

Providence High School

Safe Return Plan



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This is a working document that Providence High School reserves the right to modify in whole or in part as conditions and/or guidance changes.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Providence families,

Welcoming all our Pioneers back to campus safely has been our goal for almost a year and a half. It is incredibly exciting to see that goal (finally!) within reach and to present this updated Safe Return Plan (SRP).

In conjunction with our Student and Family Handbook, our SRP is designed to offer a lot of detail regarding our plans for the 2021-2022 school year. From virus mitigation to drop-off procedures and COVID testing protocols, our SRP and handbook are the first places to go when you have questions. As the pandemic continues to shift and public health guidance continues to change, so will our SRP. Rest assured that we will meet or exceed all CDC and LACDPH standards for safely reopening schools. This SRP plus additional information can also be found at our [Update Center](#).

Our SRP is rooted in 3 guiding principles:

1. Maximize health and safety by following public health guidance rooted in sound science.
2. Preserve our ability to safely welcome all students, faculty, and staff on campus each day.
3. Ensure a return consistent with our Pioneering Providence mission and culture.

The success of this plan will depend on all of us doing our part both on and off campus. Please read this document carefully to ensure that you understand all that we need to do to keep each other, and our households, safe.

This plan applies to all 2021-2022 programs and activities and can be amended or changed at any time based on public health guidance and the judgment of the school. We appreciate your partnership with us in following this plan.

In Providence,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. McLarty', written over a thin vertical line.

Scott L. McLarty
Head of School

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), a novel coronavirus infection emerging in late 2019, has led to an unprecedented infectious disease risk for all persons globally. The duration of this pandemic remains unclear, and the situation continues to evolve. COVID-19 transmission rates vary from region to region and have impacted each educational institution across the country differently. Providence High School went remote on March 15, 2020. More than one year later, we began seeing signs of hope and returned to campus in March 2021. Although all students, faculty, and staff will return to campus this Fall, the pandemic is not over. The combination of the Delta variant, Omicron variant, lower than expected vaccinations among the general public, and ever-changing public health requirements means we must remain vigilant and committed to following a layered approach to protecting our community from this virus. The world's road to recovery will be long, but we will get through this together.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR DECISION-MAKING

- What is the safest and healthiest decision for our community? Prioritizing the health, safety, and well-being of the entire community is of utmost importance.
- What is best for students? We ask ourselves this question constantly when making decisions.
- What is most consistent with our mission? We must uphold the mission and values of the Sisters of Providence to be “expressions of God’s healing love,” and to be “steadfast in serving all, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.”
- What laws, rules, and health guidance are applicable? We will always comply with local, state, and federal public health orders and guidance.
- What data do we have to improve our decisions? We are committed to utilizing the best science, data, and the expertise of the Providence health system in decision-making, and to challenging our assumptions with data and facts.

OUR PROMISE – “KNOW ME, CARE FOR ME, EASE MY WAY”

As an educational ministry of the Providence health system, we share a legacy and promise to “know, care for, and ease the way” of those we serve. We embrace that unique promise as it applies to our community of more than 500 students, faculty, and staff. Not even a global pandemic can get in the way of us being a Providence community that values each member of our community as a person unconditionally worthy of being respected. This SRP is one more way for us to “know you, care for you, and ease your way.”

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Providence High School is committed to supporting students’ social and emotional well-being and offering resources to ensure students transition back to school smoothly. Our ongoing partnerships with organizations (Work2BeWell, #HalftheStory, Teen Line, and One Love) provide resources and education to support the mental, social, and emotional health of our community. Our small group Advisories will continue to be an important program and vehicle to support this transition for our students. Teachers

and parents/guardians will continue to partner with our Counseling Department to identify and support individual student needs. We will need to work together to check-in on how our students are feeling and assess their individual needs to provide the support our Pioneers need during these challenging times.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND VIRUS MITIGATION PROTOCOLS

SAFETY STARTS AT HOME

The most important thing that we can do to prevent viral transmission among our school community is to avoid bringing it onto campus in the first place. The successful return to campus depends on our ability to take care of each other and that starts with assessing and reporting your health status each morning before leaving home. If you are unsure about whether or not you should stay home for health reasons, remain at home and contact your doctor as appropriate.

Regardless of your reason for staying home, if you are not coming to school, a parent or guardian must call the school's attendance line (818) 846-8141 ext. 14900.

USING THE PROTECT APP

All students and employees are required to complete a daily self-screening protocol at home each morning before coming to campus [using the Protect app from Envoy](#). To start, download the Envoy mobile app in the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#). Once in the app, sign in using your Providence High School email. For personnel or students that do not have a smartphone and/or cannot install the Envoy App, please notify IT via your respective Service Desks. For students, this can be accessed via the [Student Help Desk](#). You can also watch a [video tutorial on how to use the Envoy app](#).

Each morning you plan to come in to school, starting any time after 6:30am prior to your arrival on campus, begin the health check by opening the app. You should see a card that says, "Reserve a spot." Tap the button that says "Register" and answer the questions that follow. You will know instantly if you are approved to come to campus. If incorrect information was accidentally entered, students should report to the Welcome Center (ext. 14515) to enter campus.

When you arrive on campus, open the mobile app, and tap the card that says, "Approved to work." See more information below about checking-in under "The On-Campus Student Experience."

When you leave campus, open the app and tap "Sign out." This helps us know how many people are on campus at any one time.

VACCINATION AND COVID TESTING

As a part of one of the largest health systems in the country, Providence High School has an opportunity to lead by example. It is imperative that all eligible members of our community get vaccinated against COVID-19. Not only will it help us keep each other safe, but it will also help ensure that we are doing our part to put the pandemic behind us.

Therefore, all Providence High School employees and students are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 25, 2021.

Any employee or student who does not submit proof of vaccination or have an approved vaccine exemption by October 25 will not be allowed to participate in on-campus classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities/events. [Immunization Upload - Formstack](#).

Exemptions from this policy may be approved for medical or religious purposes upon review by an advisory committee. Personal preference is not considered to be a religious belief that would qualify an individual for the exemption. Families seeking an exemption from Providence High School's vaccine requirement must complete the [Vaccine Exemption Request Form](#) for each child by September 8.

Vaccines and masking remain our most important tools for keeping our community safe and healthy. Providence highly recommends that everyone who is eligible receive a COVID-19 vaccination booster as soon as possible. See the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for recommendations and eligibility.

Weekly on-campus COVID-testing will continue to be an available resource for students, faculty, and staff until further notice. Any changes to our surveillance testing protocols will also be communicated via the Weekly Bulletin. Weekly appointments should be made here <https://book.covid-testing-today.com/appointment-manager-index.php?c=5227861>

TRAVEL ADVISORY

All members of our community are expected to follow the current [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health travel advisory](#).

SIGNAGE & FOOT TRAFFIC

Signage throughout campus reminds students and staff about physical distancing, hand washing, foot traffic, face coverings, and general virus mitigation and hygiene strategies. Students and employees are expected to abide by posted signage at all times to ensure the safety of themselves and the entire community.

MASKING

Per CDC and LACDPH policy, all students, employees, and visitors on the Providence High School campus are required to wear a face mask while both indoors and outdoors with others, regardless of vaccination status. In addition to masking indoors, all are now required to wear masks in outdoor spaces, in crowded settings, or where physical distancing is not feasible, except while eating or drinking. Maximum physical distancing is encouraged throughout campus and when possible, especially when in the presence of others who may be unmasked while eating/drinking.

Double masking is permitted but not required. Students are advised to bring 2 face coverings to school each day in case one gets lost or damaged and we recommend families purchase several masks for their students.

Given the increased virulence of the omicron variant, it is highly recommended that everyone upgrades to N95 or KN95 masks. All employees are required to upgrade to a surgical-grade mask or higher-level PPE. Tightly woven and form-fitting cloth masks are acceptable, but not as effective at capturing small particles and aerosols that carry coronavirus. Surgical masks like N95 and KN95, fit more snugly and have an electrostatic charge that filters much more effectively. For those wearing surgical masks, double-masking, with a cloth face covering worn over the surgical mask, is recommended for enhanced protection.

For guidance on choosing a mask, follow the [CDC's Guide to Masks](#). Students wearing unapproved masks may be sent to the Welcome Center to await pick-up by a parent or guardian.

Masks should be kept clean and neat. They can have any pattern so long as the mask abides by handbook policies prohibiting offensive messages, symbols, or imagery.

Face shields are not required at any time but may be worn in addition to a cloth mask. Face shields may not be worn in place of a face mask.

Those who are unable to wear an approved mask for medical reasons must inform the Dean of Students immediately. For the safety of all, students unable or unwilling to wear a mask while on campus will not be able to participate in on-campus learning.

EXCEPTIONS TO UNIVERSAL MASKING

Employees working alone in a private office do not need to wear a face covering but must put one on while indoors with others, regardless of vaccination status.

- Every effort should be made to either eat outdoors or indoors alone. If eating indoors with others, employees and students are expected to maintain physical distance, maximize ventilation (e.g., opening windows) and remove masks only while eating and drinking.
- Students may drink water during the course of their classes by observing the following process: remove their mask, take the drink of water, replace the water bottle cover, put their mask back in place.
- Athletes must bring and wear a mask to all athletic activities. When actively participating, conditioning or competing in indoor sports, masks are required to be worn by participants, as practical. Athletes will receive additional guidance from their coaches regarding approved areas and occasions to remove their masks

DO'S AND DON'TS OF WEARING A MASK

The proper wearing of face coverings by students will be modeled and reinforced by the faculty and staff as part of their daily professional responsibilities. Students who do not comply with this expectation, or any of the virus mitigation expectations, may not be able to continue on campus learning.

DO

- Cover your mouth and nose fully.
- Have your masks fit snugly against the sides of your face so there are no gaps.
- Secure your masks with ties, elastics, or other means to prevent slipping.
- Avoid touching your face or masks as much as possible.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately before putting it on, after touching or adjusting, and after removing your masks.
- Mark the outside of your masks in some way so you can easily identify which side is the outside of the mask and handle it accordingly, avoiding touching the inside of the mask.
- Keep a bag handy for storing your masks every time you take them off – preferably a paper or cloth bag. An open Ziploc-style bag is an alternative if a paper or cloth bag is not available.

- Store your masks in a clean place. Never put them in your pocket.
- Keep your masks clean. Laundering instructions will depend on the material used to make the masks.

DON'T

- Share your masks with anyone else unless the mask has been washed and dried first. You should be the only person handling your face covering.
- Pull your mask down below your nose or chin while you are wearing it. Leaving the mask dangling or improperly fitted to your face creates opportunities for cross-contamination.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING AT SCHOOL

LACDPH recommends that measures be implemented to create physical distancing when doing so will not interfere with the full-time attendance of all enrolled students. This is especially important during times that groups of students are outside the classroom (e.g., hallway transitions) and/or anytime masks must be removed in a group setting (e.g., lunchtime) where increased physical distance is preferred. For situations when physical distancing may not be feasible, the importance of 100% mask adherence is critical. **VENTILATION**

CDC and LACDPH recommend a layered strategy to reduce exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This includes using multiple mitigation strategies with several layers of safeguards to reduce the spread of disease and lower the risk of exposure. Here's what we are doing at Providence:

- Our HVAC system has been inspected by an engineer familiar with the Guidance for Reopening Schools as developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Airconditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). All filters have been upgraded to MERV-13 (hospital grade) filters.
- Classrooms with windows and doors that open to the outside may be kept open while the air conditioning is running, and the room is occupied during the day to increase airflow.

HAND HYGIENE

Good hand hygiene is a critical component of protecting yourself and others against COVID-19 and many other pathogens. Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds, throughout the day. Be sure to wash your hands after going to the bathroom or coming in contact with a high touch surface, like a door.

Providence will have a day porter disinfecting high touch areas every hour beginning at 7am each school day. Additionally, a cleaning crew will disinfect all furniture, keyboards, doorknobs, and other high touch surfaces nightly.

Providence has installed extra hand washing stations throughout campus as well as hand sanitizer (with 60% or more alcohol) dispensers. Use hand sanitizer whenever you are unable to wash your hands with soap and water.

Gloves are not to be worn on campus as they create a false sense of safety and are often the cause of viral spread on surfaces. Gloves can only be worn by a trained individual when cleaning surfaces or

caring for someone who is sick. Only employees and authorized personnel should be engaging in these activities.

VISITORS

To reduce the number of people on campus and the possibility of viral transmission, visitors to campus are limited. Generally, visitation is prohibited and all meetings with non-employees should remain virtual when possible. This includes meetings with parents and guardians.

All visitors, including parents/guardians, vendors, and other guests, are required to show proof of full vaccination or provide a negative COVID-19 PCR test result taken within 72 hours of their visit to campus. That documentation will be collected by the main contact person (or designated staff member) coordinating the visit.

All visitors must first go to our Welcome Center located at the school's main entrance across from the hospital parking structure. To enhance the safe and secure environment of our campus we have partnered with [Allied Universal](#) to provide security personnel and [Envoy](#) to provide solutions for visitor management, contactless temperature checks, and identity verification. All students, employees, and visitors are expected to follow directions given by security personnel as well as school leadership. If you are a visitor, please be prepared to have your temperature checked and show a valid ID upon arrival at the Welcome Center.

WHEN THERE IS A POSITIVE COVID CASE IN OUR COMMUNITY

COOPERATION WITH LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

Providence High School has been working with State and local health officials throughout the pandemic. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) is the primary public health authority in our region. When we learn of a positive COVID case within our community, we are required to report it to LACDPH via their REDCap System. This will trigger contact tracing to determine extent of exposure that could lead to various levels of isolation and quarantine for those impacted. It is imperative that we cooperate with LACDPH in all contact tracing efforts. Current guidelines are that a single (or as many as 3) positive COVID-19 cases *do not* automatically require a shutdown of campus. Any decision regarding a full or partial return to at-home learning will be made by the Head of School in consultation with LACDPH.

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PROVIDENCE HEALTH SYSTEM

As the only independent school that is part of a health system, Providence, we have access to expertise and support beyond what is readily available to the public and other schools. As our primary partner, we will continue to rely on the Providence health system's guidance throughout our return to campus, just as we have throughout the pandemic. With Providence St. Joseph Medical Center as our neighbor and partner in ensuring our community's health and wellbeing, we have access to critical care at a moment's notice.

COMMUNICATION AND PRIVACY

When a member of our community tests positive for COVID-19, we will depend on LACDPH policies and the specifics of the situation to guide what communication is necessary with the broader school community. Privacy expectations, as well as the health and safety of the entire school community, will always be considered. Depending on the situation, we may need to inform the entire community that there has been one or more positive cases. We will make these decisions in consultation with medical professionals, local health officials, and legal counsel, if needed.

SHIFTING TO REMOTE LEARNING AT HOME

Every effort will be made to maintain an in-person on-campus learning experience for all students. However, this virus can adapt and mutate quickly, so we must be prepared to respond as needed. It may be necessary to temporarily close some or all of our campus for cleaning and/or to mitigate transmission. We will closely monitor our local and school community transmission rates, our own school absentee rate, and the guidance of local health officials in making these decisions. In the event of a temporary closure of campus, we will communicate promptly and maintain the integrity of our student experience through at-home learning.

INDIVIDUALS WHO TEST POSITIVE OR ARE A CLOSE CONTACT

Any person who tests positive or is determined to be a close contact of someone who tests positive must, as of January 21, 2022, follow the [Providence Surge Protocol](#). This Surge Protocol is in effect until Providence High School officially announces otherwise. This announcement will be made via email and this SRP will be updated and republished accordingly.

Any person who develops or exhibits symptoms on campus will report to Sick Bay on campus (located near the Dean of Student's office). If necessary, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. Parents and guardians will need to check in at our new Welcome Center and follow instructions from the staff when picking up a sick student.

THE ON-CAMPUS STUDENT EXPERIENCE

THE MORNING CHECK-IN

All students and employees will be required to complete a daily self-screening protocol at home each morning before coming to campus [using the Protect App from Envoy](#). Everyone may complete the screening on their smartphone or through Envoy's browser. It will provide guiding questions that give daily reminders regarding symptoms and contact with others. After honestly submitting the required information, a message will confirm whether the student or employee is clear to come to campus. No student or employee receiving a notice from the app indicating they are not supposed to come to school or work will be permitted to enter campus. If incorrect information was accidentally entered, students should report to the Welcome Center (ext. 14515) to enter campus. Parents/guardians will need to contact our attendance line (Ext. 14900 or Option 1 from our main line (818) 846-8141) to confirm that their child will not be attending and provide any other pertinent information.

When entering campus, students will use their smartphones and the Envoy app to check-in by showing their "approved pass" indicating they are safely cleared for entrance. Students and employees will then have their temperature checked. If an elevated temperature (100° or above) is detected, the student or employee will move to a secondary screening area for a confirmatory temperature check.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

All cars dropping off students will enter the driveway from Buena Vista Street and use the left lane. In order to more quickly facilitate student drop-off in the morning and to help ease traffic, we ask that you please pull all the way forward until the line stops or you are directed by someone. The drop-off line is in the left lane ONLY. The right-hand lane is reserved for other drivers who park on campus, and for through traffic. The drop off should begin at the bottom of the hill where an administrator directs traffic. Please pull all the way forward until the traffic stops or someone directs you. When all the cars are stopped, students should exit their vehicle and walk to their designated entrance point.

Campus will officially open at 6:30am and close at 6:00pm. Students are not permitted to be on campus outside of those hours, except for approved and appropriately chaperoned activities like athletics and performing arts. Beginning at 8:15am, students will enter campus through the double gates by our Science Center. There will be adults in the driveway to direct students. Students arriving before 8:15am will enter campus at the Welcome Center gate.

Students dropped-off before the first bell at 8:55am may wait in the designated outdoor areas (Quad, Senior Patio, Play Zone) before moving to their class. Students may enter their classroom starting at 8:45am.

Students should avoid gathering closely together in clusters. There will be security, faculty, staff, and administration present during morning drop-off to assist with the flow of both traffic on the driveway and foot traffic of students entering campus. Security, faculty, staff, and administration will also ensure students adhere to the safety protocols of masking and physical distancing.

DISMISSAL AND PICKUP PROCEDURES

The school day concludes at 2:50pm (Mondays conclude at 12:10pm) and all students must be picked up by 6:00pm. After 3:30pm most indoor spaces on the main campus will be closed. Outside of approved and appropriately chaperoned activities, like athletics and performing arts, students will not be actively supervised between dismissal and 6:00pm and need to wait for pickup either in the quad or by the Welcome Center. Students who choose to walk off campus (e.g., to Starbucks) outside of school hours will also not be supervised. Seniors with privileges will sign a separate agreement, provided by the Dean of Students.

WHAT TO DO/WHERE TO GO WHEN I'M NOT IN CLASS

We've designated the Quad, Senior Patio, the grassy area by the batting cage, and our new Play Zone (see more info below) as outdoor areas that can be used by all students before school, during lunch, for X-Blocks, and after school. All physical distancing guidelines are in place in all of these outdoor areas. Hand washing stations and hand sanitizer dispensers will also be present in these locations.

LUNCH LOCATIONS & PROTOCOLS

ChoiceLunch has been selected as our food service provider for the 2021-2022 school year. By signing up with ChoiceLunch, students can select and pre-order a wide variety of lunch entrees, sides, and drinks from the ChoiceLunch app. The individual, pre-packed lunches will be delivered to campus and distributed during lunch time at the lunch window. Lunch orders must be placed in advance. Students will not be able to order lunch on site or day of.

Students, faculty, and staff may also bring their own lunches. Microwaves will be available. Food delivery services such as UberEats, Postmates, and other similar services are strictly prohibited. Parents and guardians are prohibited from dropping lunch off at school during the day for their child. Available outdoor eating areas include the Main Quad, Senior Patio, and Providence Play Zone.

Faculty/Staff will provide supervision during lunch periods.

COUNSELORS

Members of our Counseling Department, Academic Counselors and our Personal Counselor will be on-campus full-time to support students in their learning, well-being, and overall acclimation. Students may meet in-person with counselors by appointment, abiding by masking requirements.

STUDENT LIFE, CO-CURRICULARS, ATHLETICS, AND OTHER EVENTS

School-sponsored events related to student life, co-curriculars, athletics, and other events will be handled on a case-by-case basis based on current LACDPH guidance and the overall well-being and safety of students, faculty, and staff. Details about upcoming student events will be announced via email and the morning PA announcements. Students and families are encouraged to have family conversations to determine whether they want to participate or not.

NEW PROVIDENCE PLAY ZONE

At Providence we promote the comprehensive health and wellbeing of our students. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “Research demonstrates that developmentally appropriate play with parents and peers is a singular opportunity to promote the social-emotional, cognitive, language, and self-regulation skills that build executive function and a prosocial brain. Furthermore, play supports the formation of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships with all caregivers that children need to thrive. Play is not frivolous: it enhances brain structure and function and promotes executive function (i.e., the process of learning, rather than the content), which allow us to pursue goals and ignore distractions.”

To support our students’ comprehensive health, we have transformed a large section (10,000 sq./ft.) of our parking lot into a Providence Play Zone. This space will greatly increase our outdoor space for students to use when not in classrooms. The Play Zone will be used for lunches and other times when students are not required to be indoors. Fun activities (including objects that can be easily cleaned throughout the day) will be available for students to use. Some areas will be tented to provide shade for seating and lounging. Restrooms and handwashing stations will be readily accessible.

STUDENT PARKING

A limited number of spaces will be available to licensed student drivers. Student drivers must check-in with the Assistant to the Dean of Students for an assigned parking spot and have an approved space PRIOR to driving to school. All spaces will be assigned on a first-come first-served basis.

CAMPUS CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Measures are in place to ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms, offices, restrooms, common areas, and surfaces throughout the school on an hourly basis. An enhanced disinfecting session will take place nightly by the school’s custodial staff.

- High touch areas (i.e. bathroom doors, hand railings) are frequently cleaned throughout the day.
- Use of shared objects is eliminated wherever possible.
- Cleaning products that are effective against COVID-19 will be used.
- Hand washing stations, both stationary and mobile units, have been set-up throughout campus.
- Students, faculty, staff are offered frequent opportunities to wash their hands.
- Custodial staff responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the school will follow guidance provided by Cal-OSHA and the disinfectant manufacturer.

- In the case of multiple confirmed cases of COVID-19 on campus, the school has purchased two Protexus Backpack Electrostatic Sprayers to ensure deep disinfection as needed.

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