

# Spring Garden Academy COVID-19 Health and Safety and Reopening Plan

*Adopted September 1, 2020*



## **Background**

Spring Garden Academy closed for in-person learning and programming on Monday, March 16, 2020 after Governor Wolf issued an executive school closing order followed by a state-wide stay-at-home order in response to the COVID-19 virus. All operations were continued remotely, including learning and business operations. Spring Garden Academy has remained closed for in-person activities but intends to reopen the buildings for some staff and parent events in early September 2020 and for in-person child care and education beginning September 15, 2020.

This document, drafted by our Leadership team and reviewed by our board, will guide reopening decisions while also outlining steps and procedures Spring Garden Academy will take to reduce risk of exposure and safely care for the children and staff in our facilities during this COVID-19 outbreak. Our team consulted guidance and policy from the Office of Child Care and Department of Early Learning (OCDEL), the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), the Philadelphia Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The leadership team will serve as the Health and Safety Coordinators during the COVID-19 pandemic and will be responsible for communicating the plan, training staff and families on the plan, monitoring adherence to this plan, adjusting the plan as conditions change, and reviewing the plan on a regular basis.

We acknowledge that if there are cases of COVID-19 in the wider community, we cannot completely eliminate transmission risk within the child care and school population. However, the steps we are taking will help keep the transmission rate as low as possible and eliminate unnecessary risk.

## **Communication and Training**

### ***Staff and On-Site Support Team Members***

All staff will be given and trained on this COVID-10 Health and Safety and Reopening Plan on September 3 or September 4, 2020. All staff hired after September 4, 2020 will train on this plan during orientation. This plan will be reviewed at monthly staff meetings, or more frequently if needed, to best serve the children, families, and staff in our community. Training will include walkthroughs of several elements of the plan followed by a focused redesign of our classroom spaces. The leadership team will prepare and give training on each step of this plan. PPE and other materials will be given at this training.

In addition, we realize that outside agencies, such as Elwyn and Catapult, may have their staff working on our site. We will require that all members of their agencies who will be servicing children in our school review this plan with one of our directors or assigned representatives

This may be done remotely. Families should notify us of specific names and agencies during the intake so that we can conduct this training in advance of the service start date.

### ***Families***

All families will receive a copy of this plan at a family orientation meeting before care and education begin. The plan will be reviewed in detail so that families are aware of their responsibilities and the steps Spring Garden Academy staff will be taking each day. The plan will also be sent by email and posted to the Spring Garden Academy website ([www.springgardenacademy.org](http://www.springgardenacademy.org)). The leadership team will prepare and give training on each step of this plan. PPE and other materials, including resources on masks and social distancing, will be given at this orientation. Families who enroll after our reopening will be given this orientation during the intake process before the student begins school.

### ***Other Family Members***

Because of COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, orientation for family members will be done in small groups. No more than two people per family may participate.

We realize, however, that our students may have several family members involved in day-to-day care, including grandparents, siblings, and even friends. This care often involves participation in the drop off and pick up routines.

We ask that family members who attend orientation share this plan and orientation information with other family members who were not present. We can also arrange a zoom meeting with caregivers or family members who were not present at the orientation.

### ***Ongoing Communication***

Given the dynamic nature of this pandemic, we will regularly review the Spring Garden Academy COVID-19 Health and Safety Reopening Plan and adjust as necessary to changing conditions. Changes to the plan will be communicated to staff and families through email, our website, and postings at the entry and exits of the school building.

A member of the leadership team will notify partner agencies and governing agencies of any changes.

### **Reopening Dates**

Beginning September 15, 2020, Spring Garden Academy will offer in-person child care and education for preschool and elementary school families while also allowing some remote learning options. We will remain open as long as conditions remain safe.

Given the dynamic nature of this virus, Spring Garden Academy may be forced to temporarily close for in-person care and return to remote learning and operations until it is safe to return to in-person care and education. Temporary closings may be prompted by government order, policy and guidance changes from OCDEL or DOH, as well as a COVID-19 outbreak in our school.

## **Screening Procedures**

Entry to the building will be restricted to staff scheduled to work, enrolled students, DHS or governing officials, and specialized workers giving direct care to a child. Family members and visitors will not be permitted on site during school hours.

All persons, including students, will go through the following screening process upon entry to the building:

- Line up on designated spots outside the building at least six feet apart.
- Undergo a temperature check. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will not be permitted entry to the building.
- Submit to a check for potential exposure by answering the following questions. Persons identified as high risk will be asked to leave the premises to quarantine or seek medical attention.
  1. In the past two weeks, have you (or your child) had a fever, new cough, shortness of breath, or been diagnosed with COVID-19?
  2. Have you (or your child) come in contact with anyone that has tested positive for COVID19 in the past 14 days?
  3. Within the past 14 days, have you (or your child) traveled to any of the states on the state's mandatory quarantine list?

In addition, staff may ask about general health concerns and illness symptoms (fever, chills, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose).

Staff will log temperatures, responses to questions, and illness symptoms during the screening process.

Any child or staff exhibiting signs of illness or who represents a high risk during the screening process will not be permitted in the building. The family will consult the director before returning and may be asked to provide a doctor's report or clearance as part of the return process. We ask families to work with the school to keep infections out of the building.

## **Child Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies**

Students will be assigned a defined entrance at drop off. Family members accompany a student to the door but will not be permitted entry. Families should remain six feet apart while waiting. The adult should wait with a child until the entry process is complete.

Families will also be given a defined pick-up door. Family members can ring the doorbell but will be asked to wait until the student is dismissed to the pick-up area. Family members must remain six feet apart at all times. One or two staff people will be assigned to assist with drop off and pick process each day.

Families must drop off and pick up at assigned times so that we can maintain social distancing procedures. Any changes to the drop off or pick up schedule must be approved by a director. This is critical. Families who struggle with adherence to this requirement may be asked or required to move to remote learning to better meet the needs of the student and the school community.

## **Monitoring Staff and Student Health**

### ***Screening***

Staff and children will be screened each day at entry. Screenings include a temperature check and questionnaire. Families are expected to provide honest answers to all questions for the good of the school community. Adults will be expected to answer for children.

1. In the past two weeks, have you (or your child) had a fever, new cough, shortness of breath, or been diagnosed with COVID-19?
2. Have you (or your child) come in contact with anyone that has tested positive for COVID19 in the past 14 days?
3. Within the past 14 days, have you (or your child) traveled to any of the states on the state's mandatory quarantine list?

In addition, staff may ask about general health concerns and illness symptoms (fever, chills, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose).

Staff will log temperatures, responses to questions, and illness symptoms during the screening process.

Any child or staff exhibiting signs of illness or who represents a high risk during the screening process will not be permitted in the building. The family will consult the director before returning and may be asked to provide a doctor's report or clearance as part of the return process. We ask families to work with the school to keep infections out of the building.

### ***Monitoring***

Once the school day has started, teachers will continue to monitor children for potential illness and communicate any concerns to the director or appointed person on site. The director or someone appointed by the director will conduct a morning and afternoon check of each classroom on site.

If anyone exhibits symptoms of an illness, the individual will be moved to the assigned waiting room. Staff will be sent home. The family will be expected to pick up a sick student as soon as possible and to follow up with the director before returning to the school for care and education.

## ***Exposure to COVID-19***

If a staff or student becomes exposed to an individual confirmed positive for COVID-19, the staff or student will be asked to get a COVID-19 test and quarantine for the time required by the Department of Health (10-14 days). We ask the student's family to cooperate with contact tracing efforts to help minimize the risk to our school and the wider Philadelphia communities.

We will notify families and staff that someone at the facility may have been exposed and articulate any known risks to the community. We may recommend or require that individuals in contact with the student or staff move to remote learning as we await information. We will also notify our licensing representative and relevant partners. All of these steps will be done in coordination with the Philadelphia Department of Health and or licensing representative.

If a staff or student tests positively for COVID-19, we will work with our licensing representative and the Department of Health on a temporary closing plan based on the exposure risk. We will notify families and staff and provide for remote learning during the closure. We ask that anyone who contracts COVID-19 cooperate with contact tracing efforts to help minimize the risk to our school and the wider Philadelphia communities. We will also notify all relevant partners.

An infected staff or child may not return to the facility until the quarantine period has ended, the illness has ended, and a doctor has verified it is safe for the person to return.

Family and staff notification of the steps we are taking will be of the highest priority. We will communicate directly through email and also phone calls. We will also notify families and staff at pick up or drop off, depending on the time of day. While information about COVID-19 risk will be shared, we will do everything possible to ensure the confidentiality of the affected individual and family.

Spring Garden Academy will always put health and safety above all else, even if that means enforcing a temporary closure of one or both of our facilities. If we temporarily close, we will contact each family by email and phone so that we communicate next steps for health and safety as well as next steps for remote learning. We will strongly encourage all families to participate in contact tracing inquiries.

## ***Individuals with High Risk***

Students who are at high risk for contracting COVID-19 should meet with a director to discuss possibilities for remote learning or precautions that are needed for in-person care. We will assess our ability to provide what is needed and discuss possible options. The family should give written information from the student's doctor to help us with this decision process.

Staff who are at high risk or staff who have a family member at risk should meet with an HR director to discuss possible provisions during this season.

The presence of high-risk staff or students will be factored in our classroom teaching assignments and student placement.

## **Staffing**

Spring Garden Academy will maintain a back-up staffing plan at all times in case a member of the teaching staff cannot work because of illness, high risk factors, or potential exposure to COVID-19. Staff may be redeployed to cover in other classrooms for a period of time to best care for our community. Leadership staff may serve in the classroom. All staff will have clearances and meet the current requirements to work with children.

## **Mask Requirement**

All students, staff, and visitors must wear a mask while on the property. Masks may only be removed for eating after social distancing meal time seating has been completed. Medical or cloth masks are required. Neck gaiters will not be considered an appropriate mask because of recent research about their ineffectiveness.

Once a student enters the classroom, the student will be given a Spring Garden Academy mask. Each student will have a number which will be placed on their masks to prevent the sharing of student masks. Spring Garden Academy staff will wash all masks and provide clean masks each morning and throughout the day, as needed. A student's assigned mask will be given at entry and collected at exit. Families are encouraged to have masks for their children before and after they leave the Spring Garden Academy property.

Classroom teachers will let families know how the children are handling masks and issues they may be encountering with enforcement. Teachers will also inform the leadership team. We ask all families to review mask usage and practice mask wearing at home before school begins. Teachers will be sending resources for families to use with their children with mask wearing and safety.

If a child struggles with wearing a mask, Spring Garden Academy will recommend or require the remote learning option until the student can safely wear a mask in school.

A student or staff with special needs that may make mask wearing difficult must provide medical documentation and recommendations to share with the school so that we can work together to ensure both the safety of the individual but also the school community. Remote learning and working options may be discussed as part of the process.

Staff will be provided with masks and face shields by Spring Garden Academy. Staff will care for their own masks and shields and must wear clean masks each day. Staff are expected to keep masks on at all times while in the presence of other staff and children as well as shared classroom or community space.

Each day, the center leadership team and an assigned staff person will do regular checks of the classrooms and the facility to ensure masks are properly worn and used.

All family members and visitors must wear a mask while on the property, including during pick up and drop off. If a family member attends a meeting during non-child care hours, a mask will be required.

## **Social Distancing**

Spring Garden Academy is committed to adhering to social distancing guidelines which require people to remain six feet apart.

### ***Admittance and Notification***

Entry to the building will be restricted to staff scheduled to work, enrolled students, DHS or governing officials, and specialized workers giving direct care to a child. Family members and visitors will not be permitted on site during school hours.

The entry and exit areas of the buildings will be marked with six foot markings so that waiting families can maintain proper social distancing.

Signs will be posted not only at the entry and exit but throughout the building to encourage proper social distancing.

### ***Classroom Groupings and Locations***

Students will remain with the same group for the day to prevent additional exposure and risk. They will also remain in the same classroom until departure.

Movement will be limited to outdoor space, bathrooms, and the classroom. Classrooms will also be configured for physical movement areas for inclement weather days. We will no longer have common or shared gym space.

Student time of arrival and time of departure information will be used to help define classroom size and groupings. Class sizes may also be reduced for better social distancing in the classroom.

Our classroom schedules are designed to stagger bathroom and hallway use to prevent increased exposure. Hallways will be marked so staff and students can keep six feet apart at all times. Classrooms will have assigned bathrooms and bathroom times. Our older students (at the 17<sup>th</sup> and Tioga site) will be moved to the upper floor away from the preschool and younger grades.

### ***Students in the Classroom***

Within the classroom, learning centers will be spaced out so that social distancing requirements are met. No more than one student will be allowed in a center at the same time. Classroom sizes will be made smaller so that there is always a space for each child in the room to be actively learning. The teacher will encourage social interaction by soliciting group responses and sharing times but will not encourage close play.

Within the classrooms, children will be given individual supply boxes to help prevent exposure. The box and supplies will be labeled with the child's name and number (which coordinates to the mask number). Staff will also be given individual supply kits to reduce exposure by the sharing of office supplies.

We will mark the classroom floors for social distancing for morning meeting and other group times in preschool and the younger grades. We will also give assigned seats, marked out at six feet apart, at the tables. In older grades, students will be given individual desks. All furniture will be reconfigured to ensure that guidelines are met.

### ***Meals***

Food preparation staff will wear masks and gloves at all times and ensure meals are served individually to prevent exposure.

At meal times, students will sit in assigned seats at the table (younger grades) or desks (older grades). Meal service may be slightly staggered within the group to ensure that children remain spaced out appropriately during the entire time. Students will not move to a common eating area but will remain in the classroom.

Shared snacks are not permitted at this time. Spring Garden Academy snacks will be individually served and may be served outside.

### ***Outdoor Space***

We will utilize outdoor space as much as possible in the warmer months. This will not only give us more space for social distancing but also reduce the overall risk. Martial Arts and other special programming may be done outside during the warmer school months and then moved to remote. Teachers will give instructions to children on how to properly social distance in the outdoor setting and will disinfect shared equipment as able. We will be moving to more structured outdoor play to help facilitate better social distancing.

### ***Staff Locations***

Staff will remain in their classrooms or work area through the work day with the exception of break times. We may have multiple break room areas to ensure staff have limited contact with others throughout the day. Staff will be assigned break room space and be expected to limit themselves to the assigned space.

### ***Adult Meetings***

Teacher meetings with families and partners will continue to be done remotely during school hours of operation.

School-wide meetings for families, such as orientation, may be held in person but will be done in small groups in a large space during non-school hours.

Staff meetings held on site will be done in a large space, such as the sanctuary. Many staff meetings will be held remotely.

Meetings by the partner churches or Next Generation Ministries will not meet in school spaces or use school entries/exits during school hours.



## ***Events and Field Trips***

Large school events, such as our Thanksgiving Dinner, will not be held during this pandemic season. Some events may be moved outside but will adhere to all social distancing requirements. Other events will be done remotely.

Field trips and large school trips are on hold at this time. We will be adding virtual trips to our schedule until field trips are safe again.

## **Cleaning/Sanitation/Disinfecting Procedures**

### ***Handwashing***

All staff and students will be expected to wash hands with soap and water throughout the day and especially when in contact with other people or shared spaces or materials. This is in addition to regular hand washing before and after meals, after messy play, and after toileting. Teachers will provide teaching on handwashing and monitor effectiveness with their students. They will also send home resources for families to practice at home.

Spring Garden Academy has no-touch trash cans and paper towel dispensers throughout our facilities, including the bathrooms, to reduce the risk of exposure during the handwashing or cleaning process.

Signs will be posted throughout the building (classrooms, offices, and bathrooms) to encourage good hygiene practices. These signs will also be posted at the school entrances. Specific handwashing videos and signs will be shared with families for home use.

Under the PA Code, hand sanitizer is not permitted in a child care space. However, we will use hand sanitizer in the Elementary School during school hours only as this space is separate from child care. Hand sanitizer will not be used during OST hours.

### ***Sanitizing and Disinfecting***

Each day, the kitchen staff will prepare sanitizing and disinfecting solutions for the facility. These will be moved to the classrooms and offices for use by staff. Additional bottles will be kept in the kitchen. Sanitizing and disinfecting solutions are posted in the kitchen and classrooms along with guidelines.

Within the classroom, teachers will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects. Some objects may be removed from play, to a designated area or bin away from the children, for cleaning later. Teachers will continue to follow all cleaning and disinfecting procedures for toileting while with the class at the bathrooms. Sanitizing and disinfecting solutions are posted in the kitchen and classrooms along with guidelines.

An assigned staff person will also clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects in the hallways, bathrooms, and shared spaces at least every four hours. Bathrooms will be checked more frequently. High frequency surfaces include, but are not limited to, door handles

and sink handles. Sanitizing and disinfecting solutions are posted in the kitchen and classrooms along with guidelines.

All water fountains will be covered during this time. Children will be given water in cups or water bottles.

Outdoor spaces on our property will be cleaned during set up and end of the day. We will not use public playground equipment unless we can separate our group from other groups and sanitize the space before play.

Spring Garden Academy uses disinfectants registered by the EPA as effective against SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

### ***Professional Cleaning: Daily and During COVID-19 Outbreak***

Our facilities will be thoroughly cleaned each evening by a professional cleaning team. This team has already done deep cleaning and is working with our team to prepare the building for reopening.

If we experience a COVID-19 outbreak, additional cleaning steps will be taken by our professional cleaning team. Details about those steps will be given at the time of the outbreak as we will receive direct guidance from the Department of Health about specific procedures and timing of the cleaning process.

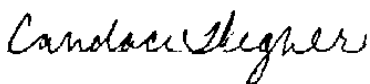
During an outbreak, a classroom or the entire facility may be shut down for cleaning. Any shutdown, even of a classroom, may lead to a temporary closure of some or all in-person learning and return to remote learning until the building is safe to reopen.

### ***Materials in the Classroom***

Classroom spaces will be designed to reduce the number of high touch surface areas in the classroom. Students and staff will be given individual supply containers. Learning materials in center areas will be organized into smaller containers for easy transport to a table and for use by one student.

Hard-to-clean materials, such as stuffed animals, will be removed from the classroom.

*Spring Garden Academy's COVID-19 Health and Safety Reopening Plan was submitted to the governing board on August 30, 2020 by the Executive Leadership Team. Official adoption of the plan will begin September 1, 2020.*



*Candace Wegner*  
Executive Director