



THE **Vanguard School**

COVID-19 Response Plan

2021-2022

Version 1.6

September 10, 2021

The Vanguard School COVID-19 Response Plan

This document represents The Vanguard School's COVID-19 Response Plan as of September 10, 2021.

This plan is designed in response to the most recent information and recommendations available from El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). It has been developed in consideration of our mission as a school and according to our capacity to meet those recommendations given current resources and limitations.

As everyone knows, the details of the COVID-19 virus and the necessary responses can evolve rapidly. New information or directives from either El Paso County or the State of Colorado may materialize at any time and dictate a rapid shift in the school's approach to keeping students and staff safe, including a change to the format in which we provide our instruction. As the situation evolves, we will communicate changes as soon as we are aware. Parents are encouraged to develop contingency plans well in advance that will allow them to support any potential shift to learning postures.

The circumstances around the COVID-19 virus have created many unique situations. Among those is the fact that, for us to effectively mitigate the challenges of the virus, everyone must act not only to keep himself safe, but also for the good of the entire community. Implementing this plan effectively for our school will require patience, perseverance, flexibility, and the cooperation of all members of our community, including staff, teachers, parents, and the student body. We are grateful for the support we continually receive from all members of our community and are looking forward to continuing to partner with you on behalf of the development of our students.

General Information



Academic Calendar and School Day Schedules

[Click here](#) to view our academic calendar.

Important/No School Dates

September 3: Staff Workday

November 12: Staff Workday

September 6: Labor Day

November 24-26: Thanksgiving Break

October 8: Staff Workday

December 20-31: Winter Break

October 18-20: Parent/Teacher Conferences

January 3: Staff Workday

October 21-22: Fall Break

School Day Schedules by Grade Level

K-3: 8:05 A.M. – 3:20 P.M.

Junior High: 8:15 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

4-6: 8:00 A.M. – 3:15 P.M.

High School: 8:15 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.



Uniform Policy and Dress Code

The school's K-8 Uniform Policy and High School Dress Code have been updated and are available on our website. [Click here](#) to view.



Parents, Visitors, and Guests

- Non-staff members are **not permitted** to enter the building before the start of school, during morning car line, or fifteen minutes after the end of morning drop-off. Non-staff members are not permitted to enter the building fifteen minutes prior to afternoon pick-up or during carline. Please see specific arrival/dismissal procedures and times for your child's building by clicking on the link in this document under drop-off and pick-up. All visitors must check in at the front office and visits must take place outside of the times mentioned above.
- Parents are permitted to attend outdoor assemblies; parents without parent ID badges must still sign in to receive a visitor's badge.

- Parents are asked to make appointments to meet with school staff, and meetings may be scheduled using teleconferencing, email, and phone calls to help reduce the number of individuals in common areas.
- We ask that parents not loiter on school grounds.
- **Any individual visitors to any campus shall receive a temperature check by the school, and anyone visiting a classroom must wear a KN95 mask that will be provided by the school.**



Student Drop-off and Pick-up

Please [click here](#) to view our Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures.



Early Pick-up

If you pick up your child early from school for an appointment or any other reason, you should call your child's front office upon your arrival. We will retrieve your child from the classroom and bring them out to you. We have several parking spaces designated for this purpose.



Food Service and Hydration

- **As a result of a USDA policy, all students in grades 4-12 at The Vanguard School are offered free school lunches, regardless of "Free and Reduced" lunch qualification.** This policy will continue until further notice. Parents **do not** need to fill out a form to take advantage of these free lunches, however, **it is very important that the school has this information, as this allows families to receive other support throughout the year that is available for qualifying families. Please complete District 11's [Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals](#).** Completion of this form is also necessary for families to continue receiving free and reduced lunch after this temporary policy expires. If you have any questions regarding this policy or our lunch program in general, please email info@TheVanguardSchool.com.
- Students in all grades are welcome to bring their lunch from home.
- **Students should bring a personal water bottle (must be clear/transparent) each day with their name clearly marked on the container.** Water bottle filling stations are available in all buildings.
- Students are required to sanitize their hands before and after meals.

- Elementary students eat lunch with their cohort groups in designated outdoor spaces, in their classrooms, or in other common areas where distancing can be maintained to the greatest extent possible.



Recess and Outdoor Activities

- Students stay with their identified cohort during recess and other outdoor activities.
- Students are allowed time and are required to sanitize their hands both before and after recess and other outdoor activities.



Athletics and School Activities

- The Vanguard School believes athletics and other activities are essential in developing well-rounded, healthy, and resilient students. The district and our school support these programs to the full extent that the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) and the El Paso County Health Department allow.
- **Large indoor events:**
 - **The school will require masks of all attendees/spectators at all indoor sporting events** due to the potential number of people attending that would not be from Vanguard.
 - The school will continue to evaluate other events such as awards ceremonies, plays, concerts, and other large gatherings on a case-by-case basis and inform families of any additional modifications or requirements.
- Other events, such as field trips, assemblies, class meetings, concerts, performances, back-to-school events, etc. will be evaluated prior to being held with specific mitigation measures implemented, or cancellation of the event, will be communicated as necessary. For the beginning of school, assemblies will take place outdoors and parents are permitted to attend. **Assemblies will be cancelled in the event of inclement weather.**
- School-provided transportation to athletic events and activities may be limited with the responsibility for student transportation to be arranged by parents. When transportation is provided by the school, masks will be required for all passengers and drivers.



Transportation

Per federal mandate, all students, regardless of age, and all adults are required to wear facial coverings while riding school-provided transportation.

Health and Sanitation



Daily Health Screenings

We are adhering to the guidance of El Paso County Public Health (ECPH), the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), and the state government as we make decisions.

This section contains information regarding health and sanitation, including instructions for daily health screenings, our plan for potential and positive COVID-19 cases, and more.

One of the most important protective practices schools and parents can take is to require students and staff to stay home when they are ill.

All students and staff should self-screen **before** entering school buildings as the best approach to ensure the lowest risk of virus transmission.

- Self-screening by parents at home with a temperature check and symptom check has been identified as the most effective strategy to achieve this objective.
- Staff members will complete a daily on-line health survey.
- Staff and students are expected to self-screen before coming to school each day. **If they exhibit any of the symptoms below or feel feverish, they should stay home, and parents are encouraged to consult with their health care provider regarding next steps:**
 - Fever (100.4 or higher)
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Sore throat
 - Loss of sense of smell or taste
 - Gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea
 - Vomiting or nausea
- Children who present symptoms at school will be isolated from faculty and students in the health room or other designated safe space, and parents will be contacted immediately to take their child home.
- **The school will be increasing the number of random temperature checks performed each day.**
- School administration reserves the right to send any student or staff member home if they are determined to be sick.

- **Students who have missed school due to illness must meet with the nurse prior to returning to school after their illness.**



Potential and Positive COVID Cases

Potential Cases

We are following county guidance when handling potential COVID-19 cases.

- Anyone showing significant symptoms/signs of COVID-19 must stay home for ten days AND must show improving symptoms for three days and be fever free (without the use of medications) for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Anyone with a fever (100.4 or higher), will be immediately sent home, regardless of whether they are presenting any other symptoms. This is consistent with our fever policy from past years.
- Anyone with symptoms but without a fever will be evaluated by the school nurse, who will decide whether that person should be sent home.
- If anyone showing symptoms/signs of COVID-19 is diagnosed with an illness that gives definitive cause to their symptoms (i.e., strep throat, influenza, etc.) they may be allowed to return to school once their symptoms improve and they have been fever free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for 24 hours.

Positive Cases

We are following county guidance when handling positive COVID-19 cases.

- We will determine which students may have been affected by a positive COVID-19 case through contact tracing.

Quarantines

We do not make the rules and policies about who must quarantine, who is exempt from quarantine, or how quarantines work. They are set by the county health officials, and we are obligated to comply.

Once contact tracing is complete for a school exposure, affected families receive notification via the Executive Director, which will include further instructions regarding quarantine and distance learning instruction during quarantine. In some cases, contact tracing results in only partial classes being quarantined.

Quarantine vs. Isolation

Quarantine:

Per El Paso County guidelines, unvaccinated individuals who have had exposure to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 or is considered a presumptive positive case are required to quarantine per public health guidance for at least 10 days, unless both individuals

were masked at the time of exposure. A quarantined individual is someone who does not have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Isolation:

Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have developed symptoms of COVID-19 are directed to isolate. Individuals should remain in isolation until:

- They have had no fever for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication); and
- other symptoms have improved; and
- at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

If individuals tested positive but have not had symptoms, they should be in isolation for 10 days, starting with the date of the positive test. If symptoms develop after the positive test, individuals should continue to isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms



Facial Coverings

At this time, The Vanguard School will not require all staff and students to wear masks in school buildings. However, anyone is welcome to wear masks, and we strongly recommend the wearing of masks for unvaccinated individuals. When all people are masked in a room, students will NOT have to quarantine unless they develop symptoms. If all students are not wearing masks, unvaccinated students are considered contacts according to El Paso County Public Health and will need to be at home for at least a 10-day mandatory quarantine as required by the county. This means we will be sending healthy students home.

It is important to note the school may require the wearing of masks in the future, if we determine it is necessary to maintain our overarching goal of keeping students safe and in school. Determining factors may include:

- If the school were to experience an outbreak in one or more buildings based on our metric guidelines
- If we see a significant increase in overall positivity rates
- If the number of quarantined students becomes too challenging to navigate

Federal law mandates anyone riding public transportation, including school buses, be required to wear a mask. **For students of any age and staff riding school-provided transportation for any purpose (e.g., athletic events, activities, field trips, etc.), in alignment with the Federal mandate, face coverings are required.**

Metric Guidelines

We continue to monitor the data and statistics concerning COVID and our community. As a measure to promote a safe learning environment, **The Vanguard School will require masks for all staff and students in a specific building if we have an outbreak of five or more**

confirmed or probable cases from five different households within a 14-day period. Mask requirements will not exceed twenty-eight days if upon reevaluation by administration, it is determined they are no longer needed. School buildings are defined as lower elementary (K-3), upper elementary (4-6), junior high (7-8) and high school (9-12).

Facial Coverings

- We honor and respect the decisions of parents and staff when it comes to facial coverings, whether wearing one or not. Our buildings are expected to be welcoming and supportive of everyone, and we will uphold a positive culture throughout the school. Should mask mandates be put back in place by state or local public health agencies, we will communicate that information.
- Should you choose to have your child wear a mask, please follow these guidelines:
 - Any solid color and/or pattern is acceptable.
 - Characters (e.g., Mickey Mouse, Paw Patrol, etc.) are acceptable. Please steer away from any facial covering featuring writing, words, and/or logos unless it is The Vanguard School logo, colleges or universities, or sports teams.
 - Masks should not have embellishments such as sequins, glitter, three-dimensional art, etc.
 - Masks cannot feature political-related content (words and/or images), profanity (words and/or images), or any message and/or image deemed inappropriate or distracting.
 - The overarching idea is that facial coverings should not create distraction or discord among staff or students. If you have any questions about what to wear, please err on the side of steering clear of anything that could be distracting, controversial, or divisive.



Physical Distancing

- The school will continue to practice physical distancing to the fullest extent possible while maintaining an appropriate learning environment. This includes limiting group sizes.
- The school will maximize outdoor venues for larger groups (e.g., assemblies, etc.) and adjust transition periods and locker visits.



Cleaning Protocol

We have regular cleaning intervals throughout the day, especially focused on bathrooms. We

are also deep cleaning every evening, establishing hygiene routines among our staff and students, and equipping each classroom with EPA registered disinfectants and cleaners to be used regularly on desks and other high traffic areas. We also utilize electrostatic sprayers for cleaning large areas more quickly.

The disinfectant that we are using is a product called Q.T.-3. This disinfectant is a product that we have been using in the school on a routine basis for some time and has received approval from the EPA for its effectiveness against SARS-CoV-2. The solution comes in a concentrated formula and is then diluted to 1 ounce per 1 gallon of water, so it is mild but still effective. Every classroom has a pre-diluted bottle of the disinfectant that teachers will use to spray each desk at the end of instruction and after the student has stood up from the desk. The solution is allowed to sit for a moment and is then wiped clean with paper towels. This process keeps the bottle of solution away from students and eliminates any contact.



Classrooms and Facilities

- The use of shared items is being limited as much as possible. Items that may be shared are placed in bins and sanitized between uses.
- Students are reminded not to share any personal items.
- All classrooms have been provided with hand sanitizer or sanitizing wipes for daily staff and student use, and we have built-in routines for handwashing throughout the day.
- Office areas have been equipped with Plexiglass shields to help protect staff, parents, and students.
- All classrooms have been equipped with two classroom-level air purifiers.
- The school received grant funding last spring for a major overhaul of our HVAC systems in every building to greatly improve effectiveness and efficiency

PE Safety:

- All students have class outside as much as possible.
- Students will be cohorted to the greatest extent possible.
- PE students will not share equipment or have contact with one another.
- Any equipment that is used by any student is sanitized between classes with the provided spray and paper towels.
- Teachers have been given hand sanitizer to have students use frequently during class and before they leave at the end of class.



Social and Emotional Wellness

We are committed to supporting the social and emotional well-being of all students. If you have concerns about your child's emotional well-being, please contact your child's Assistant Principal who will support you or put you in contact with the appropriate school resources.



Distance Learning

As a school, we are well-positioned to move into a remote or Hybrid Learning posture should state and county guidelines necessitate that we do, and we will continue to provide remote learning options to students who become quarantined. For more information on our plan, please [click here](#).

El Paso County Public Health Information



Response to COVID-19 Cases in Schools

Every case or potential exposure will be unique and handled on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with Public Health.

To report a COVID-19 case or potential outbreak, parents are encouraged to contact El Paso County Public Health at 719-578-3220.