

## Mid-Metro Academy COVID-19 Response Plan

Mid-Metro Academy is dedicated to providing quality educational opportunities for homeschooled students in a safe environment. Especially during these times, we place a high priority on the health and safety of our students, families, volunteers, and teachers. This COVID-19 Response Plan has been developed to comply with State of Minnesota requirements. Rebecca Hope, Director of Mid-Metro Academy, is formally responsible for this plan, which has been developed with teacher, staff, and parent input. The goal of this plan is to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 during the current pandemic. We hope it will also result in fewer illnesses of all kinds among those we serve. Participation and cooperation of the entire Mid-Metro Academy community—families, students, teachers, staff, and volunteers—will be essential to the success of these safety efforts.

### Mitigation Measures

Routine cleanings of our physical space, ongoing temperature screenings, physical distancing, promotion of proper handwashing techniques and respiratory etiquette, and compliance with Minnesota's face mask mandate are some of the primary precautions we will take to mitigate the spread of infections in our learning community.

**Sanitation:** At the end of each day, desks, tables, chair seats and backs, door knobs, light switches, and hand rails will be cleaned and disinfected with a product capable of killing coronavirus. At the conclusion of each class, desk surfaces and chair backs will be sprayed and wiped with a disinfectant. Students may be asked to assist with this process. Restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily.

**Health screenings:** All students, teachers, and visitors who pass beyond the check-in point each day will have their temperature taken upon arrival with a no-touch digital thermometer. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 degrees will not be allowed to remain on the premises for that day. The person who provides transportation for the student should keep his/her phone handy and be ready to come back if necessary. As students, teachers, and visitors check in each day, they will acknowledge that they have not experienced any COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours.

We expect parents to help us keep everyone healthy by monitoring each student's health before coming to Mid-Metro Academy for the day. If a student is sick or displaying COVID-19 symptoms, parents must keep him or her home. Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should self-quarantine according to the Minnesota Department of Health guidelines.

In the case of a student or family testing positive, the Minnesota Department of Health or the family's county health agency will conduct any necessary contact tracing and notify people who need to know. We request that members send a notification to [help@midetroacademy.com](mailto:help@midetroacademy.com) if their student who attends classes at Mid-Metro Academy tests positive for COVID-19. Upon receipt of such information, Mid-Metro Academy's administrator will notify the teacher(s) of the

class(es) the student attends. By reporting the case to Mid-Metro Academy, parents grant permission to share the information with Mid-Metro Academy teachers and members. Mid-Metro Academy administration and teachers will not release the names of COVID-19-positive students in any announcements made to members. Reasonable efforts will be made to protect individuals' privacy, but given the nature of our organization with its small student body and class sizes, it may not be possible to prevent others from discerning the identity of a reported COVID-19 case.

A student who becomes ill at some point during the day after already passing through the check-in screenings should request permission from the teacher to leave class and should report to the designated on-site COVID-19 Contact Representative. The representative will help the student phone a parent or caregiver to pick the student up. The representative will provide a safely distanced area in which to wait and will supervise the student until his or her ride arrives. Parents should make sure students know whom to call in such situations, and designated contact people should be advised to keep their phones turned on and accessible.

Students who must quarantine because of their own illness or illness in the family should communicate with their teacher(s). Teachers will do their best to provide class content and assignments so the students can keep up with the course.

**Physical distancing:** Where possible and practical given the classroom, number of students, and type of activity, students will be seated six feet apart. Everyone will be encouraged to maintain physical distancing to the extent reasonable. Desks will normally all face the same direction unless a classroom activity requires a different arrangement. Hallway traffic flow will proceed in a clockwise direction, and students waiting in hallways before, after, or between classes must maintain a distance of six feet from others or as much as is feasible if a distance of six feet is not possible. Signs reminding students to maintain six feet of physical distance from each other will be posted around the campus.

**Hand washing:** Signs in restrooms and the kitchen will remind students to practice proper handwashing techniques. Students will be excused from classrooms to wash hands as necessary. Hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.

**Respiratory etiquette:** Signs will also be posted reminding people to cover coughs and sneezes and to avoid touching their faces or masks. Tissues and garbage cans will be available in each classroom. Students are encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands after using a tissue. Parents should review respiratory etiquette with students before the beginning of the academic year.

**Face mask mandate:** Mid-Metro Academy is subject to the Minnesota face mask mandate. Face coverings must be worn within the building at all times per Executive Order 20-81. Parents should make sure their students understand mask requirements and how to use masks correctly so that masks don't become a distraction in the classroom. Teachers and Mid-Metro Academy's

designated on-site COVID-19 Contact Representative are encouraged to wear clear face shields rather than masks to enhance the learning process.

Those with a physical health, mental health, or other condition that makes it unreasonable for them to wear face masks are exempt from this policy as explained in paragraph 8 of Executive Order 20-81. Those who claim an exemption from face masks per paragraph 8 may use a clear face shield as an accommodation, but they are not required to do so. People who are exempt from face masks should maintain a physical distance of up to six feet from others when possible. As specified in state guidelines, Mid-Metro Academy representatives are not allowed to inquire about the condition that exempts an individual from the face mask mandate or to require documentation of the condition.

The Minnesota Department of Health resource titled “Best Practices for Masks: Considerations for People with Disabilities and Special Health Needs” states:

We also know that some people with other challenges, such as sensory issues, might find it difficult to wear a facemask. In certain circumstances, the use of masks may not be reasonable and accommodations can be made. Accommodations include safe alternatives such as social distancing. Acknowledgement, flexibility, and support for people with disabilities and special health needs is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. ... For those who are unable to wear a mask, maintain a safe social distance of 6 feet whenever possible.

Students and others should refrain from asking non-masked people why they aren't wearing a mask. They may respectfully request that the person maintain a safe physical distance. Any concerns should be brought to the attention of Mid-Metro Academy's designated on-site COVID-19 Contact Representative.

### **Additional Measures**

The following additional policies will help maintain a healthy environment.

**Communication.** All member families, teachers, and staff will receive a copy of this COVID-19 Response Plan. They must acknowledge having read it and must agree to comply with their responsibilities as stated herein as a condition of taking classes and/or participating in any Mid-Metro Academy activities. Email alerts, signs, and other communications will provide reminders and updates throughout the year.

**Food sharing.** Students should not share food with each other except unopened packaged food items that have been purchased in sealed sanitary packages.

**Gatherings.** Meetings other than classes must comply with the currently mandated meeting size specified by the State of Minnesota.

**Lunchroom.** Students may eat lunch in designated classrooms and should maintain a safe physical distance while doing so. When socializing and not eating during the lunch period, they should comply with the face mask mandate and physical distancing guidelines.

**Remote learning possibility.** If a required shutdown prohibits Mid-Metro Academy from holding classes on site, teachers will provide a comparable remote learning option. Teachers will communicate their plans for such an eventuality to the students' families before the fall semester begins.

**Teacher policies.** Mid-Metro Academy teachers are independent contractors or entities. They have the ability to create and enforce policies that may vary from this overall Mid-Metro Academy COVID-19 Response Plan consistent with applicable state law and executive orders. Teachers will communicate those separate policies to registered students' families before August 7, 2020, and as new students register thereafter. Teachers have been given the opportunity to request accommodations from Mid-Metro Academy with regard to COVID-19 and how it affects them. Those accommodations, if any, are reflected in each teacher's individual COVID-19 Response Plan. Teachers may also specify how their classes will be handled if the teacher becomes ill or must self-quarantine.

**Training.** Parent volunteers will act as greeters who check in students and visitors as they arrive on site. The person at the check-in table will be the designated on-site COVID-19 Contact Representative. Training and a procedure manual will be provided to these volunteers. Other volunteers will conduct temperature screenings with a no-touch digital thermometer. They will also receive training on the screening procedure, which will be documented in a procedure manual. This COVID-19 Response Plan will be available to all volunteers in the procedure manual binder at the check-in desk.

**Ventilation.** Efforts to enhance ventilation in classrooms will include use of fans and opening windows when weather permits.

**Visitors.** To limit the number of people our community is exposed to, parents and others should not enter the building to pick up or drop off students. Visitors who have an acceptable reason to be in the building must sign in and pass the health screening. Other groups rent space at St. Mark's School on the same days that Mid-Metro Academy does. We will make every effort to avoid their students' mingling with ours. Mid-Metro Academy has no control over the COVID-19 plans of those groups, and we cannot guarantee that they are following all the same procedures that we follow. Any concerns should be brought to the attention of Mid-Metro Academy's designated on-site COVID-19 Contact Representative.

**Waiver of liability.** All parents or guardians of students enrolled in Mid-Metro Academy classes must sign the Waiver of Liability Related to Mid-Metro Academy's COVID-19 Response, which references this Mid-Metro Academy COVID-19 Response Plan.

This policy was shared with Mid-Metro Academy teachers on July 31, 2020, and with Mid-Metro Academy registered families beginning August 3, 2020. It will be updated as necessary by Rebecca Hope, Director, Mid-Metro Academy.

Certified by:

Rebecca Hope, Director, Mid-Metro Academy

Date: July 31, 2020