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This plan has been developed by the Leadership Team at Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs that include Helen Burland, Executive Director, Eric Spencer, Principal, Laura Grozier, Director of Operations and Yvonne Pacifico, Coordinator of Health Services and Center Nurse, with guidance taken from the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Governor's Task Force, Reopen Connecticut. Eric Spencer will serve as the Compliance Liaison overseeing the implementation of the plan. It is a roadmap to allowing for school operations, resuming our education program in building while continuing to provide remote blended learning to students (and parents) who choose not to participate in-person based on individual considerations. Protocols were implemented for in-building Summer School program and adjusted based on feedback from staff and families.

Planning Priorities were as follows:

- Plan for full in-person participation with allowance for students who temporarily choose to not participate in-person.
- Plan needs to be sensitive to the individual needs of the students that are served.
- Review facility use to maximize adherence to CDC guidelines for social distancing, cohorting and cleaning protocols.
- Consideration has been given to maintaining safety as a first priority for both students and staff.
- Plan should address general guidelines such as mask usage in the context of the capabilities of the students being served.

Every effort has been made to comply with the recommendations of the State Department of Education and public health and safety mandates. A copy of this plan is available at www.stcatherineacademy.org. The framework for this plan covers the following areas: Facility preparedness and maintenance; Health screening and communication protocols; and Operations. It is understood that the plan needs to be flexible and respond to any additional executive orders from the Governor or guidance related to health and safety.

Facility preparedness and maintenance

The Center has contracted with Preferred Building Maintenance to complete deep cleanings in advance of the start of the 2020-2021 school year. PBM will sanitize all surfaces with product descriptions attached to this document. In addition, the Center will continue to contract for cleaning services with Preferred Building Maintenance for daily cleaning and sanitizing. Approved cleaning products will be available in each room of the building and staff will be encouraged to wipe down heavily used surfaces

throughout the day. Bathrooms will be regularly monitored and sanitized midday. A cleaning log will be posted in the common bathrooms.

Signage has been posted to include messages such as “Stop the Spread” by encouraging hand washing, social distancing and keeping hands away from your face.

Outdoor space will be used as often as is practical. Tables and tents have been procured to facilitate use of outdoor space as weather permits.

The health office will be used for general health related activity (e.g. minor injuries, Band-Aids, etc.) and for all health matters unrelated to COVID 19. A room located in the life skills apartment with its adjoining bathroom will be used as the Isolation Room in the event that a student or staff member begins to exhibit symptoms related to COVID 19 and needs to be isolated waiting to be picked up. This room will be monitored by a staff person when occupied.

Health Screening and Communication

The Coordinator of Health Services and Nurse (referred to as Nurse) will oversee the daily health screenings of both students and staff. Screenings will include daily temperature check and observation of any respiratory symptoms. Individuals with temperatures in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit will not be permitted to enter the school building. A mask and face shield will be worn by the Nurse while conducting the screening. A daily log will be kept in the Health Office. Daily temperature checks will continue through the first month of school and will be reviewed by the Leadership Team based on guidelines from DPH and CDC.

If a student or staff person has been present in-school and is diagnosed with COVID-19, the Center staff will contact the local Health Department and will notify all families and staff about the exposure. It is expected that families and staff will self-report exposure to suspected or confirmed cases so that efficient tracing within the school community can occur. All information that is shared will be treated confidentially in compliance with privacy expectations. Recommendations for closure or reduced opening will be developed in collaboration with the Leadership Team and the Health Department.

Operations

The building capacity is adequate to meet the social distancing recommendations put forth by the CDC and CSDE plans. Students and staff will be assigned at the beginning of the school year and will remain consistent throughout the year in accordance with cohorting guidelines. Each class group will be located in an assigned room and will have a consistent schedule to follow which will include times for bathroom use and hand washing. Students and staff will attend an in-person training session that reviews good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene and social distancing. Staff will provide daily reinforcement of best practices.

Students will be encouraged to wear a face mask, recognizing that some of our students will be unable to maintain placement of a mask for even short periods of time. Staff will be required to wear a mask at all times. Face shields will be made available to staff to provide added protection when working with students who are unable to wear a mask and/or require close contact to accommodate support that individual students might require including toileting, food preparation and de-escalation of unsafe behaviors.

Social distancing will be encouraged and reinforced throughout the day. In the cases where social distancing is not possible, appropriate face coverings will be made available. Rooms will be set up to facilitate social distancing between students and full group gatherings will be limited to spaces like the gym that allow for social distancing or outdoors where there is enough space to promote and enforce 6 feet separation.

Hand washing will be encouraged throughout the day; all classrooms have access to an in-room sink; hand sanitizer will be available in each room and at the entrance and exits for the building.

Drop off will be limited to one student at a time. Parents/drivers are requested to remain in their car until they are directed by staff to approach the door. Parents/drivers will be instructed to remain in their car in place until the daily health screening has occurred to insure that the student is healthy and may remain at the Center for the day. Pick up in the afternoon will also be one student at a time. Parents/drivers are instructed to remain in their cars and approach the exit door when directed by a staff member. Transportation provided by LEAs will be subject to district protocols.

Students will have one snack period and a lunch period. Each student will bring his/her own food from home. Lunch will be eaten in the classroom. Recess times will be staggered to allow for social distancing and limit share of recreational equipment.

The school program will remain on site with no community trips planned. There will be no visitors permitted in the building during the school day. Related services staff (speech, OT and PT) will be permitted in order to meet IEP requirements and will be required to follow the same safety protocols regarding health screening and face masks.

There will be no community sharing of materials. Each student will have a bag of materials, e.g. pencils, markers to use throughout the day. Staff will reinforce the need to keep hands off of other students' materials. Students will be assigned a computer workstation and IPAD and will be monitored to insure that access is limited to assigned materials and tools.

Bathroom use will be closely monitored and limited to one student at a time. ADLs will be included as dictated by the IEP and closely monitored to limit exposure of staff and students. Signs regarding hand washing will be posted in each bathroom. Single use paper towels are available. Hand sanitizer will be located at each door. Staff will monitor use and reinforce hand washing.

Attendance will be monitored to identify any trends that would suggest spread of illness or safety concerns.

Orientation for staff is scheduled for two days prior to the return of students. At this time, staff will be trained on strategies to employ social distancing and safety measures such as hand washing into daily routines. In addition, staff will receive professional development focused on social-emotional needs of the students returning to the classroom as well as addressing any questions or needs that the staff have to ensure a positive return to school.

Summary

These guidelines are subject to adjustments as appropriate. Parents/guardians and staff will be encouraged to share feedback to help refine the protocols that will best serve our students as we move forward. The mission of Saint Catherine Academy, that is, to provide an alternative education program

that fosters independence in a faith-based environment, remains unchanged. Our goal is to create a safety plan that allows us to return to the valuable in-person education that our students need and deserve. A clear asset that Saint Catherine Academy has is its strong community and relationships with families and staff. This asset was critical during the shutdown period this past spring. During the early days and weeks of the fall term, emphasis will continue to value a strong sense of community and positive learning environment. This will assist both the students and staff as they transition back. A highly successful Summer School program that included more than 75% of students and staff provides a valuable bridge to a full re-opening in the fall.

This document is not intended to address the education plans or strategies. Staff will be encouraged to access the [CT Learning Hub](#) as well as other professional guidelines and sources to enhance classroom plans.