



## COVID-19 Operating Plan for 2020-21 School Year

Smart Start ELC's operating plan for the 2020-21 school year is based on guidelines provided by the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Smart Start's Reopening Committee, comprised of Smart Start and Exodus staff and families, has carefully considered the following to create our operating plan: 1) guidelines established by OSPI and CDC are met, 2) aligns with Exodus church's COVID-19 operating plan, 3) ensures compliance with the insurance policy that covers Exodus church and its ministry Smart Start ELC, and 4) aligns with Smart Start ELC's teaching values and philosophies. This operating plan is intended as a reference, and Smart Start reserves the right to change any or all plans, policies, or procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice.

### **General Guidance**

Staff and students will be excluded from the Smart Start/Exodus site if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19 and/or have been in close contact with someone who has in the last 14 days a confirmed diagnosis or suspected case of COVID-19.

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

In an effort to limit exposure and spread, no one except Smart Start/Exodus staff and the enrolled child will be allowed to enter a Smart Start/Exodus building. A schedule will be determined that staggers drop-off and pick-up times and locations for all classes. For our preschool and jump start programs, drop-off and pick-up will happen at an exterior door, where one's car will briefly park to assist the child while exiting the vehicle. A Smart Start staff member will meet the student at an exterior door and conduct a Health Screening (please see below). For our kindergarten program, drop-off and pick-up will also happen outside of the classroom building. The adult with the child will exit the vehicle, line up at a designated marker, and wait for Smart Start staff to conduct the Health Screening (please see below) and then escort the child to class. For all Smart Start programs, Smart Start staff will be responsible for signing students in and out of school each day.

### **Daily Health Screening at Building Entry**

Signs of illness for all staff and students will be checked each day and documented. Staff and students with any illness must stay home. For students, the drop-off person verifies that the student's attendance is proof of a "no" answer to all of the following questions. Prior to a student attending Smart Start, each family will submit a signed document regarding the attending child and the following screening.

Has your student had any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours (on the first day after a break, symptoms in the past 72 hours):

- A cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- A fever of 100°F or higher or a sense of having a fever
- A sore throat
- Chills
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Congestion/running nose – not related to seasonal allergies
- Unusual fatigue
- Does anyone in your household have any of the above symptoms?
- Has your student been in close contact with anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?
- Has your student had any medication to reduce a fever before coming to school?

**The student must be excluded from school if the answer to any of the above questions is “yes.”** If the answer to all of the above questions is “no,” Smart Start staff is to check the student for signs of being sick, such as flushed cheeks or tiredness. The screening staff member will wear disposable gloves and a face covering. A touchless thermometer will be used to take each child’s temperature. During this assessment, a distance of at least six feet of space or a physical barrier between the staff member and the student is recommended.

### **Hygiene Practices**

Students will wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, under the supervision of a Smart Start staff member. Children are to wash hands when they arrive at school, before snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, after nose blowing or sneezing, and before leaving to go home. Smart Start staff will also follow these same guidelines.

### **Shared Materials**

No items from a student’s home may be brought to school, including backpacks. A student’s coat, layering item, scarf, and/or hat will be hung on the child’s identified hook; at the end of each class session, hooks will be cleaned according to CDC guidelines. Student materials such as crayons, pencils, markers, paint brushes, and playdough will be available to each student in a sealed and labeled container that is used only by that child. Shared toys will be cleaned at the conclusion of each class, according to CDC guidelines. Water and sensory tables will not be available at Smart Start for now.

### **Snack**

Snack will be prepped by a staff member who has washed her hands and is wearing disposable gloves. For now, we have to suspend the distribution of special snacks provided by families. Snack will be served in disposable materials and on tables cleaned according to CDC guidelines. Snack time will be staggered and served to no more than 14 students in one space at a time.

### Lunch-Hour Option

Smart Start has suspended this option for now as we will not have the time to properly prepare the lunchroom space and are unable to limit exposure and spread among classes.

### Outdoor Areas

As weather permits, Smart Start will take advantage of its outdoor spaces for both play and instruction. Outdoor play or instruction will be scheduled in staggered shifts so that only one class is using the area. High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as bike handlebars and railings, should be cleaned routinely.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures (Before, During, In Between, and After Classes)

Smart Start will create area checklists for all cleaning and disinfecting procedures based on CDC guidelines.

### Ventilation

As weather permits, Smart Start will take advantage of its outdoor spaces for both play and instruction. To prepare for classroom instruction and activities, before and between classes, classroom windows and doors will be left open.

### Return from Out-of-State Travel

Students and staff who travel outside of Washington/Oregon for vacation or other personal reasons must inform Smart Start Office staff of such extended leave. Upon return, the family will be asked where the enrolled child travelled and if anyone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 came into contact with the enrolled child. An answer of “yes” will require that the child not attend Smart Start for a period of 14 days since such contact. An answer of “no” will be documented along with where the travel was in the event an outbreak is connected to that location within 14 days since departing.

### Onsite Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

If a child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 (fever of 100° F or higher, cough, or shortness of breath) while at the facility, he/she will be immediately separated from the well people until the ill person can leave the facility (in the carport, as weather permits; otherwise, inside the church Family Room). The employee or child’s parent/caregiver must inform the facility immediately if the person is diagnosed with COVID-19. If a child or employee tests positive for COVID-19, Smart Start will contact the Cowlitz County Health Department to assist in identifying the close contacts who will need to quarantine. It is likely that all members of the infected person’s group would be considered close contacts. **Facilities experiencing a confirmed case of COVID-19 among their population will need to close at least temporarily (possibly for a duration of 14 days), as advised by local health officials.** The duration may be dependent on staffing levels, outbreak levels in the community, and severity of illness in infected individual. Symptom-free children and staff should not attend or work at another facility, which would potentially expose others. **If the infected individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 spent minimal time (i.e. 10 minutes or less) in close contact with those in the facility, the facility may consider closing for 2-5 days to do a thorough cleaning and disinfecting and to continue to monitor for ill individuals.**

A staff member or student who had signs of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 can return to the program when:

- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever – defined as no fever without the use of medications and improvement in symptoms like cough and shortness of breath; AND
- At least 10 days have passed since signs first showed up; OR
- It has been at least three days (72 hours) since recovery AND a healthcare provider has certified that the student/staff member does not have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

If a person believes they have had close contact to someone with COVID-19, but they are not sick, they should monitor their health for signs of fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other COVID-19 symptoms during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the person sick with COVID-19. They should not go to work, child care, school, or public places for 14 days.

Smart Start ELC will inform families schoolwide in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case of one of its students or staff members. No child/staff member will ever be identified by name.

### **Closing & Reopening During School Year**

Smart Start ELC is prepared for the possibility of having to close and reopen at any time during the school year as a result of COVID-19. During a potential closure of 14 or fewer days, Smart Start will continue to provide instruction via Seesaw for all of its programs, and families will continue to be financially responsible for the tuition due during that period.

If a long-term shutdown is mandated, as was the case for the end of the 2019-20 school year, Smart Start ELC will, again, evaluate tuition agreements held with its families and make decisions and adjustments regarding financial commitments based on the length of the shutdown.

### **Class Sizes and Groupings**

Smart Start will operate all of its classes as separate entities that will not share the same space at the same time. Within classes of more than 14 students, students will be separated into cohorts of no more than 14 students per cohort and remain with the same classroom teacher(s). To be equitable, cohorts and teachers will periodically be changed. Within these cohorts, social distancing will be practiced as best it can.

### **Face Coverings**

Smart Start staff will wear face shields while onsite until Washington State concludes Phase 4 of reopening or until we are otherwise instructed.

Beginning 06/26/2020, Governor Inslee ordered everyone age 5 and over to wear a face covering. To comply with this order, children UNDER the age of 5 will NOT be required to wear a mask/shield, but may do so per parent request. Children 5 AND OVER will be assigned a child's bucket hat shield that will be left at school and disinfected daily until the face-covering order is lifted. Additionally, Smart Start will continue to revise this policy for children and staff, complying with any face-covering order. For any child required to wear a face shield (supplied by Smart Start), a one-time \$10 fee will be charged.

Smart Start has chosen the shield option as we feel developmental needs and emotional, social, and language learning will be compromised if children can't see the full face and mouth of their peers and teachers. Below is a picture of what these shields look like.



### **Schoolwide and Classroom Events**

Unfortunately, until there is a resolution to the COVID-19 pandemic, Smart Start will adhere to the following in an effort to limit exposure and spread

- Classes will not be combined.
- Children will not be permitted to bring in show and tell and/or backpacks.
- All-school activities/gatherings will be cancelled.
- Student programs (such as Thanksgiving Feast and Christmas Program) will be cancelled.
  - Smart Start plans to provide families with a DVD of programs that are recorded during school hours.
- Fall fundraising event will be cancelled (spring fundraiser still to be decided upon).
- Visitors (including for Star Student/birthday celebrations), classroom volunteers, and PTO members will not be allowed at Smart Start, at either our indoor or outdoor spaces.
  - For birthday celebrations, we will celebrate each child in class with a poster that has been previously completed at home.
  - Holiday celebrations will be led by teachers in the classroom.
  - Teachers will ensure that all of these days are special for the children.
- For now, only the enrolled child and Smart Start/Exodus staff will be permitted inside buildings and may occupy the outdoor spaces of our facility. This restriction also applies to staff spouses, children, other relatives, and friends.