



## Washington Park Early Learning Center COVID-19 Addendum 2021-2022

As we prepare to open for the Fall 2021-2022 school year we will continue to put our utmost efforts into placing the health and safety of our community first. This addendum will provide you with key information about updated policies and procedures, as well as COVID-19 acknowledgement and agreements. All policies listed in our Parent Handbook are still intact unless otherwise updated below.

\* With the everchanging information and unknowns of COVID-19, all policies, procedures and addendums are subject to change. We will continue to monitor rules and regulations put forth by the Department of Human Services, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and by the State of Colorado.

# SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

## **DROP OFF & PICK UP**

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In order to limit exposure and minimize the spread of COVID-19, at this time, families including guardians, siblings, parents, and caretakers will have limited access to the classrooms.

Weather permitting, drop-off and pick-up will be done outside on our playground. Please note we are separating drop-off locations for each class. Preschool drop-off will take place on the upper part of our playground, near the alley. There are minimal spots to park in this area so we suggest you park on Dakota Ave and walk your child to the back gate. Early Learners will be dropped off at the lower playground gate. Visual markers will be placed for you to stand 6 feet apart from other families while you wait to sign-in your child. As winter comes we will most likely move drop-off for our Preschool families to the lower playground to avoid icy areas.

All adults are required to wear a mask for drop-off and pick-up. You will **need to have taken your child's temperature prior to arrival** to be documented on our sign-in sheet. Our check-in station will be located outside of our playground and while we will have clean pens available for you to use, please try to bring one of your own to reduce cleaning work. Hand sanitizer will be available at check in and a thermometer will also be available if you forget to take your child's temperature at home, but this option should only be used when necessary. As part of the check-in process, you will be asked several screening questions. Please make sure to do a thorough symptom check of your child prior to coming to school using our updated illness policy below for more detailed information on symptoms to look for. Child's belongings (backpack, lunch etc.) will be left outside the playground and put in a wagon and brought in by the children and teachers.

We ask that if possible just one caregiver comes to school to do drop-off and pick-up. If siblings are present and over 3 years old, please have them wear a mask as well.

Drop-off times for each class will be staggered to minimize the amount of people on site at one time.

Early Learners can be dropped off between **8:50am-9am** at the lower playground entrance. Preschoolers can be dropped off between **9:05am-9:15am** at the upper playground entrance near the alley. Parents will be allowed to enter our playground for drop-off but are asked to keep transitions consistent and conversation with other parents outside the playground area with social distancing practices observed. If you are unable to drop off your Early Learner before 9am, you will need to bring them into the front entrance and the teacher will let your child into the classroom. In the case of inclement weather, drop-off for both classes will be

done through the front entrance foyer. Only two families at a time will be allowed to be in the foyer area at any given time, so we ask that overflow wait outside. Please make sure to wear masks and maintain social distancing as you wait to drop off your child.

Pick-up times will be as usual (Early Learner - 11:30am, Preschool - 1pm) and done outside on our playground from the lower playground entrance weather permitting. If your child is participating in an after school enrichment class, your classroom teachers will let you know where pick-up will be taking place. In the case of inclement weather, pick-up will be at your child's classroom door. Only two families will be allowed in the foyer at any given time, so we ask that overflow wait outside. Please maintain social distancing as you wait to pick up your child.

## **VISITORS/PARENT HELPER ROLES**

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At this time we are limiting visitors to the school to minimize exposure for our classes. If your child needs additional services during the school day we will work with each family to set up a space outside the classrooms for support when possible. Essential support providers are allowed in the classroom and approved by the Director prior to service.

At this time we are not allowing Parent Helpers in the classrooms, however children will still have helping child days and will continue to have special tasks, such as feeding the fish, being the line leader, etc. When it is your child's helping day, we ask that you come 30 minutes early before pick-up in order to assist with daily cleaning and sanitizing of classroom materials in the Parent-Tot room. Please comply with current regulations and do a thorough symptom and temperature check prior to entering the school through the side entrance near the restrooms. We appreciate your time and help as we have increased cleaning to do at the end of each day. Please practice social distancing and wear a mask at all times. We will sanitize this space between helping parents. Helping Parent sign-ups will be sent out via Sign-up Genius from your Class Representative prior to the first day of school. We hope to have Parent Helpers back in the classroom as soon as possible and will let our community know when regulations change regarding additional adults in the classrooms.

## **DRESS/PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

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Please send your child to school with appropriate clothing and attire for all of our Colorado weather. COVID-19 is an airborne virus so we will do our best to keep children outside for a good portion of the day. Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to school. To

ensure proper ventilation and airflow when inside, we will have windows open - which might get a bit chilly in the cooler months.

Please pack a backpack for your child with the essential items they will need at school. Extra clothes will continue to be stored in our bathroom area. Please do not send extra toys to school as we will not be allowing shared toys from home. If your child needs to bring a lovey to school for comfort, it can stay in the backpack and be accessible when needed.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

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Parent helpers will not be required to provide snacks for the class because snacks will NOT be shared communally this year. Parents are responsible for providing a healthy snack for their child each school day. For classes that include a lunchtime, please also send your child to school with lunch.

As WPELC is a nut-free school, please continue to adhere to our nut policy and do not pack any nuts or products with nuts in snacks or lunches.

## **CLASSROOM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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### ***Mask Policy***

All WPELC staff will be required to wear a mask while working with children. The Colorado Health Department has recommended that children under 3 years old should NOT wear a mask. The most recent requirements from the City of Denver states that children 3 years and older are to wear a mask while indoors in a childcare facility to the best of our ability with supervision from caregivers to prevent misuse.

As a staff we will do our best to encourage masks, especially during inside time. If your child is 3 or older, please send your child to school with a mask labeled with their name. Packing extra masks is encouraged in the case they get lost or dirty. Masks must be cleaned at home at the end of each school day. If the masks become an issue or are being played with, we will take breaks and continue practicing and getting used to mask use. Please also practice with your children at home to reinforce the importance of wearing a mask.

## ***Classroom Environment***

The Colorado Office of Early Childhood has mandated new regulations to limit possible exposures. Here are some changes we are making in the classrooms:

- Children and teachers must remain in the same group throughout the day. Each individual class will make up a group. Groups may not share any space at the same time.
- Shared spaces such as the restroom, hallway and playground that are used by more than one group during the day will be sanitized between groups.
- Physical distancing for children and adults in the classrooms will be utilized as much as possible. The children in each class will be able to play and do activities with other students, but if all students are gathered in one space, we will do our best to encourage other activities that are set up to distance them.
- We will remove all materials from the room that cannot be easily sprayed and sanitized such as dress up clothes, pillows, etc.
- Instead of a shared sensory table, we will provide each child with their own bin to explore our sensory materials.
- At the end of each day we will follow CDPHE's recommendations for cleaning and sanitizing the classrooms. There is a three-layer plan that will be in place:
  - Teachers will clean all high touch surfaces in the classroom at the end of each day; parent helpers will be asked to help with additional items, such as dishes or painting supplies that need to be cleaned. Parent helpers will NOT be entering the classrooms (their work will be limited within the Parent Tot classroom).
  - We will continue to have our normal professional cleaning at the end of each day.
  - We are adding a professional deep cleaning each week, on Wednesday evenings, between groups.
- We will be increasing our hand-washing frequency, including every time we enter the classroom from the playground, between activities, and before snack and lunch. When hand washing is not available we are able to use hand sanitizer with strict teacher supervision.

## **ILLNESS POLICY**

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**As we return to school we all have a responsibility to one another to adhere to the health and safety recommendations of experts in the field of public health, medicine, and education. Since one member of our community's health will depend so much on another's (students, families, and staff), we must adhere to and practice what is required of us. The experience of one depends on the compliance of each member of our community, and this includes extended family.**

**If we want children to return to WPELC, we must make sacrifices for one another, and the most important sacrifice we can make right now is taking seriously mask wearing, handwashing, and social distancing. We are working hard to create a healthy culture of compliance at WPELC, and we need your support. Below you will find our current illness policy. Please note that this is subject to change as guidance changes and we will communicate those changes with you directly.**

Each child must be observed daily upon arrival at WPELC for signs of illness. Please refer to this [document](#) when assessing your child for symptoms. All families must do a thorough symptom check prior to drop off. Symptoms of COVID-19 to look for include, but are not limited to:

- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever/chills
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Congestion/running nose
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle or body aches

The CDPHE has split our “Safer At Home” status into six colors. Green: Protect our Neighbors, Blue: Caution, Yellow: Concern, Orange: High Risk, Red: Severe Risk, and Purple: Extreme Risk. At this time Denver is in a Level Orange status so we will follow illness policy guidelines in line with that status.

You can refer to this [document](#) for at home screening. If your child has any of these symptoms please keep your child at home and inform the school of the symptoms. You will then need to reach out to your health provider about next steps. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms at school we will be sending them home.

See this [chart](#) to assess your child’s symptoms and next steps on when they can return to school. Please make sure you are looking at the correct flow chart based on our current status for the City of Denver. To follow Denver’s status you can look [here](#).

\*Please note that if the minor symptoms last for **more than 48 hours**, your child will need a documented COVID-19 test with a negative result, and in all cases, symptoms will need to be resolved for 24 hours for students or staff to return to school. If you choose not to get a test, the child will not be able to return to school for **10 days** following the symptom onset AND they need to be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning without fever reducing medication.

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

Families are also required to report primary contact (as defined in [Appendix A](#)) with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the past 14 days and should keep your child home from school until the suggested quarantine time of 10 days (less with a negative test) has elapsed. The WPELC student's identity and medical records will be kept confidential in accordance with HIPPA. Please also refer to [Appendix A](#) for additional information around secondary contacts, which do not require a quarantine.

The Denver Health Department will determine school closures based on specific details of positive cases in our community. Please refer to this [website](#) for more detailed information regarding our recommendations from the CDPHE for childcare in regards to illness and exposure to COVID-19.

Children with previously diagnosed chronic medical conditions (i.e. allergies, asthma, etc.) can provide WPELC with a doctor's note to help us identify individual typical vs atypical symptoms.

## **WPELC AT HOME**

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In the event that in-person classes are suspended, we will shift to virtual learning ("WPELC At Home") in lieu of in-person classes. We anticipate this may happen in two ways:

- A school or classroom closure dictated by guidance issued by Denver Public Health due to a positive COVID-19 case in our community
- A closure due to a Denver Stay-at-Home order or other scenario outside of our immediate control

### ***Closure due to a positive COVID-19 case in our community:***

The Director has sole discretion to make this decision following the guidelines of the Denver Health Department who determine school or classroom closures based on specific details of positive cases in our community. Staff and parents will be notified immediately. Please see [Appendix A](#) for more information.

### ***Closure due to a Stay-at-Home order or circumstance outside of WPELC's control***

In the interest of our community's safety and health, the WPELC Board and Director may determine that in-person classes must be suspended (i.e. during a Denver Stay-at-Home order). In this event, the community will be notified as soon as possible and we will shift to WPELC At Home.

*PLEASE NOTE: Details of what WPELC At Home will look like will be detailed by your classroom teacher. Our teachers and parent volunteers are prepared to offer fun, age-appropriate curriculum, leveraging both online tools and take-home kits.*

## **COVID-19 FEE**

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The changes we have made for the 2021-2022 school year have been made after a great deal of thought and consideration. They have been made in order to comply with health and safety guidelines as well as to take into consideration the concerns and suggestions of our staff and WPELC families. Implementing these changes have had a significant impact on our yearly budget. In order to offset some of these expenses and to protect the longevity of the school, we are establishing a COVID-19 Fee for the 2021-2022 school year. We will collect \$75 per family at the beginning of each semester.

The changes that have resulted in incremental expenses include (but are not limited to):

- Additional deep cleaning to be performed by professional cleaning company once a week in between MTW and TF classes
- Additional half hour each day for staff to perform disinfecting/cleaning of all high touch surfaces within the classrooms and in communal areas
- Additional Director hours to ensure the smooth roll-out of procedures and to provide additional support to all classrooms
- Smaller class sizes, resulting in reduced tuition, fundraising and enrichment income
- Purchase of items to help us take additional precautions for our community such as:
  - Supply of hand sanitizer
  - Extra masks for when children forget theirs or misplace them
  - Increased supply of disinfectant and hand soap to accommodate for increased cleaning and handwashing
  - Items to enhance our outdoor space since we will be spending more time there
  - Items that help support enhanced separation of children's personal belongings and classroom materials
  - Supplies for WPELC At Home kits

## **REFUND POLICY**

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Refunds will not be offered for any closures that are less than eight consecutive weeks. During such closures, we will pivot to WPELC At Home. If in-person classes are not offered for a period

greater than eight consecutive weeks, the Board will determine what financial options, if any, are available to families based on the financial standing of the school. While we endeavour to do what we can to support our community, we can not guarantee that any refunds will be made available.

## **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

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WPELC has a four week notification requirement for withdrawals. You will be responsible for paying for tuition and any other fundraising obligations through that four-week period. If a student withdraws during a period of at-home classes, they will be unable to participate in virtual classes, and will be unenrolled from the roster. A spot will not be held for that child when we return to in-person classes.