

**FIELD STATION COOPERATIVE
COVID-19 SAFE OPERATING PLAN
FOR THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR – (Updated 10/20/2020)
Procedures will be re-analyzed and adjusted on an on-going basis**

As with the school calendar and weather closings, the Field Station will generally follow Duneland School District's lead in best practices for keeping our families safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will use their phases as a guide, but will have our own specific procedures and processes. Shifts between Phase 2 (yellow) and phase 3 (orange) in Duneland's plan will not change protocols at the Field Station. For reference, here is their plan: [Duneland's One Page Summary](#)

• **Start times will be delayed 30 minutes from our traditional schedule: Morning Classes: 9:00-11:30. Afternoon Classes: 1:00-3:30.** Part of Duneland's plan is having later start times to allow the teachers more time to clean, disinfect, and prepare in-between classes. For this reason, and also because many of our families have students in both Duneland and the FS, we will follow this as well.

• **Students will be outside the entire day, every day, with a few exceptions. All instruction, art, playtime and snacks will be outside.** We plan to be inside to hang up bags, use the bathroom, and wash hands, and this will be done either individually or in small groups. If the weather is too severe to be outside the majority of class time, we will cancel class. If however, the weather is borderline (cold but not extremely cold, or scattered storms) we may go inside for short periods of time to either warm up or to avoid a storm. We will require students to wear masks and we will keep the students as socially distanced as possible through the use of stations. We would like all students to keep a mask or gaiter in their school bag in a clear plastic baggie. Please mark your student's name on their masks. We will try hard to communicate if we feel there is a chance that we will be going inside during the day. If for example, the weather is calling for a chance of storms, we will not cancel class altogether, but we will send a Remind message out to let parents know that we may go inside. Parents can then make the decision if they want to send their child to school that day.

• **It will be very important for parents to stay informed regarding weather and dress students appropriately.** When children are dressed appropriately, being outside is not a problem, but it can become very uncomfortable and even dangerous if children are not dressed in the proper gear. Please dress your children in layers and make sure their footwear, gloves and hats are for cold weather. If your child is not dressed appropriately, you may be asked to come and get them.

• **The parent volunteering portion of the cooperative will be different than in the past.** We will have one parent volunteer for each 3-day class and no parent volunteers for the 2-day classes. The parent volunteers will stay outside. If the students are forced to go inside because of weather, parents will not go inside to help with socially distancing and space as we feel it is safest to keep the number of people in the buildings to a minimum.

• **Parents will not be allowed in the school buildings at any time, including at drop-off or at all during the school day.** The teachers will go to the cars and get the students. We encourage parents to wear masks while teachers are getting the students from the cars. Pick-up procedures will remain the same; teachers will bring the students to cars or to parents waiting outside. We encourage parents that wait outside to wear a mask and stay 6 ft. apart.

• **If students will be more than 20 minutes late, we ask that you keep your student home for the day.** It will be very important that students are on-time for class since there will be no parent volunteers to come out to the cars and since parents will not be allowed in the buildings. The same thing goes for leaving early. Since we will be outside much more on hikes and since the day will not be as predictable, we will not be able to accommodate early dismissals.

• **All students will receive a health evaluation before joining the school each morning, generally while still in their car seats.** We will check student's temperatures and also give them a quick evaluation to make sure there are no signs of illness before being dropped off. Signs of illness include but are not limited to: fever (100.4 F or above), runny nose/congestion, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, watery eyes, cough, lethargy, loss of taste or smell, headache, chills and sore throat.

• **Students will be sent home immediately if they show any symptoms whatsoever.** If a student shows signs of illness, they will be isolated from other students until their parents come to get them. Parents must be ready to answer the phone and able to immediately pick up their child at all times during the school day. Keeping a student separate from the class will take away a teacher from the rest of the class, so it will be imperative that sick students are picked up as soon as possible, always in less than 30 minutes.

• **Please see the ISDH document entitled 'COVID-19: When a Student, Faculty or Staff Member Can Return to School' for the protocol we will follow for allowing someone to return to school after a case or symptoms.**

• We will stay in the smaller groups (11 for 3-day and 9 for 2-day) as much as possible.

- All students and teachers will wash hands or use hand sanitizer at every transition.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned on a regular basis.
- Teachers will do a thorough disinfecting in between morning and afternoon classes.
- Toys that are not easily cleaned and disinfected will not be put out.
- We will not require students to wear masks while outside, only when inside for short periods of time.
- Teachers will wear masks or shields at all times.
- Parents will sign a release that states the Field Station is not responsible if their child catches the virus.
- Parents will sign a commitment letter saying they will not send their children to school if they have any signs of illness, that they will take precautions outside of school, and that they will practice safe hygiene.
- We are investigating HVAC filtration/disinfection systems.
- We will need to develop a significant list of substitute teachers. Our teachers will not be able to teach if they have any signs of illness at all. If you or someone you know are interested in being on our sub list, please let us know.
- **Outside-of-classroom volunteer hours will still be required and the minimum will actually be increased by two hours, requiring a total of 14 hours per family for the year.** Because thorough cleanings will be so important, we will need more people to help clean and we will also need extra help with getting the outside set up and then maintained for this new situation. Fundraising will also be even more important and difficult this year.
- If classes are forced to go to remote learning, we will be providing a combination of online resources and videos, along with take-home packets for the students.
- We have added a new option for parents that want to postpone their child's attendance. You can hold your spot for a reduced rate.