

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

April 18, 2023

SUBJECT:

Aiken County Public School District (ACPSD) Head Start / Early Head Start Program
COVID-19 Mitigation Policy – FY23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The school district was approved for a five-year Head Start/Early Head Start grant in May of 2020, and the 5-year project period began on July 1, 2020, and extends through June 30, 2025. Governing bodies have a legal and fiscal responsibility to administer and oversee the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The governing body is responsible for activities specified at section 642(c)(1)(E) of the Head Start Act.

The Office of Head Start issued Log Number: ACF-PI-HS-23-01 on 01/06/2023 for the development of a **COVID-19 POLICY**. In alignment with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), SC Department of Health and Environmental Control and in collaboration with the Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) see attachment 1A.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

Administration has reviewed the rationale for the development of an evidenced based COVID-19 Mitigation Policy and find it consistent with district goals and policies.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the adoption of the Head Start/Early Head Start COVID-19 Mitigation Policy.

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Aiken County Public School District

Head Start/Early Head Start

Covid-19 Screenings Policy and Procedures

Preventive planning and detailed procedures will reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission within the childcare setting. Any subsequent revisions to this policy will be supported by guidance that is available from the Centers for Disease Control and the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

COVID-19 Community Levels help individuals and communities decide which prevention actions to take based on the latest information. Each level helps convey how much COVID-19 is impacting our community using data on hospitalizations and cases. Using this data, communities are classified as low, medium, or high. For each level, CDC recommends actions you can take to help you protect yourself and others from severe impacts of COVID-19.

Individual-Level Prevention Steps You Can Take Based on Your COVID-19 Community Level

When the COVID-19 Community Level is Low, Medium or High:

- It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to stay up to date on vaccinations, including recommended booster doses.
- Maintain ventilation improvements.
- Avoid contact with people who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Follow recommendations for isolation if you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Follow the recommendations for what to do if you are exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- If you are at high risk of getting very sick, talk with a healthcare provider about additional prevention actions.

When the COVID-19 Community Level is Medium or High:

- If you are at high risk of getting very sick, it is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear a high-quality mask or respirator when indoors in public
- If you have household or social contact with someone at high risk for getting very sick, consider self-testing to detect infection before contact, and consider wearing a high-quality mask when indoors with them

When the COVID-19 Community Level is High:

- It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear a high-quality mask or respirator.
- If you are at high risk of getting very sick, consider avoiding non-essential indoor activities in public where you could be exposed.

Community-Level Prevention Strategies

- Promote equitable access to vaccination, testing, masks and respirators, treatment and prevention medications, community outreach, and support services.
- Ensure access to testing, including through point-of-care and at-home tests for all people.
- Maintain ventilation improvements.
- Provide communications and messaging to encourage isolation among people who test positive.

If you have COVID-19, you can spread the virus to others. There are precautions you can take to prevent spreading it to others: isolation, masking, and avoiding contact with people who are at high risk of getting very sick. Isolation is used to separate people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from those without COVID-19.

*These recommendations do not change based on COVID-19 Community Levels.

When to Isolate:

- Regardless of vaccination status, the CDC recommends that you isolate from others when you have COVID-19.
- You should also isolate if you are sick and suspect that you have COVID-19 but do not yet have test results. If your results are positive, follow the full isolation recommendations below. If your results are negative, you can end your isolation.

When you have COVID-19, isolation is counted in days, as follows:

- If you had no symptoms
 - Day 0 is the day you were tested (not the day you received your positive test result)
 - Day 1 is the first full day following the day you were tested
 - If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, the clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset
- If you had symptoms
 - Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset, regardless of when you tested positive
 - Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started

Isolation:

- If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home.
 - You are likely most infectious during these first 5 days.
 - It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear a high-quality mask if you must be around others at home and in public.
 - Stay home and monitor your symptoms.

Ending Isolation:

- End isolation based on how serious your COVID-19 symptoms were. Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.
- If you had no symptoms, you may end isolation after day 5.
- If you had symptoms and:
 - Your symptoms are improving, you may end isolation after day 5, if, you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
 - Your symptoms are not improving, continue to isolate until you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and your symptoms are improving.
- It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear your mask through day 10.

If you were exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 or have been told by a healthcare provider or public health authority that you were exposed, here are the recommended steps, from the CDC, that you should take, regardless of your vaccination status or if you have had a previous infection.

After Being Exposed to COVID-19:

- It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear a mask as soon as you find out you were exposed.
- Start counting from Day 1
 - Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19
 - Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure
- Continue precautions for 10 full days
- Watch for symptoms:
 - Fever (100.4°F or greater)

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Other COVID-19 symptoms
- If you develop symptoms:
 - It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to isolate immediately, get tested, and stay home until you know the results
- GET TESTED ON DAY 6—It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to get tested at least 5 full days after your last exposure even you do not develop symptoms.
- IF YOU TEST NEGATIVE—Continue taking precautions through day 10
- IF YOU TEST POSTIVE—Isolate immediately

To provide for the health and safety of children, employees, parents and visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers and other members of the Covid-19 contact tracing team will closely monitor any persons entering its buildings or centers who exhibit Covid-19 related symptoms. The Head Start Health & Safety Manager who is a member of ACPSD’s contact tracing team will work closely with and train Center Directors, Family Advocates and Teachers on:

- How to utilize touchless thermometers to take a temperature
- What to do if temperature registers 100.4 or higher and /or if Covid-19 symptoms are present
- The process for reporting COVID-19 exposure or positive test results

Employees:

- Head Start staff, parents, vendors, and contractors will enter via the Head Start facility main doors.
- If employees are sick, they should stay home.
- Employees must check in at the entrance of each facility’s primary entrance area prior to reporting to their workspace or classroom. Entry areas shall be equipped with touchless thermometers and hand sanitizer.
- All employees and children shall wash their hands upon entering their classroom and workspace.

Social distancing:

- Proper social distancing can avoid multiple staff members needing to quarantine. It is recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, that staff should avoid congregating together and should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other staff who do not work in the same classroom to the extent that is possible.
- Employees who are exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms will be denied access to the building and must leave immediately. A medical provider’s statement will be required to return.
- Employees will get their temperature taken and any employee that has a temperature of 100.4 or above will be denied access and must leave immediately. The employee must remain fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine to return and have NO other Covid-19 symptoms. A medical provider’s statement may be required.
- If the employee has a temperature of 100.4 or higher 3 consecutive days, then a medical provider’s statement will be required.

CDC and DHEC Guidance:

- The program will partner with DHEC and community health clinics and encourage staff to undergo voluntary COVID-19 testing and obtain the flu and COVID-19 vaccine to prevent the spread of influenza and COVID-19
- If an employee: Acknowledgement of this policy must be signed and returned to the Health & Safety Manager for tracking purposes.

Children:

- Social distancing may not be feasible for young children in a classroom. For this reason, prolonged physical proximity of less than 6 feet for 15 minutes or more is discouraged
- Cohorts of children and staff will be established for each class. The same group of children and staff will remain together and any interaction outside of that group will be limited. The cohorts of children in a class should be kept away from children in other cohort classes, and staff should practice social distancing when around other staff members.

Daily Schedules/Routines:

- Children and staff will wash their hands frequently throughout the day.
- If a child becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 identified during the day, they will be separated and isolated from other children. Parents will be notified to come to pick the child up

Return to Child Care Facility:

- Sick staff members and parents of sick children will be advised not to return until they have met criteria for return.
- Children or staff excluded for these symptoms should not return until they have either tested negative for COVID-19 or a medical evaluation determines that their symptoms were more likely due to another cause (e.g. sore throat due to strep throat). In this case, the individual can return when they meet criteria for that condition.
- Those who test positive test but do not have symptoms will be required to stay out of the childcare setting until 5 days after the test specimen was collected. *Note: some people may be required to extend the isolation period to 10 days. Their doctor will need to determine if this is necessary.

Visitors/Parents/Contractors:

- During the Covid-19 pandemic all visitors are recommended, in accordance with the CDC guidelines, to wear a face mask during HIGH community levels. Parents, visitors, and contractors will only be allowed in the building via appointment. It will be the responsibility of the employee scheduling the appointment to make sure the client understands and follows Covid-19 prevention practices and protocols.
 - When the visitor, parent or contractor arrives, staff will notify the employee who had scheduled the appointment of the arrival of their guest for the scheduled appointment.
 - Visitors and clients must enter through the front doors (main lobby). Only the person with the appointment may enter the building.
 - The employee that has scheduled the appointment or his/her designee will come to the main doors to receive the client/visitor.
 - The employee that has scheduled the appointment will review Covid -19 prevention protocols with the client/visitor.
 - Any visitor, parent, or contractor that has a temperature of 100.4 or above and are exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms will be denied access to the center.

Facilities:

- Facilities will be sanitized daily.
- High touch areas such as door handles, light switches, copiers, telephone receivers, etc. will be wiped down regularly.
- When possible and if confidentiality can be maintained, staff are encouraged to use speaker phone or other forms of virtual telecommunications.
- Deep cleaning and disinfecting will occur weekly.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/if-you-were-exposed.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>