



**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI SCHOOL and
CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**2022-2023
Academic Year Safe Learning Plan
Pending CMES Board Approval**

1611 Ames Avenue East
St. Paul, MN 55106
651.774.5000

www.cornerstone-elementary.org

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INTRODUCTION

At Cornerstone Montessori School (CMS) and Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School (CMES), we are committed to supporting your family and our community in an environment that is developmentally appropriate and emphasizes health and well-being. Although the Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact our daily lives, our utmost priority is still an emphasis on community, learning, and caring for your children safely.

The following Safe Learning Plan outlines the changes that have been made to accommodate in-person learning. Should we need to change to a distance-learning model, this plan will be updated accordingly.

We recognize the importance of families being able to acknowledge their own comfort level with risk, and hope to provide information that will assist all in making the best decision for their children and families. We will continue to update this document as needed, or as mandates, policy, and procedure require.

COMMUNICATION FOR FAMILIES

A CMS/CMES administrator will be on-site during the hours of 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. to respond to immediate needs by phone, emails, or a socially distant in-person meeting.

Guides and support staff will primarily communicate through email.

Meetings with Guides or administration will take place primarily over Zoom, should they be requested by either party.

Communications to the whole community are made weekly at minimum, through the school's NotifyMe system. Please make sure you are signed up for this service at www.cornerstone-elementary.org/?PageName=NotifyMe. The guides, specialists, and administration are always available to talk with individual families about concerns and progress.

Administration

Note: All CMS/CMES Administration can be reached at 651.774.5000

Alyssa Schwartz <i>Head of School</i>	alyssaschwartz@cornerstone-elementary.org
Chris Bewell <i>Director of CMES Business Operations</i>	chrisbewell@cornerstone-elementary.org
Catherine Kennedy <i>Early Childhood Program Manager</i>	catherine@mtcm.org
Lindsay Ruble	lindsayruble@cornerstone-elementary.org

<i>Elementary Program Manager</i>	
Stephanie Diaz <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	reception@mtcm.org

Toddler Community (ages 16 months - 3 years)

Lourdes Harris <i>Lead Guide A.M.</i>	lourdes@mtcm.org
Laurie Pittman <i>Lead Guide P.M.</i>	laurie@mtcm.org

Children's House 1 and 2 (ages 3 years - Kindergarten)

Anna Davis <i>CH1 Lead Guide</i>	annadavis@cornerstone-elementary.org
Molly McDermott <i>CH2 Lead Guide</i>	mollym@mtcm.org

Lower Elementary (grades 1 - 3)

Sara Wade <i>Lead Guide - Garden Environment</i>	sarawade@cornerstone-elementary.org
Hayley Bahnemann <i>Lead Guide - Pond Environment</i>	hayleybahnemann@cornerstone-elementary.org

Upper Elementary (grades 4 - 6)

Jess Goff <i>Lead Guide - Marsh Environment</i>	jessgoff@cornerstone-elementary.org
Mara Johnson <i>Lead Guide - Forest Environment</i>	marajohnson@cornerstone-elementary.org

Learning Specialists

Cynthia Crooks <i>ELL Teacher</i>	cynthiacrooks@cornerstone-elementary.org
Emma Cornwell <i>Special Education Teacher</i>	emmacornwell@cornerstone-elementary.org
Megan Riemer <i>Literacy Specialist</i>	meganriemer@cornerstone-elementary.org

Suzi Splinter <i>Special Education Teacher</i>	suzisplinter@cornerstone-elementary.org
Devon Green <i>School Social Worker</i>	devongreen@cornerstone-elementary.org
Annie Lien <i>Math Specialist</i>	annielien@cornerstone-elementary.org

CORNERSTONE POLICIES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PROGRAM HOURS

Toddler Community, Children's House 1, and Children's House 2:

Hours

Half Day 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Full Day 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Before Care* 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.

After Care* 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

*Please notify administration if you intend to use Before or After Care.

Garden, Pond, Marsh, and Forest:

Hours

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Before Care 7:30. – 8:45 a.m. (attendance by sign up only)

MASKING

Staff, children, and visitors to the 1611 Ames Avenue facility are required to wear medical masks or nonmedical cloth masks inside at all times, unless the child is in the Toddler Community, until August 1, 2022. Cornerstone will have extra masks available if needed. Children will be taught proper mask usage and parents are encouraged to model good mask etiquette with their children. If a child cannot or will not wear a properly-fitted mask, they may be sent home.

- A mask must cover the nose and mouth completely and fit snugly against your face without gaps.
- The mask should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear.
- Well fitted non-medical grade masks provide some protection.
- Well fitted medical grade masks provide the most protection.

Note: Medical grade masks and non-medical grade masks that are **not** well fitted will not provide sufficient protection. It is strongly recommended that all individuals wear N95 or KN95 masks, doubled cloth masks, or a cloth mask and surgical mask. The CDC's guide to masks can be found [here](#).

All adults and children will wear masks unless facial expressions are necessary (as with some language presentations) or a medical reason documented by a doctor, in which case face shields may be used. A child may not wear a mask if there is an underlying health condition and the school has received notification of the condition from a doctor. Face shields are not a replacement for masks and will be used sparingly, unless a mask is also worn.

As of August 1, 2022, masks will be optional indoors at Cornerstone. Masks are an effective way to prevent transmission of Covid-19 and anyone who chooses to wear one will be able to do so.

In addition, staff and children are asked to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Staff, children, and visitors are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all.

HAND WASHING/SANITIZING

Anyone entering the 1611 Ames Avenue facility is required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in each of the environments, bathrooms, workrooms, entrances, and exits.

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented in workplaces and teaching environments at all times. Staff, children, and visitors are instructed to wash their hands with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift/day, before and after any mealtimes, and after using the restroom. Proper handwashing procedures, including the application of soap and washing of wrists and individual fingers with hot water, are posted in bathrooms and near all hand washing sinks.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

To promote social distancing, only children may enter the 1611 Ames Facility during any time of arrival or dismissal. If a parent/guardian/caregiver needs to see their child during the day, they should call the front desk at 651.774.5000 and the child will be brought out. Staff and families will maintain recommended distance during arrival and dismissal.

Parents/guardians/caregivers who have not enrolled their child(ren) in before-care are encouraged to drop off their children at 8:45 a.m. Please pull your vehicle up to the front curb, where children can safely exit the car. An administrator will greet each child and guide them to their classroom where they will be asked to wash their hands and prepare for the day. **If a late arrival is necessary, please notify the administration and call upon arrival.**

Parents/guardians/caregivers may pick up their children at 4:00 p.m. If you need to pick up your child at another time during the day, please speak with school administration to coordinate the appropriate timing. Please use the car line as detailed in the *Parent Policies Handbook*. Parents/guardians/caregivers will wait in or next to their vehicle and their child will be brought out to them.

Should you arrive at the school any time before or during arrival/drop-off and administration is not present, please ring the bell and someone will be with you momentarily.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation will be provided for K-6th grade children living in St. Paul upon request. Parents/guardians/caretakers and children must read the Cornerstone Bus Policy, found on pages 8-9 of the *Parent Policies Handbook*. COVID-19 policy and procedure set forth by Cornerstone applies to all busing. **Children must wear masks in accordance with school policy, will have assigned seats based on the order in which they are picked up/dropped off, and must remain in those seats for the duration of the bus ride.**

Parents/guardians/caregivers are expected to monitor their child's health prior to allowing them to board the bus. Children will not be permitted to ride the bus home if they are found to have a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms while at school.

ENVIRONMENTS

Children may enter the Elementary environments at 8:45 a.m. and the Early Childhood environments at 8:30 a.m. With limited space in the environment, children may be pulled out of class to meet with their Special Education Teachers and Specialists. Cornerstone's COVID-19 cleaning policies and procedures extend to all areas outside of the environments for this reason.

Lead Guides may assign seats, lockers, and/or cubby space to encourage social distancing.

When weather permits, all environments will eat their lunch outside. Lunch times during inclement weather are arranged such that half of the class eats in the classroom and the other half utilizes communal space in the school building.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Provided they are in attendance, all children will be offered breakfast, lunch, and a snack during their school day. We are not able to provide meals to children who are quarantining or doing home-based schooling.

School meals will be ordered on a monthly basis. To order meals for your children please contact Chris Bewell, chrisbewell@cornerstone-elementary.org, with your request.

Children's House and Toddler Communities

Breakfast - Breakfast will be offered to children as they arrive and conclude by 9:15 a.m. An adult will serve items, most of which will be single serving items.

Lunch - Meals will continue to be provided through Cornerstone's catering service. Families that would like to provide a lunchbox are invited to do so. Children bringing lunch will store their meals in their lockers.

Snack - Snacks in single serving portions will be distributed to children by an adult.

Lower and Upper Elementary Communities

Breakfast - Breakfast is available for CMES children upon arrival (between

8:45-9:15 am). It will be served in the outside areas between Garden and Pond classrooms whenever possible or in the multi-purpose room when weather requires.

Lunch - Meals will continue to be provided through Cornerstone's catering service. Families that would like to provide a lunchbox are invited to do so. Children bringing lunch will store their meals in their lockers.

Snack - Snacks in single serving portions will be distributed to children by an adult.

Meals will be individually plated, in reusable containers, prior to service. Snacks will be available in individual (and where able, individually packaged) options. All non-disposable meal utensils and dishes will be sanitized in Cornerstone's ECOLAB machines, with procedures and chemicals that have been tested and verified by ECOLAB and the MN Department of Health. Staff will support eating, conversation, and cleanliness during all meals or snack.

Should there be a need to transition to a distance learning model, Cornerstone schools will make every attempt to provide meals for our families which will require advanced ordering and prompt pickup.

COVID TESTING, QUARANTINE, AND COMMUNICATION

CMS and CMES staff are required to be vaccinated. CMES staff may choose to submit proof of a negative COVID test weekly, in lieu of vaccination.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommends that all children be tested for COVID-19 every two weeks. Staff, including those who are vaccinated, are encouraged to be tested for COVID-19 every two weeks. **Testing resources are available via the MDH COVID-19 testing link at <https://mn.gov/COVID19/get-tested/index.jsp> and can be acquired from Cornerstone by request.**

Cornerstone's Safe Learning Plan follows the guidelines developed by the State of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and MDH guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders.

All members of the Cornerstone community are expected to follow state guidelines for COVID-19, and are asked to consider how the entire community could be affected if they choose to travel, participate in large social gatherings, or otherwise increase exposure to COVID-19. Cornerstone asks that everyone consider isolating after high-exposure activities.

Staff, families, and children are expected to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and follow the decision tree published by [the Minnesota Department of Health](#). Families and staff will be notified when/if the MDH decision tree is updated. In the event of a COVID exposure or positive test:

- **Families must notify the school within 24 hours of a COVID positive test result.** Upon confirmation of a positive COVID-19 test or direct exposure, the school will call parents/guardians/caretakers immediately to begin contact tracing and case investigation. Expectations for quarantine, testing, or other requirements will be communicated at that time.
- Through contact tracing and case investigation, **individuals who are considered close contacts will be notified immediately.**
- Families will be notified when a case is identified within their child's environment.

When a child is required to stay home for more than one week, due to exposure or a positive test, Cornerstone will provide at-home learning experiences according to the following three scenarios. Children who attend scheduled zoom meetings or complete work packets will be marked as present; children who do not complete work but have notified the school of a necessary quarantine will be marked as excused. Guides will prepare work to be picked up the day following notification to the school of an absence.

5-10 Day Quarantine Learning Plan (when child is deemed well enough to learn: asymptomatic to mild symptoms)

- Lead Guides will provide specially prepared take-home learning packets developed to meet each child's learning needs.
- Administration will support by providing technology and equipment to children who need it for online learning.
- Lead Guides may utilize Schoology, Seesaw, or a similar online learning platform as a way to provide at-home learning opportunities.
- Special Education and ELL teachers will organize zoom meetings to provide on-going instruction to children receiving those services.
- Specialists may organize zoom meetings to provide on-going services to qualifying children.
- Upon the child's return to school, we will evaluate the child's progress and, if necessary, will provide the child with a contingency learning plan (at their teachers' discretion) to help with recovery of lost time. Lead Guides will be in communication with the child and family about purposeful work being sent home so that continued learning may still occur and lesson plans may be created.

10-14 Day Quarantine Learning Plan (when child is deemed not well enough to learn: severe symptoms or requiring hospitalization)

- Absence is considered excused and will be treated as a sick leave.
- The child will not be required to complete quarantine learning packets.
- Upon the child's return, Lead Guides will provide the child with a contingency learning plan (at their teachers' discretion) to help with the recovery of lost time in school.

Full Transition to Distance Learning (if an entire classroom is quarantined for more than one week)

- Lead Guides will provide specially prepared take-home learning packets developed to meet each child’s learning needs.
- Administration will support by providing technology equipment to children who need it for online learning.
- Lead Guides will utilize Schoology, Seesaw, or a similar online learning platform as a way to provide at-home learning opportunities. In addition, Lead Guides will prepare online presentations and schedule regular zoom meetings to provide instruction and communication with families.
- Special Education Teachers will organize zoom meetings to provide on-going services to children with an IEP
- Specialists and ELL Teachers will organize zoom meetings to provide on-going services to children.

Quarantine and Testing Guidelines

Recommendations from the CDC and MDH change frequently; this Safe Learning Plan may not be updated with each change. Families and staff will be notified by email and website when there are changes and the Safe Learning Plan will be updated as is appropriate.

As of January 12, 2022, the following quarantine/testing requirements are in place:

- When exposed to a COVID-positive individual, a 14-day quarantine is recommended for all unvaccinated contacts. **Cornerstone reserves the right to require a full quarantine if the situation warrants (such as when multiple household members are positive).**

	Fully Vaccinated Adults	Fully Vaccinated Children	Unvaccinated Adults and Children
No Symptoms + Positive Test	Isolate for 5 days and wear a mask at all times for additional 5 days	Isolate for 10 days	Isolate for 10 days and test prior to return
Symptoms + Positive Test	Isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for 24 hours	Isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for 24 hours	Isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for 24 hours
Masked Exposure at School	Wear a mask and test after day 5	Wear a mask and test after day 5	Wear a mask and test after days 5 and 7*
Unmasked Exposure at School	Wear a mask and test after day 5	Wear a mask and test after day 5	Quarantine for 5 days and test after day 5
Exposure at Home	Wear a mask and test after day 5	Quarantine for 5 days following last	Quarantine for 10 days following last

		contact with positive individual**	contact with positive individual**
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- *The first test may be either a molecular test or an antigen test. The second test must be molecular.
- **When a household contact tests positive for COVID, the quarantine period begins after the positive person separates from others in the household.
 - If separation is not possible, **quarantine begins after isolation ends** (i.e., 5-10 days of isolation for the positive individual and 5-10 days of quarantine for the exposed individual).
- In any situation following an exposure, should symptoms appear, the child must isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

In all the above scenarios:

- The day of exposure/positive test/symptoms is considered day 0.
- “Fully vaccinated” is defined as having received a complete primary series and booster shot, if/when eligible.
- All children or staff must be able to wear a well-fitted mask in order to have a shortened isolation or quarantine period.
- A negative test is required prior to returning to school children completing a quarantine due to household contact exposure. An antigen test is acceptable.

Cornerstone administration will work with each family to determine the appropriate quarantine and testing regimen for the situation.

DISINFECTION PROCEDURES

We take cleaning and opportunities to strengthen our cleaning procedures very seriously at Cornerstone. In partnership with ECOLAB Inc., the 1611 Ames Avenue facility in its entirety utilizes two products for disinfection and sanitization:

1. Peroxide Multi Surface Cleaner and Disinfectant

- Broad Spectrum Disinfectant that disinfects and deodorizes by killing common germs; Antibacterial, Germicidal, and Fungicidal.
- Peroxide will not harm you if ingested, however, it is recommended that any surface sprayed with Peroxide that may come into contact with a child’s mouth or with food is then rinsed with water and sprayed with the SMARTPOWER Sink and Surface Cleaner Sanitizer.

2. SMARTPOWER Sink and Surface Cleaner Sanitizer

- A Food Contact Cleaner Sanitizer that reduces risk of foodborne illnesses by keeping food contact surfaces cleaned and sanitized with a 2-in1, no-rinse cleaner and sanitizer.
- EPA Registered food contact sanitizer with 15-second contact time for SARS - Related Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)

All staff, including contracted cleaning services, are trained in the effective and safe use and storing of these products. Light switches, doorknobs, and other high-touch furnishings and areas will be disinfected before and after school and throughout the day as needed, using the peroxide solution. Tables and other areas that may come in contact with food will be disinfected before and after each meal and additionally as needed throughout the day, using the peroxide-water-Sink and Surface Cleaner Sanitizer. All adults will wear masks and gloves during cleaning and sanitizing, including dishwashing, and food distribution.

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting outside of the teaching environments have also been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and areas in respective work environments, including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms, and drop-off and pick-up locations, as well as high-touch areas, including phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, copy machines, and as needed, Montessori materials.

VENTILATION PROTOCOL

Operation of the 1611 Ames Avenue facility includes necessary sanitation, assessment, and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. The maximum amount of fresh air is being brought into the workplace, air recirculation is being limited, and ventilation systems are being properly used and maintained. Steps are also being taken to minimize air flow blowing across people.

In accordance with state-mandated building protocol and safety and occupancy standards, we will continue to complete all required inspections and approvals for the facility on a regular basis. Licensing for the facility requires this. The ventilation, heating and cooling systems, and plumbing were inspected at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, and sanitation and safety protocol were reviewed. Inspections and policy reviews have continued as the change in temperature/weather has demanded. During times of higher occupancy, when able, doors – including patio, classroom, bathroom, and others – can be propped open within the facility to increase air circulation.

Because Cornerstone is a school and not a hospital, medical center, or pharmaceutical production plant that *requires* air-quality assessment and control risks to maintain ventilation equipment to serve airborne containment control facilities and document their maintenance activities, the HVAC system installed in the 1611 Ames Avenue facility is not now, or has ever been equipped to host HEPA Filters. For our current HVAC system, we have opted to change the filters every month, as opposed to quarterly, which was required pre-COVID-19.

Cornerstone will utilize a combination of individual Medify MA Air Purifiers for every 500 square feet of bathroom space and Heston Air Purifiers for every 1500 remaining square feet of space with H13 True HEPA filters. In addition to this, we work with staff to purchase and change the filters prior to the filter replacement indicator prompting.

HEALTH POLICIES

As previously noted, staff and families of enrolled children have been informed of and

encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. **Staff, students, and children are expected to follow the guidelines included in this Safe Learning Plan.** The following policies and procedures are being implemented at Cornerstone to assess an individual's health status prior to entering the work or school, and for staff and families of enrolled children to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

Decisions to send children home ultimately rest with the Cornerstone administration.

Please note the following policies and procedures:

- If a fever is identified, it will be verified with a second thermometer. Children or staff with a temperature above 100.4 degrees will be immediately sent home and must remain home until 24 hours after the fever breaks.
- Tylenol and medication to reduce fever may not be used to determine the length of time a child is well.
- Children will be isolated and sent home immediately if they demonstrate fever, new cough, shortness of breath, or loss of taste or smell. Children experiencing dry cough, shortness of breath, or two simultaneous symptoms (for example, fever and diarrhea) will be sent home following the CDC COVID decision tree.
- A single symptom, other than cough or shortness of breath, requires the child to be home for 24 hours after the symptom subsides.
- If an ill child has an unvaccinated sibling on-site, the sibling will also be sent home and must remain home until the decision tree path is determined. Vaccinated siblings may continue to attend.
- If Cornerstone administration requests a child be picked up due to illness, parents are expected to arrive within 30 minutes.

The most up-to-date COVID-19 symptom list can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

If a child or staff member presents symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they are strongly encouraged to seek testing. Testing locations can be found at: <https://mn.gov/COVID19/get-tested/index.jsp>

It is absolutely critical that families notify Cornerstone immediately if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19. If a child or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, contact tracing and case investigation will determine which individuals need to quarantine. Administration will inform staff and parents of MDH guidance and if closures are required.

If your child has an underlying health condition, please notify administration.

It is important to note that this guidance does not mean school is a fully safe place. We will err on the side of caution in any event of illness or exposure.

GUESTS/VISITORS

It has always been Cornerstone's goal to work closely with families and community partners, but due to COVID-19, we are not allowing visitors and volunteers unless necessary.

- **Licensed Contractors**, if/when able, will be scheduled outside of school hours to complete facility maintenance. If scheduling only allows for school hours, all licensed contractors will be required to follow the school's COVID-19 protocols.
- **Parents or family members** who would like a tour or plan on attending Parent Teacher Conferences, Parent Partnership Events, Cornerstone Café, and other school events are allowed only if scheduled ahead of time. These activities will be limited to space capacity to ensure enough social distancing.
- **Montessori trainees or community partners** needing to observe or complete student teaching are scheduled ahead of time. Individuals must be fully vaccinated and will be required to show proof of negative COVID test results 3 days prior to the date scheduled to be in the environment.

All approved visitors/guests are required to follow our school's COVID-19 protocols on masking, social distancing, and sanitizing as stated in the Safe Learning Plan.