

EPIC School Health-Related School Reopening Plan

Re-Submitted on September 3, 2020 to NJ Department of Education

Plan Effective September 3, 2020

Please note, the following plan was developed at a time when the COVID19 positivity rate in NJ was 0.96%. In the interest of student, staff, and family safety this plan is subject to change at any time as a result of any significant, sustained increase in the rate of infection or as mandated by the NJ Governor's Office.

Introduction

The EPIC School (Educational Partnership for Instructing Children) is a NJ Department of Education approved private, nonprofit school for learners with autism spectrum disorder. EPIC typically is referred, and accepts, students who would be classified as Autism 2 or 3 under DSM-V and who engage in some level of significant challenging behavior. What follows is a revised plan to implement, coordinate and supervise the September 8th reopening of EPIC using a hybrid (in-person and virtual) model of instruction.

The primary reason for choosing a hybrid model is the importance of maintaining, to the fullest extent possible, the social distancing guidelines as recommended by the New Jersey Department of Education and the Federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC). For example, the CDC estimates that an average of 114 ft² per person will be required to maintain effective social distancing within the classroom. As a 1:1 instructional program, this means that for 2 staff and 2 students to be safely socially distanced would require a space that is approximately a 21' W X 22' L (basically equivalent to the size of our gym). Given that space is a concern it is essential that we do what we can to ensure social distancing and protect the health and safety of all concerned.

The EPIC Hybrid Model

Prior to the start of the regular 2020-21 School Year on Thursday, September 3rd, EPIC students will be assigned to one of two groups: An **A Group** and a **B Group**.

- Students in **A Group** will receive in-person instruction at EPIC during the first full week of September and then virtual/distance instruction the following week.
- Students in **B Group** will receive virtual/distance instruction during the first full week of September and then in-person instruction at EPIC the following week.
- The first day of school this year is Thursday, 9/3 and Virtual/Distance Instruction will be provided to both **Group A** and **Group B** on that date and Friday, 9/4. Hybrid instruction will start September 8, 2020.
- Parents were informed, via email, as to their son's or daughter's group assignment.
- Our goal will be to reintegrate all EPIC students into a single student body at the earliest possible opportunity and as a function of modified state or federal (i.e., CDC) guidelines.

- If deemed necessary by the EPIC Administration or mandated by the Office of Governor, EPIC may return to full-time virtual instruction for all EPIC students within 24 hours of notice.
- The September 2020 A/B Schedule is attached as **Appendix I** and EPIC School Year A/B Schedule is attached as **Appendix II**.

Virtual Instruction Opt In/Opt Out

Parents may opt for full-time virtual instruction at any time by notifying the Executive Director, Clinical Coordinator, and/or SLE & Transition Coordinator. Should parents opt for full-time virtual instruction they will, subsequently, be able to opt back into in-person instruction at the end of each trimester (October 31, February 28, June 30) by providing 2-weeks' notice of their intent to switch. The reason for this is that the health and safety challenges associated with adding a new, in-person student are complex and, as such, require significant planning time. Prior to the end of the trimester, parents receiving full-time Virtual/Distance Instruction will be surveyed regarding participation in the full hybrid model.

Virtual Instructional Continual Improvement

To continue to improve the effectiveness of Virtual/Distance Instruction with EPIC's students, a set of individualized "Responding to Virtual Instruction" objectives will be included in each student's IEP and implemented during in-person instruction. Such objectives will target: 1) Making virtual instruction more effective, 2) Increasing the types of virtual instruction to which a student can respond, and 3) Increasing the number of response opportunities during virtual instruction. Also, and as noted in the "Digital Divide" section on page 4 of this plan, EPIC has 9 students who have been provided with brand new touchscreen laptops. For the students with these laptops who are alternating between In-Person and Virtual/Distance Instruction, their assigned laptop will be used both at home and in school (after being sanitized) so student fluency with the computer may be addressed.

Parent Involvement in Virtual Instruction

Starting September 3rd all EPIC parents (or their designees) will be required to participate in Virtual/Distance Instruction with their son or daughter if he or she is not independent with Virtual/Distance Instruction. Virtual/Distance Instruction is expected to be provided for 4-hours each day inclusive of clinic meetings and parent training sessions. This does not need to be 4 continuous hours of virtual instruction, but it does need to add up to 4-hours and will be provided between the hours of 8:40 AM to 2:40 PM. With that:

- EPIC acknowledges that, at the outset, not all students will be able to productively engage in virtual instruction for 4-hours. EPIC is, however, contracted by the sending district to provide a minimum of 4-hours of instruction/day so this needs to be the standard. Parents do not have the option to opt out of virtual instruction with their child. However, parents do have the option to opt for virtual instruction 5-days/week in place of the proposed hybrid model which includes in-person instruction at EPIC.

- EPIC will work with each family to systematically increase hours of student engagement in virtual instruction as quickly as possible. If a particular student can sit and watch a preferred video for 60 minutes the skill of attending is in his or her repertoire but now needs to be generalized to other electronic stimuli.
- A portion of the hours dedicated to in-person instruction at EPIC will be used to target those skills associated with effective skill acquisition via virtual instruction.

Hours of Instruction

- Over the first 4 weeks of school the hours of in-person instruction will be systematically increased from 4 hours/day at the start to a full 6 hours/day after 4 weeks. This is necessary to enable students to transition back into in-person instruction in as positive and minimally disruptive way possible.
- During the first two weeks, in-school instruction will be provided from 8:40 AM to 12:40 PM (4 hours). Virtual instruction students will also be provided with 4 hours of instruction, but that schedule can be more flexible in order to meet individual family needs. Hours for instructional staff will be the normal 8:15 to 3:45.
- During the second two weeks of school, in-school instruction will be provided from 8:40 AM to 1:40 PM (5 hours). Virtual instruction students will continue to be provided with 4 hours of instruction/day.
- Starting in Week-5, in-person instruction will be provided from 8:40 AM to 2:40 PM. Virtual instruction students will also be provided with 4 hours of instruction/day.
- A documented case of COVID19 within EPIC may result modifications to the above schedule.

IEP Meetings and Clinics.

Until further notice, all IEP meetings will be virtual meetings and held using the video conferencing platform preferred by the sending district. In addition, any meetings that would typically take place in person at EPIC (e.g., Clinics, Re-evaluation Meetings; Peer Review Committee; Human Rights Committee, Parent Trainings, Fundraising meetings, etc.) will be take place via Zoom. Visitor’s day is suspended until further notice.

EPIC Pandemic Response Team

EPIC’s Pandemic Response Team is designed to oversee the implementation of the school’s reopening plan, with emphasis on measures related to health and safety. The EPIC Pandemic Response Team consists of:

Name	Title
Dr. Peter Gerhardt	Executive Director
William Schmalz	Principal
Erin McGill	School Nurse
Angela Rodriguez	Certified Teacher & BCBA
JoAnne Emerle	SLE/Transition, Certified Teacher & BCBA
Amy Taranto	Finance Administrator
Kaitlin Lange	Certified Teacher

Nicole Dilling	Instructor
Angely Rivera	Instructor
Kathy Furer	EPIC Parent
Lisa Krieger	Board President

The responsibilities of EPIC’s Pandemic Response Team include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring routine monitoring of COVID19 data for Bergen County.
- Ensuring plans for Virtual/Distance Instruction are up-to-date and implemented in compliance with relevant DOE guidance.
- Requiring staff to self-monitor and report COVID19 symptoms both in school, at home, or in the community.
- Ensuring EPIC families are in compliance with mask protocols and social distancing guidelines.
- Collaborate, if needed, with local health officials.
- Ensuring adequate PPE for all staff and students.

Any changes to the currently approved plan will be presented, for review and approval, to the EPIC Pandemic Response Team.

Addressing the Digital Divide

EPIC is committed to ensuring that all students have consistent access to the technology they require in order to benefit from Virtual/Distance Instruction. To date, EPIC has:

- Added an additional hot spot in a classroom to ensure reliable access to the internet for Virtual/Distance Instruction.
- Purchased 20 Chrome Books for staff use during Virtual/Distance Instruction
- Purchased 9 Dell touch-screen laptops for use by students who continue to lack proficiency with the use of a computer mouse.
- Although laptops remain the property of the EPIC School, they will travel with the assigned student between home (virtual) and EPIC (in-person) for students on the hybrid model. These computers will be sanitized before use. During in-person sessions, instruction in relevant computer skills using the student’s assigned laptop, will be provided.
- For a family to be provided with the technology to address the digital divide, all that is necessary is for them to make a formal request to either the Executive Director or Principal.
- Beyond that, before the start of the 2020-2021 school year on September 3rd, 2020, the Executive Director will call each EPIC family and inquire about any tech needs they might have. It will be made clear that whatever equipment they need will be provided free of charge and, as such, it remains the property of EPIC. **Appendix III** contains the form use for documenting calls, related requests, and subsequent action. There were no additional requests at this time. This process will be repeated on a bi-monthly basis to prevent any lapses in student access.
- As EPIC is a small school (maximum enrollment of 34 students) we do not anticipate any challenges in prioritizing the distribution of tech and any related resources. At this point we have provided laptops to 9 students or approximately 28% of our

enrollment so additional requests are somewhat unexpected. If at some point prioritization becomes necessary decisions will be made based on:

- Immediacy of student need,
- Reported needs of Parents (i.e., there is no means test, per se), and
- Equipment requested (i.e., some equipment is easier to obtain than others)



Please Note: In the following sections, “Critical Area of Operation” references, “The road back: Restart and recovery plan for education” (2020) as published by the New Jersey Department of Education.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES RE: COVID19
(CRITICAL AREA OF OPERATION #1, #2 & #5)

Since the initial school closure order on March 13, 2020, EPIC has focused on developing policies and procedures that promote EPIC being a healthy, COVID19-free school and workplace. Among these are:

- **EPIC Parents**
 - The Families of EPIC students are expected to practice social distancing and follow any mandated or recommended mask protocols whenever required.
 - EPIC parents, or their designee, are required to take their child’s temperature in the morning before he or she gets on the school bus. The recorded temperature must then be sent, via email, to the School Nurse for her records.
 - In addition, Parents have been provided with an electronic copy of a “COVID19 Symptom Checklist” (Appendix IV) to complete on behalf of their son or daughter on a daily basis. Once completed, this too is to be emailed, as an attachment, to the School Nurse. Staff are completing the same checklist on a daily basis and it takes no more than 15 seconds to complete.
 - Students will not be allowed to enter either EPIC facility if this information is not provided to the School Nurse prior to the student’s arrival at school. Every effort will be made to avoid such a situation by obtaining the necessary information prior to student arrival.
 - If a student has a fever, he or she will be required to remain at home for a minimum of 72 hours without any fever and without the use of fever reducing medication. Medical clearance will also be required. Any positive cases of COVID19 will be required to stay home from a minimum of 14 days and the receipt of medical clearance to return to school
 - For the foreseeable future, any materials shared between EPIC parents and staff or provided to EPIC parents by staff will be done in digital format only.
 - Parents who transport their own child to and from EPIC will, for the foreseeable future, need to wait in the bus line until their child is retrieved by an EPIC staff.
 - **Families who travel with their children to a designated “high-risk” area need to report such activity to the Executive Director and their son or**

daughter will not be allowed to enter either facility for 14 days. Families who travel without their children to a designated “high-risk” area need to report such activity to the Executive Director and a decision will be made at that point regarding admission.

- **EPIC Staff**

- Prior to staff returning to work at EPIC during ESY, all staff were tested for COVID19. Of the 34 tests given through EPIC or through a staff member’s private physician, there were 34 negative results. All staff were again tested on August 31st with identical results.
- All staff are required to wear a mask when in the building and to maintain social distancing at all times.
- Before entering either the main school building or the Life Skills House, all staff will have their temperature taken by the School Nurse, or her designee, and complete a “COVID19 Symptom Checklist” (**Appendix IV**) which is then kept on file.
- Staff are encouraged to frequently wash their hands during the day using the provided antibacterial hand soap
- While staff may still order lunchtime deliveries, such deliveries need to be paid in full, inclusive of tip, before the actual delivery. Deliveries will be left in the designated box located outside of the office for staff to retrieve when notified.
- Staff are to sanitize their hands at start and end of each teaching session, meal prep, snack or lunch.
- **Staff who travel to a designated “high-risk” area need to report such activity to the Executive Director and will not be allowed to enter either facility for 14 days. In such cases, leave options should be discussed with the Executive Director.**

- **Reasonable Accommodations for “Increased Risk” Staff.**

- According to the CDC (July 2020), individuals over the age of 60-years and/or have certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. At this time, these conditions include *Cancer, Chronic Kidney Disease, COPD, Immunocompromised State, Obesity, Serious Heart Conditions, Sickly Cell Disease, Type 2 Diabetes, Asthma, Cystic Fibrosis, Hypertension, Dementia, Liver Disease, Pregnancy, Smoking, Pulmonary Fibrosis, and Thalassemia.*
- EPIC has made, and will continue to make, reasonable accommodations to support staff with any of these comorbid conditions. For example:
 - A pregnant staff member has been allowed to provide Virtual/Distance Instruction on a full-time basis from home
 - A staff member with COPD has a “safe area” on each floor of the school where he/she can temporarily remove his or her mask.

- EPIC will continue to make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to staff as requested and appropriate. A copy of EPIC's "Request for Accommodation" form is attached in **Appendix V**.
- **EPIC Students**
 - Parents are required to take their child's temperature in the morning and again before he or she gets on the bus. Student temperature and a completed COVID19 symptom checklist is to be submitted to the School Nurse before student arrival.
 - An elevated temperature will require the student to stay home for a minimum of 72 hours with a fever and in the absence of any fever reducing medications.
 - The side door of the EPIC School has been designated for arrivals. The gym doors have been designated for dismissal. These are marked as such.
 - Before exiting school transportation, all students will have their temperature taken by the School Nurse or her designee. Student temperatures will be taken a second time between 12:30-1:30 in the afternoon.
 - After having their temperature taken, all students will be prompted to wash their hands thoroughly before they enter their classroom.
 - Throughout the day students are to be prompted to wash their hands before and after each instructional session (approximately 45 minutes), before and after lunch, before and after gym and after accessing the bathroom, sneezing or coughing.
 - Students are to be prompted to disinfect their work area after each instructional session.
 - Students are to remain in their classroom for the entire day. Exceptions include bathroom breaks and scheduled gym breaks.
 - If students can wear masks, they should wear masks. If a student needs a break from wearing a mask, he or she can either be brought outside (weather permitting) or pull their mask down below their chin while sitting at their desk, a minimum of 6-feet away from other individuals.
 - Students are to eat lunch in their classrooms using paper plates, plastic cups and disposable utensils. Student masks are not required at lunchtime. Parents are asked not to send prepared foods in reusable containers as they may not be returned.
 - If a change of soiled clothes is required, the soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag, tied closed, and sent home with the student. Clothes will not be washed at EPIC.
 - Students will need to wait in their classrooms until called for dismissal. Only 1 student will be dismissed at a time.

Alterations to Classrooms

The primary rationale for adoption of a hybrid model of programming is to ensure EPIC's ability to socially distance students and staff in each classroom. To that end:

- All desks in classrooms face the same direction unless positioned more than 8 feet apart.
- Two new outside tables have been purchased allowing instruction to be held outside, weather permitting.
- Moveable plexiglass barriers have been purchased for each classroom to, primarily, separate student workstations (e.g., desks, computers, etc.).
- All instructional materials are to be sanitized by staff at the end of an instructional session and at the end of the day. If instructional materials not sanitized, they are not to be used by any other student until they have been sanitized.
- Classroom surfaces are to be sanitized at the start of the day and the end of each instructional session using an EPA approved cleaner.
- All EPIC classrooms have a ventilation system that provides for the recirculation of fresh air.
- Ultraviolet “Air Scrubbers” have been installed in the general ventilation system and stand-alone systems placed at strategic locations around the building. UV Air Scrubbers use short-wave ultraviolet light (UV-C light) to inactivate airborne pathogens and microorganisms like mold, bacteria and viruses. While their effectiveness against COVID19 is unknown, they represent another layer of defense at the EPIC School.
- All classrooms are fully air conditioned (central air) and, in addition, all but one EPIC classroom have window air conditioners as backups if necessary. For the classroom without a window air conditioner, instruction will move to the staff room if necessary. The filters on both systems are checked on a monthly basis and changed as necessary.
- Each classroom is supplied with 10 bottles of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, and a bottle of disinfectant spray which is kept in locked drawer of the teacher’s desk. Hand sanitizing stations are placed just outside of each classroom to help deter any attempts by students to ingest disinfectant liquid.

Transportation

(Critical Area of Operation #3)

As an APSSD, EPIC does not contract nor manage student transportation between school and home. We do, however, monitor for compliance with the IEP, for appropriate seating, and for the physical/behavioral condition of students when arrive in the morning and leave in the afternoon. In addition, EPIC owns a number of vans used for CBI and SLE activities.

For these vehicles:

- Upon arrival of the buses in the morning, staff are to confirm the presence of sufficient social distancing. A similar check will take place at dismissal.
- Staff are required to wear masks at all times when in an EPIC van.
- Students and staff are expected to strategically place themselves in the van to establish maximum, safe social distancing.
- Instructional programs designed to systematically teach each student to wear a mask, have been in place since March 16, 2020. At this point approximately 50% of EPIC’s student are able to wear a mask for a minimum of 30 minutes with an overall goal of 90 minutes. Unfortunately, approximately 12-15% of EPIC students are unable to wear a mask for longer than 10 minutes at a time. These students are, not surprisingly, our most behaviorally challenged students so our ability to move past

the 10-minute mark has been somewhat limited. This will be a significant instructional target in the coming year.

- When SLE and CBI programming returns, EPIC students who are able to wear masks for more than 30-minutes will, at times, participate in more of a “group format” (e.g., 2 staff/2 students). Students who are unable to wear a mask for that long will be provided SLE and CBI programming using a 1 staff/1 student model of instruction to ensure safety and social distancing.
- Vans are to be sanitized after each use with either anti-bacterial wipes, the electrostatic cleaner, or both.
- To the greatest extent possible, social distancing will be maintained on all EPIC vehicles.
- When social distancing is not, for whatever reason, possible, both staff and students will be required to wear masks.
- Weather permitting, van windows will be kept open when driving.

Student Flow, Entry, Exit, Common Areas

(Critical Area of Operation #4)

Where EPIC previously instructed all students in the safe and independent navigation of our facility such programs will be, for the foreseeable future, discontinued.

- EPIC Parents are required to take their child’s temperature first thing in the morning and again before he or she gets on the bus. Student temperature and a completed COVID19 symptom checklist is to be submitted to the School Nurse before student arrival. The symptom checklist is attached as Appendix IV.
- If the School Nurse has not received, from the parents, a student’s temperature reading and symptom checklist by the time the student arrives at EPIC, that student cannot be discharged from his or her bus. At that point, the parent will be required to either provide the necessary information or pick up their son or daughter. Every effort will be made to contact a student’s Parents before arrival, so such a situation can be avoided.
- Student temperature will again be checked by the School Nurse (or designee) between 12:30-1:30 PM. If a fever is present, the student in question is to be immediately quarantined and the parent called to come pick up their child.
- An elevated temperature will require the student to stay home for a minimum of 72 hours with a fever and in the absence of any fever reducing medications.
- Facility signage:
 - The front stairway is designated for “UP” traffic only and is marked as such. The rear stairway is designated for “DOWN” traffic only and is marked as such.
 - All hallways are designed for “ONE WAY” traffic only and are marked as such.
 - Only two people (1 staff/1student) are allowed in the hallway at any time.
 - All hallway floors are labeled with both directional arrows and markers to maintain social distancing at 6-feet.
 - Classrooms have floor markers for social distancing during instruction.
 - Appendix VI provides a visual overview of the signage.

- Emergency evacuation plans have been revamped to reflect the need to socially distance even under “crisis” conditions. Modifications include, but are not limited to:
 - Drills will be conducted twice monthly (once for A Group & once for B Group).
 - Both up and down staircases will be used during a fire drill or other emergency evacuation drill.
 - Student destinations after exiting the school have been changed to ensure a minimum of 10 feet between classroom cohorts.
 - At the end of the drill, students will reenter the building classroom by classroom.
- If students can wear masks, they should wear masks. During Virtual/Distance Instruction all students were placed on an instructional program for wearing a mask. This will transition into in-person instruction in the fall with the goal of 90 minutes of uninterrupted mask wearing.
- Preparation for dismissal will start 10 minutes earlier than usual and students will need to wait in their classrooms until called. Only 1 student will be dismissed at a time.
- Only one student or staff is allowed in a bathroom at any given time unless to do so represents a health/safety challenge to the student.
- Access to the gym will be scheduled with no more than 2 students and 2 staff in the gym at any given time.

Screening, PPE, and Response to Student/Staff Symptoms

(Critical Area of Operation #5)

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
 - To date, EPIC has acquired over 3,000+ surgical masks, 60 face-shields, 18 pairs of goggles, 2,000+ pairs of gloves (including XL) and 200 hospital gowns for staff. We continually add to this stockpile.
 - For the time being, parents and school district personnel are asked to avoid in-person visits. Non-EPIC visitors are not allowed in either facility. If parents or district personnel need access to either facility they will be required to wear face coverings at all times. While students are expected to wear a mask for the maximum duration possible, there are, however, a number of possible exemptions:
 - When doing so would inhibit the individual’s health.
 - When a student is in extreme heat outdoors.
 - When a student is in water.
 - If a student’s documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), precludes the use of a face covering.
 - When a student is eating or drinking.
 - If or when anyone has trouble breathing or is unconscious, is incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
 - The student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities.
 - During gym when individuals are in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet apart.

- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task (for example, students operating machinery in which face coverings may get caught).
 - Staff masks are provided by EPIC, but individual staff may wear a mask of their choosing. For students, masks may be provided by the student's family/guardian EPIC will provide disposable face coverings for students who either forget or have misplaced their masks. In addition, EPIC will provide face coverings for students whose families may be experiencing financial hardship.
 - Cloth face coverings should be washed at the end of every day (sooner if they become wet or soiled).
 - Single use disposable face masks should be changed daily unless they become damp or soiled, in this case they should be replaced immediately.
 - EPIC will also provide additional PPE, in the form of gloves, gowns, face shields, safety glasses, etc. to teaching staff, nursing staff, paraprofessionals, and administration.
- **In the Case of Symptoms or Confirmed Diagnosis**
 - If a student has been exposed to COVID19, via close contact, his or her parents are required to immediately report such exposure to the Executive Director and School Nurse.
 - If, while at school, a student displays any symptoms of COVID19 he or she will be initially assessed by the School Nurse and, if appropriate, quarantined in the Nurse's office until his or her parent arrives to pick up their child. At the Life Skills House, the back office will be used for quarantine while waiting for a parent to arrive.
 - Areas used for quarantine are to be temporarily closed and outside doors and windows opened to increase air circulation. Within 24 hours the quarantine area (and the student's classroom) will be cleaned and disinfected using an electrostatic cleaner and CDC approved disinfecting products.
 - When the Nurse's office is being used for a student quarantine, any staff or student requiring medical attention will be seen in the staff room.
 - If a staff displays any symptoms of COVID19 they will be assessed by the School Nurse and, if indicated, immediately sent home.
 - Any staff or student who is sent home will require medical clearance before being allowed to return to EPIC.
 - Areas used by a staff who is sent home are to be temporarily closed and outside doors and windows opened to increase air circulation. Within 24 hours the area will be cleaned and disinfected using an electrostatic cleaner and CDC approved disinfecting products.
 - For any confirmed cases of COVID19, the School Nurse will immediately notify the local health department. (See "Contact Tracing" section below for more details.)
 - The notification of parents and/or other staff will be determined based upon the CDC's definition of "close contact". According to the CDC, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset. Depending on the probability of close contact, a decision will be made by the Executive Director, Principal and School Nurse as to who will

subsequently be contacted and informed of the potential for exposure. Contacts may be classroom based, floor based, or school based.

- **PARENT NOTIFICATION:** When providing notification to parents or staff, no identifying information for any student or staff is to be shared. As such, Parent notifications will take the form of *“A potential case of COVID19 was identified on the 3rd floor of the Main School Building and that individual was immediately sent home. At this point you, as Parents, have the option to continue in-person instruction via EPIC’s hybrid model or have your son or daughter receive Virtual/Distance Instruction for the next two weeks.”*
 - **STAFF NOTIFICATION:** *Staff notifications will be similarly formatted. For staff who were in close contact with the identified individual will be required to work from home in the provision of Virtual/Distance Instruction for a period of up to two weeks. Other concerned staff may have the option to provide Virtual/Distance Instruction from home but only if it does not impact the implementation of an in-person student’s IEP.*
 - Parents and staff will be notified if the identified individual tests negative for COVID19.
 - As necessary and appropriate, the School Nurse will share this information with the local health department and/or the student’s sending district.
 - NJ Department of Health’s current Communicable Disease Service Guidance will be followed contingent on the identification of a documented case of COVID19.
 - The EPIC School Nurse is the liaison for all interactions with the Department of Health.
- **Readmittance after illness**
 - Students and staff with suspected or documented cases of COVID-19 are to remain home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and for at least 72 hours after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications. Persons who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days (14 days including weekends). A second test may, at that point, be required.
 - Medical clearance will be required prior to readmission.

Contact Tracing

(Critical Area of Operation #6)

Contingent on the identification of a documented case of COVID19 the School Nurse will contact the Paramus Department of Health and report the case. In addition:

- Once a positive COVID19 case is shared with the Paramus Health Department, EPIC will assist in **contact tracing** to the maximum extent possible. This may include, but not be limited to:
 - Providing a list of individuals who may have had close contact with the individual in question while at the EPIC School. Resources used to determine who may have had close contact include staff interviews, staff/student attendance records, classroom schedules and a review of classroom digital recordings.
 - Providing contact information for the student’s family to determine who in the family or the family’s community may have had close contact.

- Contact tracers would then be expected to contact identified individuals to recommend next steps and to share resources about how they can get tested.
- In the event of a suspected case of COVID19, EPIC will provide the following:
 - Contact information for suspected person
 - The date symptoms were developed
 - Last day in either EPIC facility
 - Types of interactions
 - Contact information for close contacts
 - Any other relevant information as requested.
- In the event of a confirmed case of COVID19, EPIC will provide the following:
 - Contact information for the positive person
 - The date symptoms were developed
 - Last day in either EPIC facility
 - Types of interactions
 - Contact information for close contacts
 - Any other relevant information as requested.
- EPIC's School Nurse is designated as the school's liaison responsible for providing notifications and carrying out any actions with regard to contact tracing as requested by the Department of Health.

Facilities Cleaning Practices

(Critical Area #7)

- Surfaces/objects included under this section include, but are not limited to:
 - Classroom desks and chairs
 - Door handles and push plates
 - Handrails
 - Bathrooms
 - Light switches
 - Refrigerator handles
 - Microwave handles and keypads
 - Buttons on vending machines
 - Computer keyboards
 - Faucets
 - Smart phones
 - Hand-on instructional material.
- In addition to the daily nighttime cleaning crew, EPIC has hired 2 daytime cleaning people (one full time, one part time) to rotate between the main school building and the Life Skills House to wipe down flat surfaces, doorknobs, toilet handles, refrigerator handles etc. The wipe down will be completed using EPA approved disinfectant wipes. It is expected to take approximately 90 minutes to complete one full "swing" through the main school building and the Life Skills House. A checklist of target surfaces has been developed and can be found in **Appendix VII**.
- An extensive deep cleaning of both facilities took place on August 29th and such cleaning will continue on a monthly basis.

- Upon entering their classroom, all staff will wipe down all flat surfaces, handles, and loose materials in the classroom using disinfectant wipes and wearing disposable gloves. This process will be repeated every 45-60 minutes on average.
- After entering the classroom, staff will ensure that the air conditioner is on or windows are open (weather permitting).
- On a bi-weekly basis the electro-static mister will be used across all classrooms, offices, and activity areas to further ensure the safety of the facilities. An electrostatic mister sprays an electrostatically charged mist onto surfaces and objects in the environment. The mist contains positively charged ions that are able to adhere to surfaces. After the mist is applied, a sanitizing agent works to disinfect the covered surfaces.
- Antibacterial soap dispensers have been installed in all restrooms.
- Ultra-violet “Air Scrubbers” have been installed in the ventilation system. Air scrubbers are designed to eliminate harmful contaminants including bacteria and viruses from the air and on the surfaces. Hand-held ultra-violet wands will also be available for each classroom.
- Tile floors in the all the restrooms have been clear sealed to prevent any fluids from seeping into the grout between the floor tiles.
- A total of 15 alcohol-based, hand sanitizing stations have been installed throughout the main school building and the Life Skills House. These stations are maintained by Aslan Cleaning although EPIC has access to the refills should it be necessary for use to change.
- All instructional materials are to be sanitized either at the end of an instructional session or at the end of the day. If instructional materials are to be sanitized at the end of the day they are not to be used by any other student until they have been sanitized.
- All classroom surfaces are to be sanitized at the end of an instructional session end each instructional session using an EPA approved cleaner.

Meals

(Critical Area of Operation #8)

EPIC does not maintain a cafeteria or provide meals for our students. However, a number of students have been taught to independently make their own lunch and this instruction/activity will be suspended for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, EPIC students will eat lunch in their classrooms using paper plates and plastic cups and disposable utensils. Parents are asked to not send in prepared foods in reusable containers as they will not be returned.

Physical Education/Recess

(Critical Area of Operation #9)

NOTE: In line with Department of Education guidance, student face coverings may be removed during physical education so long as individuals are in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of at least six feet apart. Vigorous exercise may contribute to the transmission of COVID19 and, as such, is limited. Such activities, when appropriate to a particular student, should take place outdoors.

- A schedule for the use of EPIC’s gym has been developed for all EPIC staff and their students. Staff members working with students in the 2nd level gym are required to wear masks and face shields.

- When using the 2nd level gym (treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes) two students may use the treadmills without a mask so long as the treadmills are on opposite sides of the room.
- Alternatively, one student may use the treadmill along the far wall while another student uses the elliptical without masks.
- A student can use the stationary bike without a mask so long as they are the only student up there.
- All equipment used must be wiped down and disinfected before and after use.
- The main gym can only have 2 students at a time of the opposite ends of the gym if they are not wearing masks. There can be 3 students if they are all wearing masks.
- Physical education will also be provided in the classroom using either live or video instruction.
- All gym equipment (mats, scooters, bicycles, balls, cones, etc.) are to be disinfected at the start, and end, of each gym session.
- Students receiving virtual/distance instruction may participate in group fitness sessions with their in-person classmates whenever the schedule allows.
- Whenever possible, physical education activities will take place outdoors and, as appropriate, without student face masks. Upon returning from outdoors activity, both students and staff are required to wash their hands.
- All students between kindergarten and 5th grade will continue to have a minimum of one, 20-minute recess period/day. Weather permitting this will take place outdoors with staff and students washing their hands when completed.
- EPIC does not have a locker room, so no related precautions are warranted.

Field Trips, Extra-curricular Activities, & Use of Facility Outside of School Hours
(Critical Area of Operation #10)

EPIC does not engage in field trips with our students. EPIC does, however, provide Community-Based Instruction (CBI) to all students and Structured Learning Environment programming to students over the age of 16-years. Both CBI and SLE are temporarily suspended until sometime after September 18th, but our intent is to resume CBI and SLE programming as quickly and as safely as possible.

- CBI, once reinstated, will occur under the guidelines put forth under “Transportation” on page 6 of this document.
- CBI will resume, on a case by case basis, as a function of individual student ability to wear a mask coupled with continued low rates of community infection.
- Before CBI or SLE can restart for a particular student, his or her parents will be notified beforehand so any concerns they might have can be addressed and their consent for programming obtained.
- For at least the immediate future, a prerequisite to participating in either CBI or SLE will be the student’s ability to wear a mask for 30 continuous minutes.
- In the past, Parent meetings, meetings of the EPIC Human Rights Committee and Peer Review Committee, Parent Trainings, and Board meetings were held in the facility outside of the school hours. These are now all held virtually.
- No outside agency or organization uses our facilities.

Educator Health and Well-being

(Critical Area of Operation – Unnumbered)*

The physical health and emotional well-being are essential to success of EPIC and its students. To help address that concern:

- Semi-monthly “Listen and Learn” Zoom sessions will be scheduled for staff. Sessions will be moderated by a senior EPIC Staff (minimum 5-years with EPIC) and provide the opportunity for all staff to express concerns or offer suggestions on a voluntary and confidential basis. The moderator can, at their discretion, bring any issue or concern to the attention of the EPIC Administration.
- In addition to the Special Education Teachers on EPIC’s Crisis Response Team, a minimum of two instructors (paraprofessionals) will be added to ensure comprehensive representation.
- EPIC has invested in new staff recognition software (BucketList) that will allow for immediate recognition and recording of exemplary staff behavior and achievements, particularly those that relate to COVID19 Health and Safety Protocols.
- On a weekly basis EPIC already bagels for all the staff but starting in September EPIC will add a monthly lunch.
- As necessary, the services of a licensed positive psychologist will be contracted to provide staff counseling and support.

Board of Trustees Resolution

This plan has been reviewed by members of the EPIC School Board of Trustees and a motion to accept the plan, as written, will be presented at their August 28th meeting. See **Appendix VIII**.

Respectfully Submitted;




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List of Appendices

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Appendix II	EPIC 2020-2021 School Calenda A/B Schedule
Appendix III	Digital Divide Parent Survey
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Appendix I
September 2020

SAMPLE IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

September 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Staff Training	2 Staff Training	3 All Virtual	4 All Virtual	5
6	7 Labor Day	8 A Group 4 hrs	9 A Group 4 hrs	10 A Group 4 hrs	11 A Group 4 hrs	12
13	14 B Group 4 hrs	15 B Group 4 hrs	16 B Group 4 hrs	17 B Group 4 hrs	18 B Group 4 hrs	19
20	21 A Group 5 hrs	22 A Group 5 hrs	23 A Group 5 hrs	24 A Group 5 hrs	25 A Group 5 hrs	26
27	28 B Group 5 hrs	29 B Group 5 hrs	30 B Group 5 hrs			
6-Hour School Days Begin Monday October 5th						<small>©MichelZbinden.com</small>

Appendix VII EPIC Cleaning and Disinfecting Checklist

Date: _____ Time: _____ Cleaner's Initials: _____

General Facilities			
Complete	In Progress	N/A	<i>Use a CDC approved disinfectant to clean and disinfect all hard surfaces.</i>
			Front Stairway Handrails
			Back Stairway Handrails
			Doorknobs/Handles – 1 st Floor
			Light Switches – 1 st Floor
			Desktops/Flat Surfaces – First Floor
			Doorknobs/Handles – 2 nd Floor
			Light Switches – 2 nd Floor
			Desktops/Flat Surfaces – 2 nd Floor
			Doorknobs/Handles – 3 rd Floor
			Light Switches – 3 rd Floor
			Desktops/Flat Surfaces – 3 rd Floor
Restrooms			
			1st Floor Bathrooms
			Sink & Faucets
			Toilet Flushers
			Paper Towel Dispensers
			Soap Dispensers
			2nd Floor Bathrooms
			Sinks & Faucets
			Toilet Flushers
			Paper Towel Dispensers
			Soap Dispensers
			3rd Floor Bathrooms
			Sink & Faucets
			Toilet Flushers
			Paper Towel Dispensers
			Soap Dispensers
Kitchen			
			Sinks & Faucets
			Handles Microwaves, Toaster Ovens, Refrigerator, & Coffee Maker
			Cabinet Handles
			Counter Tops
			Kitchen Table
			Kitchen Chairs

Gym			
Complete	In Progress	N/A	<i>Use a CDC approved disinfectant to clean and disinfect all hard surfaces.</i>
			Door handles
			Light Switches
			Cabinets
			Unstacked Chairs
			Any Open Tables
			Treadmills
			Stationary Bikes
			Large "Bounce" Balls
			A/C Controller
Staff Room			
			Door Handles
			Light Switches
			Cabinets
			Tabletops
			Vending Machines
			Chairs
Equipment			
			1 st Floor Copier Machines
			1 st Floor Telephones
			2 nd Floor Copier Machines
			2 nd Floor Telephones
			3 rd Floor Copier Machines
			3 rd Floor Telephones
			Laminators
			Plexiglass Dividers
Supplies			
Do you need more disinfecting wipes? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Do you need more disinfecting spray? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Do you need more paper towels? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Do you need more gloves or PPE? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
What PPE do you need? <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves <input type="checkbox"/> Masks <input type="checkbox"/> Gowns			

Anything else? Any comments?

Appendix V
EPIC School Request for Accommodation

Date: _____

Employee Name: _____

1. Please provide a description of the accommodation you are requesting. Please try to be as specific as possible.

2. Please provide the reason for the accommodation.

3. Describe the limitation, if any, is interfering with your ability to perform your job.

4. Describe how the requested accommodation will help you perform the essential functions of your job.

5. Is this request time sensitive? Yes/No (circle one). If yes, please explain.

6. Provide any additional information you think may be relevant to this request

I acknowledge that I have accurately completed this request form and that the information contained is true and correct. I understand that any intentional misrepresentation concerning the facts or information may result in corrective action up to and including termination of my employment.

Staff Signature

Date