



AECI 1 Reopening Plan Overview

The AECI Charter School network places the highest regard for student, staff and visitor safety. As a charter school serving the local community, it is our responsibility to place as many safeguards in place that will reduce the likelihood of spreading the Covid-19 virus among school stakeholders. This includes the services of a cleaning and disinfecting company that will provide CDC recommended sanitizing protocols daily.

Our mission states that we will “create an integrated, rigorous academic program that provides students with the necessary skills, knowledge and practical experience to pursue college and a career in the fields of architecture, engineering, and construction industries.”

Our primary goal is to provide a safe, clean and virus free environment where students are not afraid to engage in rigorous in class lessons supported in part by a well-developed online learning platform.

The socio-emotional needs of our students take priority as they begin to develop their moral and character identity as we help students navigate through this historic pandemic event. This plan was developed by a six-person planning group consisting of the Network’s CEO, two principals and three assistant principals. In addition, staff feedback and concerns were used to guide the plan. In order to create and support a safe and caring environment for our students, we will implement specific [CDC recommended systems and protocols](#) to ensure a safe return to a learning environment. The Dean of Students is the designated COVID-19 safety coordinator, whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school’s reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operation issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or “new normal” levels. As the CDC or Governor Cuomo revise guidelines for returning to the building, we will also update our systems and protocols to maintain the highest standards of sanitization and maintenance of a clean germ-free environment.

Communication

AECI will continue to message updates and modifications to our reopening and learning plans through multiple means. Staff communication will take place through email and either virtual or in person staff meetings. The school has recently worked to obtain all parent emails. Weekly updates will be sent from the principal via email, with those messages also posted on the school's website and social media. Larger updates will also be backpacked home and sent via phone blasts. In the event AECI becomes aware of a positive case of coronavirus within the school all the above means of communication will be utilized to ensure the entire school community is aware. Using a translation phone number, families can call into the school and all contact information will be translated into the parent's home language.

Throughout the building, relevant social distance signage will be displayed in English, Spanish, and visuals. Signs will remind everyone to distance 6 feet away from each other as well as to wash hands and sanitize frequently. Signage in the bathrooms will display reminders to wash hands. Floor decals in the cafeteria will be placed 6 feet away from each other for student line-up for lunch.

In the event AECI becomes aware that someone who has been in our building has contracted COVID-19, the following protocols will go into place. Should in-person courses be in session, classes will end for the day and students and staff will be dismissed. Parents will immediately be notified via phone blast and email. A prepared letter will also be sent home with students. The Department of Health will be notified.

The daily cleaning and disinfecting procedures detailed below will be followed. We will follow Department of Health guidance for the timing of reopening the school building and further disinfecting procedures.

Health and Safety



During pre-service professional development, all staff will be trained in the following protocol to detect and handle students that present with symptoms of the coronavirus. If a staff member observes students that present or complain of coughing, runny nose, shortness of breath, body aches, loss of taste or smell, body chills, or loss of sense of smell or taste they will immediately alert the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator who will send the student to the isolation room, located next to the cafeteria entrance. The isolation room will have a sign that says “Occupied. Do Not Enter Without Proper Protective Equipment.” Once there, the nurse will see the student to further assess.

The Health and Safety Planning Group surveyed the building and using floor plans determined the safe number of students that can be in the building. Half our student population can be in the building at a time while maintaining 6 feet of distance between students. To accommodate, student schedules have been reorganized so students generally will not travel throughout the building as they have in previous years. This will result in less contact between students throughout the school day. During blended learning, approximately half the students will be engaged in remote learning while the other half of students will be engaged in traditional in-the-building learning.

We plan to have **no more than 14 students in each classroom at a time** when the school transitions to blended learning. Given our minimum classroom dimensions of 27 x 25, rows of 4 by 4 can be set up in the classrooms while maintaining 6 feet of distance between students.

AECI performs the required number of fire drills and lockdown drills. In order to ensure distancing requirements, 2 additional staircases and exits will be used with permission from our landlord. Students will leave each classroom in staggered fashion to remain distancing requirements. Outside of the building, students will lineup 6 feet away from each other, which will require additional streets. Security guards will be posted along the streets used to ensure student safety during the drill.

The usual lockdown procedure requires students to cluster in one side of the room and remain silent. This procedure will be modified so students will line up against three of the four walls of each classroom, keeping 6 feet apart.

The school can accommodate the full number of staff at one time. AECI created an additional teacher's lounge space so teachers can maintain social distancing requirements while on their prep periods.

In the main office and other offices, a protective shield was installed to create a barrier between staff, students and visitors.

Nutrition and Lunch

Lunch will be served in the school cafeteria. During blended learning, student schedules will be designed so that students will remain at least 6 feet apart from each other during all lunch periods.

AECI's cafeteria has 22 tables. By sitting 1 student at each end of the table, each lunch period can accommodate 44 students while maintaining 6 feet of distancing. Students traveling to the cafeteria will be dismissed from class early so they can travel without other students in the hallways. In the cafeteria, students will be called up to receive lunch three tables at a time and will stand on the floor markers that designate 6 feet of distancing. AECI will expand the number of lunch periods to 5 to accommodate our social distancing plan.

Hand sanitizer will be placed in front of each student table before each lunch period. Students will use the hand sanitizer before receiving lunch and before returning to their classrooms. Tables will be sanitized between lunch periods.

During blended and remote learning, extra lunches for pickup will be provided for students that are not participating in in-person learning.

The cafeteria staff are employed by the Archdiocese of New York. They will receive training from them and follow guidelines outlined by the Department of Health and their employer.

Entrance to the Building

All students, staff, and visitors must always wear a mask that covers the mouth and nose. All school community members and guests that arrive at the building without a mask will be provided with one. Students will enter the building through the cafeteria. Upon entry, students



will swipe in and will be immediately fever scanned. Students that have a fever will be sent to the isolation room adjacent to the entryway and retested again after 15 minutes. Students who still present with a fever will have parents notified to come and pick up their child. Students will have to be symptom free before returning to the school building. Students that arrive after 2nd period will enter through the main entrance and will be fever scanned as well. Protocols for students that present with a fever will be followed as above.

All staff will answer a daily questionnaire on Google Forms before arrival each day that confirms they do not have symptoms of being sick, they have not knowingly come in contact with someone who has Covid-19, and that they have not recently traveled to high-rate infection areas. This form will also ask staff if they require additional PPE.

Upon arrival each morning, all staff will be fever scanned. Staff that present with a fever will be sent to the Staff Isolation Room. Staff who still present with a fever after 15 minutes will be sent home. Before returning, a doctor's note must be provided clearing them for return. They will then be subjected to the entry procedures outlined above.

Visitors who arrive to the building will also be fever scanned and will be given a questionnaire that confirms they do not have symptoms of being sick, they have not knowingly come in contact with someone who has Covid-19, and that they have not recently traveled to high-rate infection areas. Visitors who answer yes to any of these questions will not be allowed in the building. Visitors who present with a fever will have to return in 15 minutes to be scanned again. Visitors who still present with a fever will not be allowed in the building.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures

Personal hand sanitizer and wipes will be provided on each desk. After each class, students will use the provided hand sanitizer and wipes to wipe down their desk area before continuing to the next class. Teachers will ensure masks are secure for each student before they leave the classroom. Security guards will wipe down all doorknobs and handrails at the start of each class. Security guards will monitor students in the hallway to ensure they are practicing social distancing measures and masks are securely in place.

There is growing evidence that the coronavirus can be transmitted not just directly from person to person but can be transmitted through the air. During the upcoming school year, each classroom and office will be outfitted with air purifiers with HEPA filtration that will run throughout the school day. The number of purifiers in each room will be proportionate to the size of each room to ensure that each room has necessary coverage.

AECI contracts with **ABC Janitorial Cleaning**, a professional sanitizing and disinfecting company. Following CDC guidelines, at the end of the school day, high touch point areas will be cleaned by ABC using Electro Disinfection Sprayers. These high touch points include:

- Desks
- Counter tops
- Doorknobs
- Computer Keyboards
- Hands on learning items
- Faucets
- Banisters and handrails
- Cafeteria tables
- Restroom Surfaces

UVC light has been used in medical facilities for decades to disinfect surfaces from germs and bacteria. Recently the NYC MTA has been using this technology on its trains and buses.

AECI will deploy this technology this year to combat the virus. Daily, multiple mobile UV-C light devices will be used in each room for a period of about 15 minutes. While disinfecting is underway, the door to each classroom will be locked and caution signs will be present.

Transportation

There are 10 students who receive door-to-door transportation services. AECI will communicate with the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) to ensure that bussing will be provided for students on the days they are attending live classes. The Department of Education



is responsible for ensuring that all state and local guidelines are followed by the bus companies. All other eligible students will receive a metro-card and are subject to the guidelines in place for public transportation.

Technology and Connectivity

AECI has purchased new laptops for all teachers and students for use during in-person, blended, and remote instruction that will be distributed during the first week of the year. Students and staff that lack internet access at home will also be given a hotspot to be used to complete assignments from home. During in-person and blended learning, students will bring their laptops to and from school each day with chargers provided in each classroom so students can charge their device if the need arises. This provides students with access to the necessary technology and eliminates sharing of equipment.

Live distance learning lessons will be conducted through Zoom. All assignments during remote, blended, and in-person instruction will be submitted through Google Classroom. This provides students with consistency and allows for easy transition to different learning environments.

Teaching and Learning

The school learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year aligns with the NYS Learning Standards by providing students with rigorous lessons for in person learning, distance learning and a blended learning model. During all forms of learning, teachers will provide lesson plans daily that address differentiation, the needs of special populations (Special Education Students, English Language Learners), social-emotional learning, and learning inequities.

Formative and diagnostic assessments will be given by teachers using online tools such as Renaissance and Castle Learning to identify students with academic gaps.

During pre-service, scheduled from August 26th to September 4th, teachers will complete a self-assessment on their use of technology for distance and blended learning and engaging students in different models of lesson delivery. All teachers will receive instructions on how to

use Zoom, Google Classroom and other platforms to increase engagement and rigor in their lessons. Teachers will work with grade teams and content teams to prepare lesson plans for peer feedback. Teachers will collaborate to identify and share strategies for all models of teaching and learning.

Throughout the year, teachers will provide lesson plans to supervisors for feedback. Supervisors will review lesson plans and make any necessary recommendations. For both in school and online instruction, administrators will perform formal and informal evaluations, making recommendations as necessary. Evaluations will be recorded in TeachBoost and shared with the teacher to improve methods of in person and remote instruction.

Instruction will continue to follow state standards and guidelines. Our instructional goals this year will be focused on differentiation and literacy across content areas. Teachers will be given feedback specifically on these two school targets and on other areas in addition to providing a quality distancing learning lesson. Professional development will be provided to teachers throughout the year remotely or in person to improve practices.

A distance learning lesson plan template will be supplied to teachers to address issues such as differentiation, vocabulary, online norms and routines, checks for understanding, management needs, and assessment.

The school intends to begin the school year with a remote learning plan, with the school transitioning to a blended learning model starting October 5. Students will attend an in-person orientation learning session during the week of September 8th-11th with all health and safety protocols in place and no more than 50 students in the school building at one time. These orientation sessions will be in small groups with the purpose of training students in depth on how to engage in our remote learning platform. During remote learning students will be engaged with teachers by attending live synchronous sessions of their assigned classes on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. On Wednesday, students will be assigned to virtual X Period, which allows in-need students to work with teachers in small groups to target areas of need. These students will be assigned to this opportunity based on gradebook data. Further X Periods will be assigned on Saturdays.



When the school transitions to a blended learning model, students will engage in in-person and remote learning according to the following schedule:

Group A consists of SPED, ELL, and additional selected students. Group B consists of the remaining students.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Classroom Instruction	Remote Learning	Classroom Instruction	Remote Learning	Classroom Instruction
Group B	Remote Learning	Classroom Instruction	Remote Learning	Classroom Instruction	Remote Learning

During blended learning, synchronous learning will be provided for Group A students on Tuesday and Thursdays by Student Support teachers.

Extracurricular activities

Students will be offered the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities in person and remotely.

Extracurricular activities will take place at the end of the school day and follow all health and safety procedures as outlined above. Students will wear masks and socially distance at 6ft apart. There will be no more than 12 students in a room at any time. Remote activities will also take place at the end of the school day and facilitators and students will take attendance following student club guidelines. All clubs will submit an application that will be reviewed and approved by AP Dooley.

Staffing and Human Resources

AECI follows NYS charter school uncertified teacher exemptions. AECI has hired two additional on-staff certified teachers over its typical complement to provide additional student support and to cover in person or remote classes, should the need arise. During remote and in-person instruction, the Assistant Principals, Dean, Director of School Culture, and Director of

Mathematics will be available to substitute for classes. In addition, for in-person instruction, the school will continue to contract with its agency that provides substitutes for the school. AECI will employ a 7-day pre-service training program to prepare its staff for all forms for remote and blended learning programs.

Physical Education

During blended learning, students will receive in-person physical education each day they are in the school building. As done in past years, AECI can, weather permitting, make use of the nearby park for its physical education classes.

All physical education lessons during in-person classes will employ 6 feet of social distancing between all students and all students will continue to wear masks. Lessons will focus on fitness stations and paired activities such as badminton to ensure lessons continue. Students that cannot wear masks due to physical limitations will receive alternate activities.

Remote Physical Education classes will be part of all student schedules during blended and remote learning. Fitness station type activities will be teacher led during this time as well.

Serving Special Populations

Special populations will be scheduled for in-school instruction on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The purpose of this is to provide additional instruction to support students.

Special Education

Integrated Co-teaching Classes (ICT classes) will have two teachers in the classroom (both virtually and in the school building). Special Education Student Support Services (SETSS) will be scheduled on days when students are in attendance. On Tuesday and Thursday student support teachers will interface with special populations in live online classes for remote learning. Each teacher will receive a caseload of students to work with remotely. Teachers will communicate with the general education teachers, counselors and parents to monitor student



progress. Students receiving mandated counseling will be scheduled on days of attendance. The social worker and school counselors will also be available for remote sessions to address social-emotional needs of students.

English Language Learners

AECI will provide our English Language Learners with the support necessary for the acquisition of language skills, both in school and in a remote learning environment. Our ESL teachers will be in the classrooms when permitted to highlight content and process so that the product is standards based aligned and in line with higher student outcomes. When students are working remotely, our ESL teacher will work with small groups of students to assist with work and support language skills.

Social-Emotional Well Being Support

The implications of this health crisis may have a deep impact on students and their families. Social and emotional learning (“SEL”) will be an important component of engaging students and creating a foundation for academic learning. Pre-service training for all staff this summer will provide professional development to learn about SEL competencies, and how to create an environment that promotes the social and emotional development of all students. During our new student orientation as well as during the first few weeks of school, students’ academic and SEL needs will be assessed. Findings will be evaluated by a SEL team consisting of our social worker, school counselors, principal, assistant principals and teachers, and either internal or external mental health resources for the school community may be recommended. During remote learning, all students will have a 15-minute session to meet in small groups with their assigned mentor. Mentors will be chosen from a pool of teachers, counselors, and administrators. Mentors will gauge students’ academic and mental health wellbeing and refer as necessary to counselors.

During in person and blended learning, students will have daily advisory classes in order to ensure social-emotional needs are met.

Socio-emotional learning will be part of each class so students will be supported throughout their day. The school counselors will interface regularly with students and families. The parent coordinator will reach out to families to assess needs. Referrals will be made if a student is

deemed to require additional services. In addition, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings will be held remotely to provide support and information to families.

During the start of the year in-person orientation students will meet and start to build relationships with their teachers. Immediately following the orientation, students will begin full distance learning, following a schedule that has been provided to them during orientation. Included in the student's schedule will be any special needs, mandated counseling and support services for our ELL and Special Education population.

Any student who is living in a shelter, has been displaced from their home or needs to remain at home for health reasons will be provided with full distance instruction through Google Classroom. They will submit work and get feedback from their teachers on Google Classroom and using their school email. These students will also have daily check ins with their counselors for support. These students also will have access to our funds that provide uniforms and school supplies free of charge. Lunch will be available in the building during remote learning.

School counselors have developed a SEL plan to continue to provide services to students when they are participating in full distance learning and blended learning. Counselors will work with the Dean's office, the Director of School Culture and the administration to address student's needs in and out of the school building. Counselors will contact parents and support students with academic and social emotional needs.

Families will receive information about resources and referrals for mental health, behavioral and emotional support services and programs through our parent coordinator, school counselors and social workers. We will have physical resources in the building and post links to resources on our school website and social media platforms.

Staff will be attending professional development during pre-service the week of August 26th. Staff will receive information on managing students mental and physical health needs, providing resources and contacts for referrals. Each student will have a team of teachers, a grade level counselor, social worker, and administrators who will be provided with training to assist students with mental health needs.

Our SEL team is composed of grade level counselors, social worker, deans, teachers and assistant principals. The team will meet weekly to address high needs students and provide resources for families.



Attendance & Absenteeism

Students participating in in-person instruction will have daily and class attendance taken in accordance with existing AECI policies. Daily attendance is taken using student swipes upon building entry. Class attendance is taken 10 minutes after the start of each period on our SIS.

Students participating in remote learning will have daily attendance taken at their daily check-in with their mentor. Teachers will take attendance on the school's SIS once students have logged into Zoom for their daily live-in person lesson.

Each day, the Attendance Coordinator will email the official absent list to staff. Teachers will report to the Attendance Coordinator students who logged in for daily attendance but did appear in their individual classes. The Attendance Coordinator will then adjust the official attendance. Teachers will contact parents of students that did not attend specific classes. Inability to contact the parent or other concerns will be referred to the grade level school counselor for further follow-up.

The Attendance Coordinator will meet with the Principal and grade level counselors bi-weekly to discuss trends in attendance and develop action plans for specific students that demonstrate low attendance.

Students that are chronically absent will require a mandatory parental meeting. Parent In the event of chronic absences or students who have not engaged in remote or in person learning, outreach will be made by school counselors and a remote online Google Meet session will be scheduled with parent/guardian to discuss their child's attendance and formulate an action plan. In some extreme cases, a home visit will be performed by the attendance coordinator and an administrator to increase both parent awareness of absences and to inform parents who may not be aware of student lack of engagement. PPE and distance protocols will be followed during all home visits.

Attendance will be provided to the state using existing mechanisms.

Next Steps:

- We will wait for guidance on school building openings from the Federal Government and Governor Cuomo (expected by August 7th, 2020)
- Our plan is fluid and will be updated weekly to incorporate guidance from the State Education Department, feedback from our community and Covid-19 related data
- We will utilize October remote learning experiences to guide our Hybrid learning model and eventually our full in-person learning experience for students
- We will be in consistent communication with our Board of Directors to help guide our decisions on how to best support our students, families and community
- We will send consistent communication to our students, families and community about our plans and progress
- **Please send any questions, concerns or feedback to AECI 1 Principal Colin Healy at chealy@aecicharterhs.org.**