

Return to School Plan

Fall 2021

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Introduction

Quest Forward Academy is committed to supporting the health and safety of our students and staff as we return to in-person instruction for the Fall of 2021. **The foundational principle of this guidance is that all students must have access to safe and full in-person instruction and to as much instructional time as possible.**

The policies and procedures outlined here are designed to maximize safety in compliance with local and state health and safety requirements, and specifically follow the latest guidance for safe in-person instruction by the California Department of Public Health **based on the recommendations of the CDC issued on July 9, 2021**. This guidance is based on the latest scientific evidence regarding the transmission and epidemiology of the COVID-19 virus, **and its variants**, and outlines key mitigation strategies, reflected in this plan, that allow for safe in-person instruction. We are taking these steps further to ensure the health and safety of all employees and students by requiring universal masking of all employees while indoors.

We ask you to please familiarize yourself with the components of the plan by reading through this document. Once you have done so, please sign the acknowledgement form on the last page of this Return to School Plan. Students will need to bring the signed form on **the first day of their return to school** the week of August 16, 2021, in order to return to in-person status.

Quest Forward Academy's Return to School Plan was developed in alignment with the following:

- [Sonoma County Health Orders](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines](#)
- [Stronger Together: California Department of Education Guidebook to a Safe Reopening](#)
- [California Department of Public Health School Reopening Guidelines](#)

COVID-19 Administration Team

Interim School Director SheriAnn Simpson and Thalia Becerril are supervising all Quest Forward Academy COVID-19 safety protocols. All employees are required to follow the policies and procedures laid out in this plan, use safe work practices, and assist in maintaining a safe work environment.

SheriAnn Simpson, Interim Director, and Thalia Becerril will supervise COVID-19 training for students and employees. This will include training on pre-screening and self-assessment protocols to determine when students or employees should remain at home instead of coming to a school site.

All family communications regarding COVID-19 matters can be sent to the school administration at the following email address: staysafe@questforward.academy

Our COVID-19 Administration Team will:

1. Coordinate notification of staff, students/parents (following public health guidelines) when there has been a COVID-19 exposure at the school site or a school event.
2. Collect and report data to the Sonoma County Public Health Office.
3. Be a single point of contact for concerns and questions from staff, parents, and students via telephone, email, or video conferencing during the day.
4. Provide Contact Tracing in conjunction with Public Health guidelines.
5. Provide for the dissemination of related communications.

On-Campus Protocols

Promoting Behaviors that Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 and its Variants

Universal Masking Required On Campus, Indoors

Current protocol requires **universal masking** for all students, staff, and mentors while indoors on campus. This will be explained further in several of the sections outlined in this document. There will be some students who will have special arrangements with a 504. See below.

Mandatory Daily Health Screening

All mentors, staff, and students will conduct daily self-checks at home before coming onto campus. Once on campus, each student will be screened by staff for COVID-19 symptoms, including a temperature check with a touchless thermometer. If a student identifies or exhibits COVID-19-like symptoms upon arrival, or at any point in the school day, they will be escorted to the isolation area outdoors and a parent or guardian will be contacted. The student will remain in the isolation area until the parent or guardian arrives.

Each mentor, staff, and student should complete a Home Health Check using the Symptom Checklist, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). *If the answer to any of the questions is “yes”, the student should not come to school.*

Symptom Checklist

Are you experiencing any of these symptoms?

- Cough
- Fever
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Feeling achy
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea or vomiting
- New or unusual headache or dizziness in last 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- Tingling or numbness

Risk Factor Checklist

- In the last 24 hours have you been in contact with anyone with a known case of the COVID-19 virus?
- Are you awaiting COVID-19 test results?
- Is any member of your household experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, awaiting COVID-19 test results, or been exposed to COVID-19?

Remember, if the answer to any of these questions is yes, please do not come to school. Anyone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms must take a COVID-19 test with a negative result before returning to school.

Supplies for the School Day

Students should be sure to bring their clean mask **and** a fresh back-up mask, their computer, charger, a water bottle, lunch (if they will not be eating the school-provided lunch), pens and

pencils, paper, books, and any other supplies you will need for class. We will minimize the sharing of commonly-used items in classrooms such as pencils/pens, computer chargers, etc., in order to mitigate the spread of the virus. Food may not be shared with non-household members.

Transportation Policies and Procedures

We strongly encourage families to drive their own students to school **to minimize close contact with other students**. If this is not possible, everyone in the carpool and the driver should mask and, if possible, the car windows should be down. Students taking public transportation should be careful to follow posted rules for travel with proper social distancing and masking procedures.

Drop Off/Pick Up

Students who drive themselves and students who are dropped off should be masked upon exiting their cars. Masked students will take their place in the health screening line outside of the main entrance, observing the new social distancing protocol of a three-foot radius or more until they have completed their daily health screening.

Once students enter at their designated time, they will not be allowed to exit the building. Please note: once on campus, there will be no leaving campus for before school walks to Starbucks or TacoBell. Pick-up will occur after school is dismissed. Students who have after school activities or business will currently be allowed to remain on campus until 4:00 pm until further notice. Students waiting to be picked up will remain masked and socially distanced in the outdoor pick-up area. In other words, students waiting to be picked up should remain outside while students conducting activities or school business will be allowed to remain inside, masked, until 4:00 pm.

Entering School

1. Students will line up outside of the main entrance, masked, observing the social distance protocol (currently a three-foot radius).
2. School personnel will take students' temperatures and ask screening questions. Students will not be allowed to enter the school building until this has been done.
3. Students and all personnel **MUST** have their masks on to enter the building.
4. Students will use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.

5. When students enter the building, they place their phones in a designated cubby for the day. At the end of the day, students will remove their phones from the designated space to be taken home.
6. Students will then head straight to the first block class.

Universal Face Masking

All students and employees are required to wear masks at all times and in all indoor settings. Outside of school, students may remain unmasked if observing a three-foot radius of social distancing. Students and staff must wear medical masks that cover the mouth and nose, not bandanas, neck gaiters, scarves or other face coverings. Exceptions to this are covered in another section of this document.

- Students should bring their own masks and a backup mask. All masks must have two or more layers.
- Students will not be allowed to enter the campus building without a mask.
- Please have a steady supply of clean, fresh masks available.
- Employees will remain universally masked throughout the day while indoors. If an employee has a documented medical exemption registered with the HR Department, this person will be working alone in a closed, marked office. For their own safety, students will not enter these offices.
- Quest Forward Academy will allow for mask breaks outdoors **for all non-laboratory classes**. This guidance allows for breaks from the use of a mask when a person is outside and at least a 3-foot radius from others not in their household. We will allow students to take mask breaks according to these guidelines when outdoors. Food and drink will be included in these outdoor breaks but protocol will be covered in another section of this document.
- Any community member who refuses to wear a mask or repeatedly violates the mask rule by not wearing the correct mask will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include loss of instruction.
- Students who require an accommodation for masking should contact Brandon Allen ballen@questforward.academy. Be prepared to provide documentation for the request.

Physical Distancing

Individuals will maintain a polite social distance at all times. Furniture placement, classroom configuration, arrival and departure procedures, rules for use of common areas and lunch distribution, traffic flow designation, and signage will all support distancing efforts.

Safe Building Flow

1. Students will follow the arrows on the ground designating directional flow throughout the building. Directional signs will be posted to indicate on-campus traffic flow to maintain the polite social distancing as best we can.
2. The elevator will be available for single use only, and available only to those unable to use the stairs.

Restrooms and Drinking Fountains

Students will have restrooms available during passing periods. These will be shown on the first day on campus. **Please read signage** to know the updated bathroom policy for each bathroom, as this varies depending on location and size.

1. Mentors will use discretion in allowing one student at a time outside of the classroom for a restroom break.
2. Masks must remain on at all times in the restroom.
3. There will be signage posted on restroom doors to note the capacity of people per restroom.
4. Drinking fountains will be closed, but touchless water-refill stations will be available. However, students and employees will not be able to drink inside of the building, though they will have frequent outdoor breaks.

Handwashing

1. Students and staff will wash and disinfect hands frequently throughout the day, including before entering and leaving the building, before and after each class, before and after eating, and before and after using the restroom.
2. Touchless disinfectant distribution stations are positioned throughout the campus.
3. All classrooms are equipped with hand sanitizer.

Food Service Outdoors Only

Students will continue to provide their own water bottle and any drinks. Food service will take place outside of the building in designated areas. Breakfast will be limited to pre-wrapped nutritious items. Lunches will be individual meals that will be picked up by students outdoors. Weather and climate factors will be announced shortly.

Disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes) will be used as much as possible. If disposable items are not feasible, items will be handled with gloves and washed in a dishwasher. Staff will monitor various eating locations to ensure all follow safe procedures. Additional trash/composting containers will be used to accommodate the various eating areas.

Essential Visitor Policy

Only essential visitors will be allowed on campus. Essential visitors will undergo the same screening procedures and follow the same safety protocols as all other members of the on-campus community. For tracking and communication, all visitors will sign in upon arrival. We ask parents to refrain from entering the school building to minimize exposure.

Site Cleaning, Disinfection, and Air Filtration

Cleaning and Disinfecting During the Day

All high-touch surfaces in classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and common spaces — including light switches, door handles, desk tops, classroom sink faucets, printers/copy machines — will be cleaned regularly throughout the day with products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against coronavirus. Disinfectants will be used according to the manufacturer's directions.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Nightly

The building is cleaned nightly in accordance with EPA/CDC recommendations, including the use of EPA/CDC compliant disinfectant on high contact surfaces by staff trained in infection control.

Air Filtration: Engineering Controls, Equipment and Building Systems to Minimize Exposures

The airflow rate within the school, both for recirculated air and fresh air, meets or exceeds the state of California's ventilation standard as per Chapter 4 of the California Mechanical Code. The various ventilation zones of the school are equipped with economizers that introduce fresh air into the ventilation systems and are currently set to maximize airflow through the building. The school's filters have been upgraded to MERV 13 filters, which remove contaminant particles as small as 0.3 microns and are effective in filtering out bacteria, sneeze particles, mold spores, etc. MERV 13 filters are the same grade filters hospitals use for general surgery and inpatient care areas and the highest grade filter our HVAC units will accommodate.

Scenarios: COVID-19 Symptoms, Diagnosis, Exposure, Outbreaks

COVID-19 Symptoms

If you experience any COVID-19 symptoms:

- Do not come to campus
- Contact your healthcare provider
- Obtain a COVID-19 test and quarantine yourself until you receive your test results

Should you wish to see how Quest Forward Academy may handle any exposure issues or like scenarios, please feel free to read the [guidelines as provided by Sonoma County](#). Our policies will be similar to these, however, as an independent school, we reserve the right to maintain stricter guidelines in order to protect our community.

[Scenarios-Based COVID-19 Guidelines for Schools in Sonoma County](#)

Routine Testing

Any community member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, who has recently travelled, or has been exposed to someone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or who has received a COVID-19 diagnosis, should not come to school and should be tested immediately.

Testing for Unvaccinated Staff and Mentors, Part-time Staff, and Consultants on Campus

As of August 11, 2021, any unvaccinated school team member will have weekly testing with either PCR testing or antigen testing. Any PCR (molecular) or antigen test used must either have Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or be operating per the Laboratory Developed Test requirements by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Quest Forward Academy team members will email their weekly test results to staysafe@questforward.academy by 7:00 am each Tuesday until further notice. If verification of testing is not received, the employee must remain off-campus.

To read more about this new California school employee policy, [please see this link](#).

It is an option to get tested through one's healthcare provider. Free Public Testing is also available: The State of California and OptumServe are offering free testing to the general public in Sonoma County by appointment only at various locations. Fill out the patient survey at lhi.care/covidtesting to find a location and schedule an appointment. For more information, call 888-634-1123.

Additional free testing resources and information are available on the Sonoma County SoCoEmergency [webpage](#).

Contact Tracing

Community members are required to report COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, and/or positive test results to the Coordinator staysafe@questforward.academy email for the purposes of contact tracing. Names of all community members will remain confidential.

Employees, Student Training, and Community Education

Employee training on plan implementation

Before in-person instruction begins, staff will have completed Safe Schools COVID-19 safety training as well as on-site safety reviews of the Return to School Plan policies and procedures in accordance with state guidelines.

Family Education on Plan Implementation

Quest Forward Academy's COVID-19 Return to School Safety Plan will be posted on the school website at least 5 days before full-time in-person instruction resumes. Quest Forward Academy staff will hold an informational town hall to review the safety plan and answer any questions. Parents and students will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and are familiar with the school's safety plan before a student may return to in-person instruction.

Orientation to Safe Practices

Students will be provided with a "safe practices" orientation on their first day back on campus.

A Day in the Life: In-Person School in COVID-19

Before you Return to School the First Day

- Review the policies and procedures outlined in this Return to School guidebook.
- Students and parents/guardians sign the Return to School form.
- Parents make sure that they have a signed COVID-19 waiver on file at school.

Before You Come to School Every Day

- Complete your at-home health screening.
- Pack all the supplies you will need for learning during the day.

On Arriving at Quest Forward Academy

- Please put your mask on before exiting the car.
- Parents are asked to stay in or by their vehicle during pick up/drop off. Parents not remaining in their vehicles must wear masks if on school grounds. Please do not enter the building unless essential.
- Students will line up outside of the front entrance to the school in the designated area, observing social distancing markings.
- Students will not congregate at entrance or exit areas.
- Quest Forward Academy will provide social distancing floor markings in waiting and reception areas.
- A designated staff member will take the temperature of each student and ask them COVID-19 health screening questions (itemized below). Students who have a temperature above 100 degrees F or who answer yes to any of the questions will not be allowed to enter campus.
 - Have you or anyone in your household had any of the following symptoms in the last 21 days: sore throat, cough, chills, body aches for unknown reasons, shortness of breath for unknown reasons, loss of smell, loss of taste, fever at or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit?
 - Have you or anyone in your household cared for an individual who is in quarantine or is a presumptive positive or has tested positive for COVID-19?
 - Do you have any reason to believe you or anyone in your household has been exposed to or acquired COVID-19?
 - To the best of your knowledge have you been in close proximity to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19?
- If a student exhibits symptoms, or answers yes to any of the above questions, they will be instructed to wait outside the building at the designated isolation area and a parent or guardian will be called immediately for pickup. A staff member will supervise these students from a 6' distance until a parent or guardian picks up the student.
- If they can enter, students will use hand sanitizer, go directly to 1) drop off their cell phone and then 2) pick up breakfast and take it to their first classroom space or go directly to their first classroom space, following the demarcated traffic flow to ensure distancing.

When Switching Rooms

- When entering a classroom, students will use hand sanitizer.
- Before leaving a classroom, each student will be responsible for wiping down their workspace with a disinfectant wipe. These will be provided by Quest Forward Academy and handed out by a staff member towards the end of each class period.
- Students will follow the designated directional signs on the floor of hallways or staircases to move from location to location.

When Eating Lunch

- Students will wash or sanitize their hands prior to picking up their lunch.
- All food will be served by gloved and masked personnel.
- When getting lunch, students will follow a polite social distance of a 3-foot radius distance in the lunch line. This may mean having groups of students coming into the lunch line at a staggered entry.
- For the time being, the Academy will be using pre-packaged disposable packs of silverware.
- Lunch will be picked up via contactless measures. (i.e. the bagged or boxed lunches will be pre-packaged and the students can just pick up a single bag or box).
- Once a student has their lunch, they will make their way to one of the designated eating areas. Weather-related planning for lunch and breaks will be released shortly.
- While outside and eating, a student or mentor can remove their mask.
- No food or drink will be shared unless from the same household.
- When done eating, students will throw away trash or compost in designated bins and immediately wash/sanitize their hands.
- At the end of the lunch period, students will move to their next classroom as directed by a designated staff member.

In the Common Areas

- In general, large gatherings and assemblies will not be held at this time.
- If in a common area though, all personnel will be universally masked and maintain a polite social distance between each person and no sharing of devices, headphones, or other games.

When Meeting with an Employee

- Maintain a **polite social distancing of a 3-foot radius** between the student and mentor at all times.
- If a mentor needs to show a student something, they can 1) show it on a larger screen that they can both see from a distance or 2) screen share and walk a student through it.

When Using the Restroom or Getting Water

- Read the signage to determine how many people are allowed in each of the restrooms at any one time. The restrooms do not have equal space, so be mindful to check the signage.
- All students and employees will wash hands with soap and water before leaving the restroom.
- Water fountains will not be used at this time, but the water bottle refill station will be available. Students will bring personal water bottles that they can reuse and keep to themselves. As a reminder, drinking will be during outdoor mask breaks and lunch only. A student who has a water-related emergency in class should inform their mentor.

When Employees are Working or Eating (in the Workrooms)

- Each employee will have a designated space somewhere in the building where they can house their items to limit the spread of germs. Employees will remain masked indoors except for those with a medically documented exemption.

When Waiting for the Bus or Parent Pick Up (Upon Leaving the Academy)

- Students will wait outdoors in the designated waiting area.
- Students will not congregate at entrance or exit areas.
- Parents are asked to stay in or by their vehicle during pick up/drop off.
- If students need to wait indoors, they will remain masked.

When there is a Parent-Employee Conference or other Parent/Guardian Meeting

- These meetings will generally occur via phone or video conferencing. If an in-person meeting is deemed critical, it may only take place where social distancing can be maintained.

During an Emergency Fire Drill or other Emergency Situation/ Evacuation

- As much as possible, students and staff will maintain a distance of a 3-foot radius when leaving the building.
- Once outside, they should continue to maintain that distance and use alternative spaces (e.g. parking lots) as needed to spread out away from the building.

When a Student Gets Sick During Class

- The student will immediately gather their belongings on their own and make their way to the isolation area in the front of the building to get their temperature taken and answer any health questions.
- The isolation area will be located outside of the main entrance at the first outdoor table.
- If a student leaves the school sick or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or a fever, they are not permitted to return until they test negative for COVID-19.
- The campus COVID-19 Administration Team will follow state protocols for contact tracing and communication.

Acknowledgement of Return to School Plan

We require that all members of the Quest Forward Academy community agree to abide by the safety procedures and policies listed in this Plan in order to return to in-person instruction.

By signing this form, you agree to:

- Follow universal masking indoors, distancing, limit eating and drinking to frequent outdoor breaks, and traffic flow policies while on campus. Only essential visitors are allowed inside.
- Practice frequent hand-washing and hand sanitation while at school, including on entering and leaving the building, the bathroom, and classrooms, and before and after eating.
- Pre-screen daily at home and stay home if you are exhibiting any of the symptoms on the screening form, or if you may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Get tested if you or any member of your family develops COVID-19 symptoms or believes they may have been exposed, and report the test results to the school Coordinator (staysafe@questforward.academy).
- Self-quarantine if you believe you may have been in contact with someone who has the virus or may have the virus.
- Inform the school (staysafe@questforward.academy) immediately if:
 - You or any family member develops symptoms
 - You or any family member has been exposed to COVID-19
 - There is a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case in your household
- Abide by the county and state guidelines regarding health and safety.

Student Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____