies that encourage sick staff and students to stay at home without fear of reprisal, and ensure staff, students and students’ families are aware of these policies.
- Implement screening and other procedures for all staff and students entering the facility.
- Prevent discrimination against students who (or whose families) were or are diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are perceived to be a COVID-19 risk

Screening & Personal Protective Equipment – ECO Charter School will be responsible for conducting daily health screenings of all employees, students, and visitors, as required by state and federal government ordinance. In accordance with CDC guidelines, ECO Charter School requires all students, employees and visitors to wear masks in common areas, including classrooms, restrooms, hallways, etc. (unless doing so poses a medically-documented health issue for said student or individual).

Screening

- If an ECO community member experiences symptoms of illness before s/he comes to school, the individual should stay at home
- Upon arrival to school, ECO screening teams will take community members’ temperature; if the community member has a temperature of 100.4 or greater and symptoms of illness, the following procedures will be implemented:
 - Staff members will be sent home to quarantine, asked to monitor for additional symptoms, and encouraged to contact her or his doctor.
 - Students will be placed in a special area and the School Nurse will contact the student’s family to request that a family representative immediately arrive to pick up the student
- Ask all individuals if they or anyone in their home is exhibiting [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any exposure to a positive case of COVID-19 at school while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records.

- If a student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, staff should communicate with the parent/caregiver and refer to the student’s health history form and/or emergency card.
- Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness; send home students and staff with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough or other [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Policies should not penalize students and families for missing class.

Masks

Individuals who show no symptoms of COVID-19 may still be infected and can spread the infection to others. Therefore, a mask may help prevent spreading the virus to others. Appropriate masks include product that continuously-covers the nose and mouth, such as disposable dust masks or handmade fabric masks. Scarves and bandanas are not acceptable face coverings. Masks must be free from offensive or controversial slogans, grotesque depictions, or otherwise distracting or inappropriate decorations.

Masks must be used in accordance with NJDOE and CDC guidelines unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines, particularly in indoor environments, on school buses, and areas where physical distancing alone is not sufficient to prevent disease transmission. To this end, the following will transpire at ECO Charter School:

- Teaching and reinforcing use and care of [masks](#), or in limited instances, face shields.
- Students and staff will be consistently-reminded not to touch the mask and to [wash their hands](#) frequently.
- Information and demonstration will be provided to all staff and families in the school community regarding proper use, removal, and washing of cloth masks.
- Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a mask will be addressed.

Mask Chart	
Age	Requirement
Under 2 years old	Exempt
2 years old – 2 nd grade	Strongly Recommended, however required @ ECO unless exempt
3 rd – 8 th grade	Required, unless exempt

**Note: Masks are strongly encouraged for young children between two years old and second grade, if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.*

- Persons younger than two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, anyone who is unconscious or incapacitated, and anyone who is otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance are exempt from wearing a mask, if issue or condition is medically-documented.
- A mask or face shield will be removed for meals.
- Families are required to provide a clean mask for their child daily.
- In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not wearing a mask and not exempt from wearing a mask under New Jersey Department of Education guidelines. If a student arrives at school without a mask, the school will provide one. If a student refuses to wear the school-provided mask, the student will be separated and engage in virtual learning for the day. ECO Charter School has implemented protocols for providing masks to students who inadvertently fail to bring a mask to school.

Requirements for Staff

- All staff must use masks in accordance with New Jersey Department of Education and CDC guidance.

- In limited situations where a masks cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth mask while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a mask outside of the classroom.
- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to masks. ECO will consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.

Personal Wellness

All ECO community members are required to follow and adhere to CDC, federal, state, and local guidelines. Families must reinforce health and safety practices by promoting social distancing and personal hygiene in school as well as in the home environments. In addition to wearing proper masks and hand protective coverings if applicable, students and staff must practice proscribed methods to protect themselves, which include but are not limited to:

- Students and staff staying home if they are sick and avoiding close contact with others
- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; using alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Covering mouth when coughing or sneezing by using a tissue or inner elbow, not hands
- Training all staff and providing educational materials to families in the following safety actions:
 - Enhanced sanitation practices
 - Physical distancing guidelines and their importance
 - [Proper use, removal, and washing of masks](#)
 - Screening practices
 - How COVID-19 is spread
 - COVID-19 specific [symptom](#) identification
 - Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if one is 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
 - For workers, COVID-19 specific [symptom](#) identification and when to seek medical attention
 - Creating plans and procedures to follow when children or adults become sick at school
 - Creating plans and procedures to protect the community from the threat of virus or other illness
- Conducting illness-related trainings virtually, or in-person, ensuring a minimum of six-foot distancing is maintained

Social Distancing

Social distancing helps limit contact with infected people and contaminated surfaces. Although the risk of severe illness may be different for everyone, anyone can get and spread COVID-19. Everyone has a role to play in slowing the spread of the virus and protecting themselves, their family, and their community. Per the CDC, social distancing, also called "physical distancing," means keeping space between a minimum of six feet between persons on-site at ECO. ECO Charter School students, staff and visitors are expected to:

- Stay at least six feet from any other person
- Replace hugs, handshakes, and high-fives with smiles, waves, and thumbs-ups
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings, both in and outside of school
- Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day. Prioritize minimizing contact between adults at all times

In order to allow for students, staff and visitors to follow social distancing guidelines, ECO Charter School is implementing modifications to facilities, procedures, and routines as follows:

- Installing clear acrylic dividers with vinyl decal messaging will be placed on tables and on floors to promote distancing adherence to hygiene expectations
- Arranging classrooms minimizing face-to-face contact
- Staggering arrival and drop off-times locations as practicable as to minimize scheduling challenges for families
- Designating new routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible
- Conducting daily health screenings of students and staff upon arrival at school
- Limiting student cohorts to 10 students per on-site grade level/designated cohort
- Using and maximizing outdoor space for instruction and activities where practicable, weather permitting
- Minimizing movement of students and teachers or staff as much as practicable
- Maximizing spacing and developing practices to minimize movement in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate
- Limiting admittance of nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving groups as much as practicable
- Providing each student with bottled water daily to eliminate the use of shared water coolers
- Serving individually bagged breakfast and lunch meals to students
- Keeping each student's belongings separated and in individually-labeled storage containers, hooks or other areas
- Ensuring belongings are taken home each day to be cleaned
- Ensuring adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.) to the extent practicable or limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses
- Avoiding the of sharing electronic devices, clothing, toys, books and other games or learning aids as much as practicable, where sharing occurs, clean and disinfect between uses

Mental Health and Wellness

It is important to recognize that educators, children and families may experience stress, confusion, fear, anger, sadness or anxiety during the return to school. As a result, students may display increased negative and disruptive behaviors. For students to be successful, ECO Charter School will address and support students' safety, social-emotional health and wellness needs.

Preparations for Returning to School

We recognize that getting back to "routine" is important to trauma recovery. However, teachers and students will still be in recovery mode so it will be important to take it slowly and flexibly. Re-establishing school as a safe, positive space is a major priority. ECO Charter School is implementing the following protocols:

- ECO Administrative team will oversee equitable and inclusive programming and policies to support student and staff social and emotional well-being, promote trauma-informed practices, embed strategies and professional development to address equity, social justice and anti-racism
- Map current mental health resources, programs, and initiatives that exist in school and in the community
- Encourage families to share any issues they anticipate will be challenges for them/their students once school starts
- Encourage teachers and staff to share any issues they anticipate will be challenges for them/their students once school begins
- Provide training and support to ECO staff to promote personal mental well-being

Tiered Systems of Support

In order to address the mental health wellness of the ECO community, the values and application of social emotional learning and trauma-informed care practices will be incorporated within the context of the New Jersey Tiered System of Support (NJTSS). We will implement a series of protocols based on a tiered system of support: supports for all students (Tier I), supports for students identified as at-risk (Tier II), and more intensive supports for students in crisis or those who

do not respond to Tier II interventions (Tier III). Each tier includes appropriate assessment practices, intervention practices and ongoing consultation practices.

Tier I – Universal Interventions for All Students

ECO Charter School will implement classroom-based social-emotional learning, school wide behavioral expectations such as:

- **Assessment Practices** – establish a school-wide systemic screening process in order to identify students experiencing traumatic stress
- **Intervention Practices** – continue Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programming within the classroom for all students. This will be implemented via our daily CREW activities
- **Consultation Practices** – provide professional development for teachers, administration, and educational staff to promote trauma-informed understanding and a knowledge and motivation; professional development opportunities will address topics such as the interplay of race and trauma and its effects on students in the classroom, self-care and secondary trauma stress

Tier II – Supplemental Supports and Interventions

ECO Charter School will implement assessment and problem solving strategies, support groups, social skills groups targeted (Tier II) for groups of students identified as “at-risk” through the Tier I screening process or staff referral. Supports for Tier II students include:

- **Assessment Practices** – a more comprehensive assessment is conducted to guide evidence-based practices depending on severity of concerns; create opportunities for short, individual check-ins with students who have been referred by staff
- **Intervention Practices** – expanded trauma-informed intervention practices include grief-specific supports, evidence-based group practices, and trauma-informed behavior support plans
- **Consultation Practices** – expanded trauma-informed education and awareness: restorative practices embedded into school discipline procedures can improve school climate and help students learn valuable skills by engaging students in proactively repairing relationships harmed by dysregulated emotions and behaviors. Done properly, such practices can help students impacted by stress and trauma heal

Tier III - Intensive Interventions - Individual

ECO Charter School will provide supports and interventions for individual students with more intense, or non-responsive to Tier II intervention. Targeted and/or intensive services will be delivered in school or via community providers. Supports for Tier III students include:

- **Assessment Practices** – ongoing progress monitoring and referral practices will be utilized if students do not respond to Tier II or Tier III interventions
- **Intervention Practices** – short-term, targeted, evidence-based interventions for individual students will be available either in-person or via teletherapy; students and/or families may also be referred for community support with the school psychologist serving as the liaison between community provider and school
- **Consultation Practices** – actively partner with families to address safety issues and concerns, define family needs and hopes for treatment, and regularly share input about how their child is doing; actively partner with community agencies, DCP&P, Crisis Center and establish a procedure when emergency community resources need to be engaged.

Organizational Health

In order to ensure continuity of operations, ECO Charter School will continuously monitor the health of our students, staff and visitors. We have developed the following protocols for responding to an exposure to COVID-19 within our community.

Staff Member, Student or Visitor Illness

Per the New Jersey Department of Education and CDC guidelines, ECO Charter School will implement the following protocols if a staff member, student or visitor is exposed to or tests positive for COVID-19.

- Work with school administrators, nurses and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
- Any students or staff exhibiting symptoms should immediately be required to wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable.
- Establish procedures to arrange for safe transport home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate, when an individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
- For serious illness, contact 911. Seek medical attention if COVID-19 symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face.
- Notify local health officials immediately of any positive case of COVID-19, and exposed staff and families as relevant while maintaining confidentiality as required by state and federal laws.
- Close off areas used by any individual suspected of being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Advise sick staff members and students not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue [home isolation](#), including at least 3 days with no fever, symptoms have improved and at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
- Ensure that students, including students with disabilities, have access to instruction when out of class, as required by federal and state law.
- Schools should offer distance learning based on the unique circumstances of each student who would be put at-risk by an in-person instructional model. For example, students with a health condition, students with family members with a health condition, students who cohabit or regularly interact with high-risk individuals, or are otherwise identified as “at-risk” by the parents or guardian, are students whose circumstances merit offering distance learning
- Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a school has an outbreak, in accordance with NJDOE and CDC guidelines
- 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.

Continuity of Learning

Per the New Jersey Department of Education and CDC guidelines, ECO Charter School will implement the following practices to ensure students have continuous access to our academic program:

- Monitor staff absenteeism and have a roster of trained back-up staff where available and as practicable.
- Check state and local orders and health department notices daily about transmission in the area or closures and adjust operations accordingly.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

School Re-Entry: Teaching & Learning

The New Jersey Department of Education and State Health officials have determined that it is safe for schools to resume in-person teaching and learning despite concerns about community spread.ⁱ Scientific evidence indicates that risks to students and staff can be kept low if schools adhere to strict control measures and dynamically respond to potential outbreaks. Note that a reduction in risk is different from a goal of achieving zero cases, there is no such thing as ‘zero risk’ in anything we do, and certainly not during a pandemic. There is no perfect plan to re-open schools safely, there is no one size fits all strategy that works for every school”ⁱⁱ however, ECO Charter School has implemented the appropriate health and safety protocols including but not limited to social distancing, enhanced sanitation and disinfection practices, infrastructure augmentation, and employee training, as required.

Moreover, ECO school leaders have executed action steps to amend schedules, practices, routines, meal distribution, and almost each and every element of school operations to safeguard the community while concomitantly maximizing on and off-site learning. Though various elements of schooling will be different, ECO Charter School will continue to provide students with quality education and related services including but not limited to social and emotional supports and related service provisions.

Complying with CDC guidelines and NJDOE expectations, ECO Charter School, will offer families two distinct options for learning during the 2020-2021 academic school year. The offerings include a Blended or Hybrid Learning Model (combination of in-person teaching and learning and virtual learning program), and a Full-time Virtual Learning Model (students attend classes from home via the use of a Chromebook and mobile wireless hotspot). Please note, our program models are fluid and subject to change at any time. ECO Charter School is actively monitoring health conditions in our school and the larger community as well as working collaboratively with NJDOE and Camden County Public Health officials. It is possible that our school, and others, may need to shift to full-time virtual learning for all students. Learning expectations, academic information, schedules and other program information follows.

Learning Expectations, Virtual & Blended

Expectations for Families

ECO Charter School honors and appreciates the tremendous sacrifice made by families who are, after all, students’ first teachers. We are grateful for the collaboration with families and of course, will need families to work closely with us to ensure the Virtual Learning program equitably teaches, serves, and supports students, regardless of the selected academic model. To this end, in order to facilitate the academic program, families must agree to partner with ECO Charter School and through distinct and direct action, share the responsibility for educating students while in the home environment. Chief among the many responsibilities and expectations associated with Virtual and Blended Learning are the following:

- **Active participation, communication, support, and guidance.** Families must be aware of and demonstrate commitment to students’ participation in Virtual Learning by:
 - Ensuring the students show up on time to learn each and every day
 - Learning how to operate and be responsible for the care of technological devices

ⁱ National Alliance of Public Charter Schools

ⁱⁱ Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Healthy Buildings for Health. <https://schools.forhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/06/Harvard-Healthy-Buildings-Program-Schools-For-Health-Reopening-Covid19-June2020.pdf>

- Maintaining student username and passwords for various online platforms
- Setting up the conditions for students to actively-participate in daily instruction without distractions, and aptly follow up with teachers as required to ensure students are on pace with lesson delivery, completing and submitting assignments
- maintaining the honor system when completing assessments and other work products
- Furthermore, families are expected to:
 - Ensure students get an appropriate amount of sleep each night. Research recommends 11-13 hours per night for ages 3-5, 10-11 hours per night for ages 6-10, 9-10 hours per night for ages 11 and up.
 - Ensure students follow best practice in hygiene including brushing teeth twice per day, bathing each day, changing into the school uniform for class, washing hands regularly and following CDC preventative measure recommendations.
 - Ensure students, at the appointed time, log in daily to participate in on-line learning; attendance will be tracked based upon student login and active participation.
 - Consistently emphasize and model (beyond speeches and verbal reminders) the importance of learning. Your children should see you engaging learning and/or activities that demonstrate actions associated with learning including but not limited to reading for information or pleasure, completing math exercises for personal business, etc.
 - Establish daily routines for their children, providing a stable, resource-rich, consistent place at home for students to utilize for the purpose of learning.
 - Consistently communicate with teachers, taking time to clearly understand lesson purposes, learning expectations and outcomes, as well as review assigned work; refrain from completing student work and/or encouraging students to change incorrect work. Teachers need to see what students understand in order to know how to assist individual students and larger groups of students who may share similar learning needs.
 - Set limits, model, and implement expectations regarding when and how technological devices are used; students must use school-issued technological devices for academic work only.
 - Distribute school-issued meals to ensure all students eat daily whether utilizing the blended or virtual learning

Expectations for Students

- **Be prepared. Be committed. Be engaged.** – Students are expected to assume the responsibility for learning. This means students are expected to:
 - Show up online on time, in the school uniform, with a mask and be prepared to learn.
 - Actively-engage in the learning process; this means participating in learning everyday, making connections, asking questions, and providing feedback for the teacher, and collaborating with peers.
 - Complete all assigned work and related learning activities.

Expectations for Teachers

- **Know. Show. Grow.** – ECO Charter School teachers will provide the structure and ingenuity for virtual learning. ECO teachers will:
 - Design and deliver age and developmentally-appropriate lessons and learning activities.
 - Be accessible to communicate and interact with students and families during the scheduled virtual learning time.
 - In addition to daily virtual instruction, once per week, complete video check ins with students and families to ensure students are on track or moving toward meeting grade level learning expectations
 - Provide timely feedback regarding student-submitted work products
 - Report out to ECO's operations team to highlight student attendance and engagement data, reporting to appropriate agencies as necessary

Expectations for School Leaders

- **Mitigate. Motivate. Monitor. Measure. Modify. Message.** – ECO Charter School leaders will continue to implement operational adjustments that underscore safeguarding the community, educate and engage employees regarding safety precautions, academic programming, and community wellness. Too, leaders will consistently evaluate implemented plans and make adjustments so as to meet the complex and changing needs of the community. Furthermore, school leaders will:
 - Provide the necessary supports and resources to ensure high-quality teaching and learning.
 - Communicate clear and consistent expectations across the stakeholder community.
 - Inform the stakeholder community of any and all changes to school programming.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Homework, & Grading

ECO Charter School’s instructional practices, though abbreviated in order to comply with social distancing guidelines, will continue to be aligned with the school’s mission, vision, climate/culture, professional learning endeavors, evaluation practices, and fiscal decision making and in compliance with NJ Department of Education requirements. Ensuring teacher instructional clarity (planning lessons to ensure alignment of standards and best instructional methodology that compliments the employed learning model) will continue to be a critical aspect of ECO teacher’s practice, both in the virtual and blended learning models. We will prioritize access to high-quality, grade level texts and engage students in reading, thinking, speaking, and writing about engaging grade level texts on meaningful topics; this will remain a core principle as we collaborate to design for both the virtual and blended learning environments.

We will place faculty members at the center of the educational experience for the ECO student community. Students have been disconnected from the school community, and in many situations, over the spring and summer, tremendous pressure was placed on families and caregivers to lead student learning. In September 2020, placing the teacher at the center of the educational experience will help reconnect students to the school and the school community, and will release the pressure from families and caregivers, depending, of course, on the model the family selects. We will prioritize small group differentiation to accelerate learning and address specific student needs.

Faculty members will work collaboratively to align instructional pacing to augmented schedules, as necessary. We will, via both learning models, lead students to ask questions for the purpose of understanding; we purposefully guide students to make connections with and between other disciplines. Grade level teams are collaborating for the purpose of designing fun, interesting ways to build rapport with and across grade level cohorts. We facilitate guided discovery, teaching students to synthesize, summarize, and recall information. We also use context-based vocabulary enabling students to fluently read texts for comprehension and for enjoyment.

Curriculum

Using a variety of resources, including but not limited to ECO Charter School’s various curricula, teachers will cultivate active and interactive learning through the consistent use of educational technology resources, and by writing, speaking and collaborative activities (when and where appropriate, and via social distancing) so students learn to work effectively in collaborative groups and to communicate about Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies as well as special areas classes both orally and in writing. All students, whether learning virtually or via the blended program, will be actively involved in grappling with meaningful, real-world mathematical problems that build on their experiences. Our faculty will use meta-cognitive strategies and include students in decision making, when appropriate, about learning activities including projects that promote independent and creative thinking.

Instruction & Assessments

Our instructional practices will include the use of data honed from a variety of assessments in order to establish learning goals and to make sound instructional planning and delivery decisions based on student’s instructional needs. We, therefore, need families to partner with us to ensure students are submitting their own work products. Faculty will continue to use models, essential questions and appropriate academic language to shape student learning experiences based on state standards and grade level expectations.

Homework & Grading

Given the change in academic schedule, teachers will extend student learning by assigning reasonable assignments designed to be completed by independently at home. Some assignments will be on Google Classroom, while others will be on any number of the on-line platforms utilized by ECO Charter School. Teachers will continue to report out on student growth via the standards-based model; student mastery of standards will continue to be determined by multiple assessment outcomes as well as authentic performance tasks.

Instructional Models

Blended Learning Model

Due to conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with the State of New Jersey Department of Education guidelines, the Camden County Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ECO Charter School has created a Blended Learning academic program model that underscores community health, safety, and special considerations for learning. This program features in-person learning as well as virtual learning.

ECO Charter School’s Blended Learning Model combines on-site, in-person, face-to-face, socially-distanced teaching and learning with off-site, remote, on-line, virtual teaching and learning. This approach allows us to reduce the on-site student population by 50% four days per week and 100% 1 day per week. Too, it supports social distancing practices, and facilitates students receiving in-person, real-time, instruction from a teacher while also being afforded the opportunity to collaborate with peers. Students of families who select this model will attend school in-person two days per week and attend school virtually three days per week. Kindergarteners and students with exceptional needs will attend in-person school four days per week and virtually, one day per week. The school day will begin at 7:45 am and end at 12:30 pm. Said model divides the ECO Charter School student body into four distinct cohorts organized by sibling/family group and geographic location. The cohorts are identified as Earth, Water, Air, and Fire. The Earth cohort includes all Kindergarten students. The Water cohort includes students with exceptional needs. The Air and Fire cohorts are comprised by all remaining students.

The Blended Learning Model supports the intentional, effective and layered instruction that is directly aligned to state standards, as does the Virtual Model.

The schedule for the Blended Learning Model is as follows:

2020-2021 TENTATIVE BLENDED LEARNING MODEL & SCHEDULE					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
On-site Learning 7:45 AM to 12:30 PM	Earth learns on-site.	Earth learns on-site.	All ECO Charter School students will learn virtually. Facilities are closed to students for sanitation and disinfection.	Earth learns on-site.	Earth learns on-site.
	Water learns on-site.	Water learns on-site.		Water learns on-site.	Water learns on-site.
	Air learns on-site.	Air learns on-site.		Fire learns on-site.	Fire learns on-site.
Virtual Learning 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Fire learns virtually.	Fire learns virtually.		Air learns virtually.	Air learns virtually.

Full-time Virtual Learning Model

The Full-time Virtual Learning Model features teaching and learning on-line, in real-time, five days per week, four hours daily. Real-time teaching sessions will be held from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Students are required to attend classes according to the schedule class times. Lessons will not be recorded. Students are expected to log into specified platforms and to attend and participate in classes just as if students were physically present in one of our school buildings. During the time when virtual learners are not in class, students are expected to complete coursework in preparation for their daily classes. This time is referred to as, Connections Time. Students who participate in this model receive the same instruction as students who learn in-person, except students are learning via a technological device. Attendance, completion of academic assignments, and participation expectations mirror that of the Blended Learning Model.

All ECO Charter School students are eligible for full-time virtual learning. We strongly recommend that families with students in our special education program discuss the individual student’s IEP and the Virtual Learning Model option with Dr. Terri Allen, ECO’s School Psychologist and Child Study Team Case Manager prior to making a final decision. Dr. Allen is available at 856.963.2627.

All families who select the Virtual Learning Model must submit the [Virtual Learning Request Form](#) on or before August 12, 2020. This deadline is without exception. Those who select Virtual Learning may switch to the Blended Learning Model at the end of trimesters, only. Forms are available via the link listed above, on-line at www.ecocharterschool.org, and at the school’s main office.

The schedule for the Full-time Virtual Learning Model is as follows:

2020-2021 TENTATIVE VIRTUAL LEARNING MODEL & SCHEDULE					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:45 AM to 12:30 PM	At-home Connections Time	At-home Connections Time	At-home Connections Time	At-home Connections Time	At-home Connections Time
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction

Services for Special Education & Students with Disabilities

It is not surprising that research suggests that the lowest performing students should be provided with as much instruction as possible. While the extended school closures have a significant impact on the education of our students, we recognize that students with disabilities may have experienced increased distress and negative educational consequences due to the changes in instructional method and environment. Since the onset of virtual instruction, ECO Charter School has consistently met obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. Upon re-entry in September, it is essential to provide FAPE and the provision of special education services (IDEA) to the greatest extent possible with the implicit understanding that the provision of special education and related services operates within the broader context of general education. Additionally, the converging events - loss of instruction and insufficient data - present challenges for school teams in trying to identify and meet the needs of at-risk students within the general education setting.

Special Education

Per New Jersey Department of Education recommendations, ECO Charter School will implement the following procedures and support services for Special Education students:

- ECO Charter School will compile a list of any students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications related to COVID-19 concerns. The ECO Administration team, in coordination with the school nurse, will contact the families in order to determine if additional precautions are required upon return to school.
- ECO Charter School teachers collected end of the year assessment data and progress was monitored during remote instruction. Data collected during the 2020-21 school year will be examined by the special education teacher(s) and the school psychologist/case manager in order to best determine student progress. Data will also be considered within the context of general education data and comparative data from other students in the same resource room to help determine if any observed regression is unusual relative to disabled and non-disabled peers.
- Upon return to in-person learning, baseline data will be collected by the student's special education teacher in order to assess regression and inform instruction and IEP goals. Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to participate in an IEP meeting at the start of school in order to review/revise if needed in order to better meet student needs.
- The ECO Charter School IEP team will make an individualized determination whether and to what extent compensatory education services may be needed to make up for any skills that may have been lost as a result of COVID-related disruptions to the provision of FAPE. If regression and/or a lack of progress is present, the IEP team will identify opportunities for recovery, including additional, new, or different services and accommodation
- 2019-20 evaluations that could be completed with existing data are complete. Evaluations that require in-person standardized testing will be completed as soon as it is safe to do so. Parents/guardians were contacted by phone (or email if they could not be reached by phone) when school was first closed, followed by written notice regarding any delays.
- ECO consistently provides clear communication to parents/guardians of the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by federal and state law.

Students with Disabilities

ECO Charter School recognizes the importance of serving our students with disabilities. To ensure our students receive the services they deserve, ECO Charter School will:

- **Individualized, student-specific response** – take into account the needs of the individual student and provide flexibility for response as appropriate. We will address student-specific needs arising from the transition back into the school building and/or the possibility also of a return to all virtual instruction.
- **Accommodations and Modifications** – ensure that students with disabilities will continue to have equitable access for instruction, whether they are a part of the Full-time Virtual or Blended Learning Model. The IEP team will consider how the physical classroom setting differs from a virtual environment to identify additional supports needed, including technology support
- **Integration of technology** – hold all family meetings via a virtual platform to ensure safety for all meeting participants.
- **Related Services** – review related services goals upon return to school and revise with parental input/consent if appropriate.
- **Student Schedules and Programming** – students will attend school 4 days per week (7:45 am to 12:30 pm). On Wednesday (all students are virtual), these students will have individualized interventions and/or small group instruction/reinforcement.

- **Staff Professional Development and Consultation** – provide resources and education on the potential heightened negative impact of the closure on students with disabilities; consult with teachers and administration on school-wide behavioral needs of students and ensure that supports that are fair and equitable to students with disabilities; provide educators with professional development to best utilize the accessibility features and accommodations tools made available through technology based format.

NJTSS/RTI Supports for Academically At-Risk Students

ECO Charter School understands that converging events - loss of instruction and absence of quality data - present challenges for trying to meet the needs of diverse learners, including identifying and making eligible those students who are in need of special education. Importantly, many students will be returning to school with increased social, emotional and mental health issues associated with the crisis, which will complicate school function in many ways. We will focus on the mental wellness of students on a school-wide, classroom, and individual basis as intentionally as academic interventions and supports. We acknowledge that there may be a higher prevalence of academic risk in nearly all schools with variability depending on circumstances. Moving forward, we recognize the impact on academic screening, intervention, and referral for CST evaluation and have modified our referral practices.

Additional Program Information

Procedures to Change Academic Program Model

Families may choose a different academic program type by submitting [Request to Change Academic Program Form](#). This form may be submitted at any time. Those who select Full-time Virtual Learning may switch to the Blended Learning Program at the end of trimesters, only. This will allow the ECO Administration team to ensure all program elements are in place before the student returns to the school. The transition from the Blended Learning program to our Virtual Learning program can be implemented within forty-eight hours after the form is submitted. Should a family seek to transition a special education student from one program type to another, we strongly recommend that the family discuss the student's IEP and the potential transition from program type with Dr. Terri Allen, ECO's School Psychologist and Child Study Team Case Manager. Dr. Allen is available at 856.963.2627. Families will be notified in writing and via telephone when the change is official. Mrs. Donna Cavicchia, ECO's Director of Operation, will assist families who need support with the transition to a different program model and/or who have questions. Mrs. Cavicchia is available at 856.963.2627. Forms are available on-line at www.ecocharterschool.org, at the school's main office, or emailed to families upon request.

Data Reporting of Student Participation

As required by the NJ Department of Education, ECO Charter School will maintain and report by subgroup, accurate data regarding student participation in virtual learning programming. This information will be maintained via the school's SIS system.

Procedures for Communicating ECO Charter School Policies with Families

ECO Charter School will share newly implemented policies and procedures with families in their native language. Information shared with families will include the Virtual Learning Policy, program learning expectations, procedures for transitioning to a different learning model, and how families seeking information about programming may successfully access information the family needs.

Technology & Connectivity

All ECO Charter School students will have at her/his disposal a school-issued technological device (Chromebook) and mobile wireless hotspot with sufficient data for students to access real-time instructional delivery and to complete related assignments. Technology will be seamlessly integrated into instructional delivery whether learning virtually or learning via the blended model. ECO Charter School believes that education technology is best used to activate prior knowledge, to aid with instructional pacing, to lead students to make relevant connections to what is being taught, and to aid with independent and guided practice.

Professional Learning

Faculty members will report to work on August 19th and via the annual Faculty Academy, engage in professional learning aimed at aptly preparing teachers to engage virtual and blended learning environments. As it relates to school reopening, this year's Faculty Academy will focus on:

- Augmented policies, procedures, practices and routines related to reopening
- Sanitation and hygiene expectations
- Blended learning model and best practices
- Virtual learning model and best practices
- Educational equity: ensuring that students in the virtual and blended learning programs receive the same instruction
- Creating and maintaining a highly-specialized climate and culture via limited, in-person and virtual environments
- Enhanced training regarding use of online learning platforms and curriculum elements
- Instructional continuity strategies and best practices in virtual learning
- Expectations regarding student attendance, participation and grading
- Academic planning including but not limited to academic mapping and analysis of assessment data
- Identifying student and family needs and resources for wraparound supports

In addition to this two-week training period, employees will complete professional learning each month; topics are differentiated, but will include focused topics such as data analysis, equity, amplifying student voice, PBIS practices, social justice, and best practices in health and safety during the pandemic. Additional topics will be brought forth and focused on specific teaching and learning practices that map onto students' needs and the needs of our school.

Meals

When on-site at ECO Charter School, students will consume individually-wrapped hermetically-sealed bagged breakfasts and lunches in classrooms or outside while practicing social distancing. ECO Charter School will supply students with breakfast and lunch when learning virtually, too. Meals will be distributed on Tuesdays and Fridays to be consumed on the days when students are not in the building. Meals will only be provided for school days (Monday-Friday) when students are not on-site.

Recess

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2013), "Recess represents an essential, planned respite from rigorous cognitive tasks. It affords a time to rest, play, imagine, think, move and socialize. After recess, for children or after a corresponding break time for adolescents, students are more attentive and better able to perform cognitively. In addition, recess helps young children to develop social skills that are otherwise not acquired in the more structured classroom environment." CDC guidelines will be followed (physical and social distancing) for recess periods. All recess activities will ensure social distancing practices are followed throughout the activity. Outdoor activities will be planned whenever possible. Additionally, students and staff will have time to wash their hands before and after the recess period.

Transportation

Transportation services are critical to the operations of our school community. As we re-enter the school year, ECO Charter School has taken the following health and logistical considerations when scheduling student transportation:

- Transportation will continue to be provided for students who meet mileage requirements.
- Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable.
- Masks are mandatory if social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Ensure each bus is equipped with extra unused masks for students who may have inadvertently failed to bring one.

- Bus company contracts will include required enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
- Buses will be cleaned between routes.
- Students will receive assigned seats on buses.
- One student per seat on bus to facilitate social distancing.
- Bus drivers are required to practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated the ECO Re-entry Plan

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Building Entry & Exit

- **How will building entry and exit be managed to maintain social distancing?**
 - Students will enter the building through designated locations each day. We have expanded entry points to allow for social distancing. Each student will be screened before entering the building.
- **Will building visitors be limited?**
 - We will limit building visitors. Visitors must adhere to ECO Charter School's policies. All visitors are required to wear a mask. Staff members are strongly encouraged to schedule all meetings with parents/guardians via phone conference or Google Meet.
- **Will everyone in the building be required to wear masks?**
 - All staff members, students, families and visitors are required to wear a mask.
- **How will ECO Charter School enforce social distancing at entrances and exits?**
 - We have installed building signage reminding students and staff of CDC best practices, including social distancing guidelines. Staff members will offer verbal reminders as needed at arrival and dismissal.

Cleaning

- **Has the building been cleaned since school closed in March?**
 - All classrooms and common areas have been sanitized. As we return to the building, ECO Charter School staff will implement the enhanced cleaning protocols outlined in the re-entry plan.
- **How will daily cleaning procedures be different when we return to the building:**
 - We have increased custodial staff and extension of duties. Custodial staff will be responsible for thrice daily cleaning and disinfection of high touchpoints in all common areas. Cleaning supplies and disinfecting products are CDC approved. Custodial staff are fully trained in proper cleaning procedures, including the safe storage of cleaning products.
- **Will hand sanitizer be available throughout the buildings? Will it be touchless?**
 - Yes. Twenty touchless sanitizing stations are deployed throughout ECO Charter School facilities.

Building Systems

- **Have you made any enhancements to building systems?**
 - We have installed touchless soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers, faucets and flush valves in all bathroom facilities. Additionally, air purifying systems have been installed in each classroom and common areas.

Classrooms & Common Areas

- **Does the administration team have plans for staggered work hours/days, or entry/exit timeframes to limit building occupancy?**
 - We have implemented a blended learning model to limit the number of students in our buildings each day. Students were divided into cohorts so that a maximum of 50% of our student population will be onsite on any given day. All staff are required to be present daily.
- **Are students, staff and visitors required to wear a mask?**
 - Yes. As outlined in our re-entry plan, students, staff and visitors are responsible expected to follow guidelines around social distancing and the use of PPE, this includes wearing a mask.
- **How will we rearrange classrooms to adhere to social distancing?**
 - Classrooms will have a maximum of 10 students per class per day. Acrylic dividers were installed on the tables in each classroom to further support social distancing and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. A maximum of two students will be seated at each table.
- **Can I use the teacher's lounge or my classroom to conduct a meeting?**
 - In accordance with government mandates, we encourage you to conduct meetings and trainings virtually. If a meeting must be held in person, please limit the number of participants and follow all social distancing guidelines. Additionally, all participants are required to wear masks. All in-person meetings require advanced approval by the ECO Administration team.
- **What precautions are you taking in common areas such as hallways and bathrooms?**
 - Following the enhanced cleaning protocols outlined in the ECO Charter School reopening plan, we will increase the disinfecting of all areas daily and nightly. We have installed signage and markers to encourage social distancing as well as acrylic dividers between sinks. Transitions and bathroom use will be coordinated to reduce the number of students and staff in these areas throughout the school day. Wednesdays will be used for deep cleaning both facilities

RESOURCES

New Jersey Department of Education - <https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools: A Compendium of Public Resources on The Safe Reopening of Charter Schools

CDC Main Page for COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC Communities, Schools & Workplaces - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

CDC Businesses and Workplace Guidance - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>

CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

CDC Guidance for Employees Diagnosed with COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

CDC Guidance For Cleaning and Disinfecting - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/ReOpening_America_Cleaning_Disinfection_Decision_Tool.pdf

California Department of Public Health and State of California Department of Industrial Relations COVID-19 Industry Guidance: <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools.pdf>

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: Schools For Health: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools: <https://schools.forhealth.org/risk-reduction-strategies-for-reopening-schools/>