



Health And Safety Plan for the 2020-2021 Program Year

Introduction

Open Connections is committed to the health and safety of our staff, youth, and their families. Open Connections will make decisions that are true to our mission and values, and based on guidance from the following organizations:

[Chester Co. Health Department Guidelines](#) per Delaware County Intermediate Unit.

[PA Department of Education Guidelines](#)

PA Department of Health Guidelines

Plan for the 2020-2021 Program Year

Understanding that in-person programming is vital to our community's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development, and acknowledging that Open Connections has many distinct advantages over a conventional school including small program sizes that allow for physical distancing, rooms that allow for outdoor air ventilation, attendance only two or three days a week, and ample outdoor spaces, we are committed to offering on-campus programming as much as possible. When feasible, we also hope to offer virtual only programs for families who do not feel comfortable on campus.

For determining when programming should be on-campus or virtual, OC will rely heavily on the recommendations that the Chester County Health Department (CCHD) has laid out in its guidance to schools: <https://www.chesco.org/DocumentCenter/View/59143/School-Guidance>.

The CCHD defines four levels of community transmission (Low, Moderate, High, and Very High) based on two metrics (the incidence rate per 100,000 people and the PCR test positivity rate). See chart below.

Chester County Health Department Community Transmission Levels Chart

Community Transmission	Incident Rate per 100,000	AND/OR	PCR Test Positivity	Instructional Model
Low	<10	AND	<5%	In-Person
Moderate	≥10 and <40	AND	≥5% and <7%	Hybrid
High	≥40 and <80	OR	>7% and <10%	Virtual and/or Hybrid
Very High	≥80	OR	≥10%	Virtual

OC will monitor the two metrics in both Chester and Delaware county. These metrics are found at (<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>). We will use

the higher of the two incident rates and the higher of the two PCR test positivity numbers to determine what community transmission level with which to identify. For each level of community transmission, CCHD recommends various instructional models. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) defines these instructional models here: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/Pages/DeterminingInstructionalModels.aspx>. Based on the CCHD's recommendation, the PDE's instructional model definitions, and the distinct advantages that Open Connections has, we do not differentiate between the in-person and hybrid instructional models - they are the same. Therefore, Open Connections can deliver on campus programming in the Low, Moderate, and High phase.

LOW PHASE: While in the Low phase, CCHD recommends in-person instruction. During this time Open Connections will provide programming on campus, both indoors and outdoors.

MODERATE PHASE: In the Moderate phase CCHD recommends a hybrid instructional model. During this time Open Connections will provide programming on campus, both indoors and outdoors.

HIGH PHASE: In the High phase CCHD recommends a virtual and/or hybrid instructional model. Acknowledging OC's distinct advantages and recognizing our commitment to on-campus programming, Open Connections will provide programming on campus, both indoors* and outdoors.

*While in the High phase, staff are encouraged to hold programming outside when possible and when it doesn't interfere with the quality of the programming. Possible situations that could interfere with the program include cold weather, snow, rain, and lack of access to necessary resources.

VERY HIGH PHASE: While in the Very High phase CCHD recommends a virtual instructional model. During this time, Open Connections will provide virtual programming only.

As of September 11th, both Chester County and Delaware County are in the High phase.

We will also follow the CCHD guidelines for moving back and forth between phases. Taken from the CCHD, consideration for transitioning between phases will be based upon the below thresholds:

- Transitioning to a more in-person instructional model can be considered when thresholds for incidence rates are met for three (3) consecutive weeks, and evidence of a decrease in positivity at the County level. Consideration should be given to incidence rates of neighboring jurisdictions.
- Transitioning to a more virtual instructional model can be considered when thresholds for incidence rates are met for two (2) consecutive weeks. Consideration should be given to incidence rates of neighboring jurisdictions.

Data is released every Friday afternoon, so per the guidelines laid out by the Chester County Health Department, families will be given at least four days notice before switching phases.

This is the method we will follow unless there is a directive from the state or county in opposition to doing so.

PANDEMIC TEAM

Our Pandemic Team is comprised of our administrative team:

- Rick Sleutaris - Overall Pandemic Coordinator
- Chris McNichol - Building Safety
- Rick Sleutaris - Technology
- Margaret Welsh - Communication Coordinator
- Margaret Welsh - Supplies and Logistical Support

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- A nurse has been hired to be on campus at all times while programs are in session. Per PA Dept of Education's definition of high risk, Open Connections does not have any youth who fit this criteria.
- We will offer virtual program components, when possible, for all those who are uncomfortable being on campus at any point as well as for youth who are home due to self isolation or quarantine.
- Guidelines around family and staff travel:
 - Families and staff are encouraged not to travel to hot-spot areas. If a family or a member of the family travels to a state listed on the PA Department of Health travel advisory list, they are required to follow the health guidelines outlined here: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Travelers.aspx>
 - Staff who travel and need to quarantine will be taking unpaid time off for the duration of the travel and quarantine, unless it is for a true family emergency (hospitalization, funeral).
- There will not be any OC sponsored Program Group Field Trips until further notice.
- OC will follow PA Department of Health guidelines for Families who live in a travel advisory state

Hand-Washing/Hygiene/Bathroom Usage:

Below are guidelines for hygiene practices for youth and staff which include the manner and frequency of hand-washing and other best practices;

- All staff and young people will wash hands/sanitize when arriving on campus. They will use the hand sanitizer stations or sinks (preferably the outdoor ones).
- Wash hands prior to eating and after eating.
- Wash hands/sanitize every time they put their mask back on.
- Wash hands after bathroom use.
- Sanitize when entering and exiting buildings. - Sanitizer Stations will be at Barn Door, Silo Door, Slate Rm Door, Foyer Door, OP.

- There will be a small portable pump bottle of hand sanitizer for each program.
- Outside handwashing stations will be available and located by the main door of the Barn and outside the Farmhouse Foyer door.
 - For hand washing ease, Open Program will create pods of 3-5 (depending on program size) that they keep for the whole year. Each pod will have a Facilitator assigned to them. The Facilitator will be in charge of overseeing the youth washing their hands properly at each designated hand-washing time.
 - Each program will be assigned bathrooms based on their program home room locations. This limits the number of youth using the same bathroom each day.

Face Masks:

Guidelines on the use of face masks:

- At OC all people are required to wear a cloth mask on arrival and dismissal and when they are indoors.
- Cloth masks* must be worn outdoors when a consistent 6 ft of distance is not maintained. In general, to cut down on constant need for hand washing and policing, masks should stay on outdoors even if physical distancing is happening, unless the physical distancing is for a prolonged period of time.

* Youth in Open Program and Group Tutorial I may wear a face shield instead, although we strongly prefer the use of cloth masks since they are scientifically proven to be much more effective.

Physical Distancing:

Youth will practice physical distancing whenever possible. There will be signs to remind all community members to keep the distancing in mind.

- If a youth gets injured a facilitator will not need to maintain physical distancing in order to meet the emotional and physical needs of the young person. CCHD recommends wearing a gown and PPE if feasible.

Screening Plan:

- Prior to arriving on campus, families and staff are required to conduct a daily screening per CCHD. Families should inform OC by 9:00 am if their youth will not be attending due to illness/symptoms.
- When arriving on campus, parents will pull their car around the circle and wait in the car until it is their youth's turn to be screened. Parents should wait in their car while their youth are being screened; if their youth clears the screening, parents are then able to continue around the circle and exit the driveway, and their youth will head to their designated program space (either indoors or outdoors, depending on the phase). An OC staff member will be present to help escort younger youth safely to their program space.
- Teens driving their own car should pull into the parking lot, park and stand in the designated line to be screened.

- All persons arriving on campus will immediately have their temperature taken. No one will be permitted to stay on campus if their temperature is above 99.5F on a forehead thermometer (per CCHD) or appears to be exhibiting symptoms of illness as determined by the [CCHD](#).
- Screening tent will be staffed from 8:30 - 9:30am each morning by the nurse.
- At the conclusion of programs, facilitators will escort their group to the parking lot.
- After program time, all families are kindly asked to leave campus promptly with their youth.

Attendance:

- The nurse will be recording attendance so that OC is prepared in the event of needing to contact trace.
- Families are required to report absences by calling the OC office (610-459-3366) by 9 am.

Sickness:

- Any staff or youth who does not feel well will be required to stay home. They may return to campus under these conditions (Per CCDH):
 - Individuals should be tested for COVID-19; individuals awaiting test results should not come on campus.
 - If test result is negative, return to school following readmission criteria illustrated in PA Code, § 27.73. *Readmission of excluded children, and staff having contact with children*. If no alternative diagnosis is known, return to school 24 hours after symptoms are improved.
 - If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for Positive COVID-19 PCR Test with symptoms (see CCHD)
 - If an individual is not tested, exclude for: 24 hours with no fever without using fever-reducing medicines and improvement in symptoms and 10 days since symptoms first appeared
 - If an individual is using medication to treat or suppress a fever, he/she should be excluded until medication is no longer needed.
- Any staff member or youth who displays signs of illness while at OC will be sent home. A youth who becomes ill while at OC will be moved to a separate room or kept outside with a supervising adult until a parent or caregiver arrives for pickup. The rest of the cohort will move to a different space for the remainder of the program day.
- If any staff or youth have a possible or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis, we will follow recommended procedures from CCHD for cleaning and closure. We will communicate the details and recommended actions to our families as recommended by CCHD.
- Staff compensation: In addition to one week's worth of sick days (standard), staff will have additional paid time off for the duration of the quarantine if:
 - They are advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine (or if a family member living in their house needs to self-quarantine);
 - They are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and are seeking medical attention.

Isolation and Quarantine Spaces:

- If someone gets sick while at OC, they will be separated from their group and taken to a comfortable spot outside (weather permitting) or to one of the two identified indoor rooms -- a staff work space for non-Covid related symptoms or the Parent Library for Covid-related symptoms. OC administration will contact the youth's parents/caregiver. If they cannot be reached, we will contact their emergency contact listed on their registration form.
 - The Director will be notified of the sick person.
 - OC Nurse to determine appropriate next steps.
- If the isolation room for suspected Covid-related symptoms is utilized, Chris McNichol will contact the cleaners to disinfect the isolation room before the start of the next program day.
- PPE is required to safely be with a sick person. - Mask (N95), gown, eye protection, gloves (per CCHD 7.22 doc.)

COMMUNICATION

- Update COVID Policies and Procedures
 - Rick Sleutaris will monitor the CCHD for current local metrics and recommendations
 - Margaret Welsh update the staff and OC community as necessary.
 - The Health and Safety Plan will be communicated to families when finalized and posted in the COVID section of the OC website.
- COVID health and hygiene tips will be included in the weekly e-mail blast to families.
- Electronic communication will replace most of our paper documents, with the exception of the OC Magazine which will be delivered to youth at the end of a program day to take home to their family.
- An updated Family Handbook (updated with COVID year changes) will be distributed to OC families prior to Opening Day.
- Mental Health Resources will be shared with the community and listed on the Family Area of the OC Website.

BUILDINGS

- Cleaners have been hired for deep cleaning and disinfecting prior to the opening of the year.
- Signs will be posted in highly visible locations, that promote everyday protective measures, and how to stop the spread of germs;
 - Handwashing signage in all the bathrooms and by all sinks, indoor and outdoor.
 - Masking signage on all exterior doors;
 - 6 ft distance markers on the paths outside.
- Procedures for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting learning spaces, surfaces, and any other areas used by youth (i.e., restrooms, drinking fountains, hallways);
 - Restrooms and outside sinks will be disinfected mid-day by cleaners
 - The drinking fountain will not be used. Bottle Filler will be available.
 - High touch areas will be cleaned mid-day by Cleaners and Facilitators
 - Common areas (hall ways, exterior door knobs, etc.) will be divided up and connected to a program space, so that they are cleaned mid-day in connection with the program space.

- In addition to a mid-day clean of bathrooms and high touch areas, Cleaners will come each evening and do a thorough cleaning and disinfecting of all spaces on campus.
- Each program space will have a spray bottle of disinfectant and rags.
- Low-touch paper-towel dispensers have been hung in all bathrooms
- Ventilation -
 - HVAC - All filters have been replaced and are up to date; we use MERV 13.
 - New fans were purchased for each program space.
- Critical Supply Order Placed (PPE, equipment, etc.)
 - Thermometers - 4 -Barn, Farmhouse, OP, screening tent.
 - Disposable masks - adult size
 - Disposable masks - youth size
 - Disinfectant
 - Soap
 - Gowns
 - Face shields
 - Eye protection
 - Hand Sanitizer

Inventory of Masks, disinfectant, ppe, paper towels, hand sanitizer will be monitored by Chris McNichol and Margaret Welsh.

Limiting Occupancy:

We will limit the number of individuals in learning spaces and interactions between groups of youth;

- We will be in small groups as much as possible. This means that youth and staff will be grouped consistently with the same people as much as possible to limit exposure points (i.e. a Tutorial group will not mix with other groups unless they are outside and physically distant.)
- Specialty Spaces (Lab, Art, Makerspace, Woodshop, Music Rm) will be used by a maximum of one group in the morning and one group in the afternoon and will be cleaned between uses.
- Each cohort will have an assigned bathroom.
- While in the High phase, staff are encouraged to hold programming outside when possible and when it doesn't interfere with the quality of the programming.
- Each program has been assigned program spaces so that they are easily able to meet the necessary physical distancing requirements of 6 feet.
- All food will be consumed with program members. Youth and Staff will bring all necessary utensils and dishes with them; i.e. there will not be any use of the OC kitchens and equipment.
- On program days, aside from drop off and pick up, at this time parents are not permitted on campus for the health and safety of the staff and young people. (Increased potential exposure points).

PROGRAMMING

- All staff will be trained on the implementation of our Health and Safety Plan during our summer staff training workshops including: Teaching staff how to properly wear a face covering (cover nose and mouth), to maintain hand hygiene when removing the face covering for meals and physical activity, and how to replace and maintain (washing regularly) a cloth face covering.

- Proper Mask Care: Masks should be washed after every use, using hot water and regular detergent. Ensure it is completely dry before using it again. (Direct wording from CCHD)
- Facilitators will demonstrate and reinforce the above techniques with the youth in their program(s).
- Procedures to limit the sharing of materials among students include:
 - Each young person will have their own supply kit that includes items such as pencils, markers, rulers, paper.
 - Youth in OP and GTI will have their own set of manipulatives for activities.
 - There will be no kitchen use for food prep this year, either for programs or lunches.
 - Computer/laptop usage:
 - One youth assigned to a computer for a full day. (In the event that they do not use it for the full day, it may be used by another youth once it has been properly cleaned by the facilitators). On Wednesdays, youth will be assigned to a computer for a half day. The computers will be cleaned between each use.
 - Groups are allowed to take computers outside with them. The youth and facilitators will be responsible for signing them out and returning them as usual.
 - Youth who have laptops will be asked to bring them for in-program use.
- Protocols for Group Games;
 - Each program will have their own bag of sports equipment for which they will be responsible for cleaning after each use.
- Until further notice, no outside Visiting Artists will be brought into programs.
- Copier/printer usage- to limit sharing, send wirelessly to the printer or email to Margaret who will make copies and leave them in the staff mailbox.
- To limit exposure points, staff debriefing may need to take place virtually. Staff young people in programs are expected to be with their parents when not in programming.

GROUPS

- Processes for identifying and restricting non-essential visitors and volunteers;
 - Visitors will be greeted by signage asking them to call the main number to announce their arrival on campus. We will then direct them what to do or where to go.
 - Deliveries - Signs will direct all deliveries to the Appalachian Porch.
- Fire Drills will be held in a physically distant manner.
- Protocols for Arrival and Departure times.
 - All persons arriving on campus will immediately have their temperature taken. No one will be permitted to stay on campus if their temperature is above 99.5F on a temporal thermometer (per CCHD) or appears to be exhibiting symptoms of illness as determined by the [CCHD](#).

- Youth and staff wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, before and after being on outdoor environments and shared outdoor spaces.

ADMISSIONS

- We will not have visitors on campus during programming time.
- Tours on campus will be conducted when programs are not in session.
 - Admissions interviews via Zoom will be conducted during program hours.
 - There will not be any trial days for prospective youth.
 - Rolling admissions will continue throughout the first half of the year as usual.