

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for **Mexico Academy and Central Schools**



First Draft January 2021

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

This plan has been developed with the input of Mexico Academy and Central School's District Safety committee, as required by the amended New York State Labor Law. Members of the committee with input on the plan include the following required groups; nursing staff, business office administration, representatives of human resources, leaders of the CSEA union within the district, facilities administration, a representative of MACSFA (teacher's union), clerical staff, school board member, and the superintendent of Mexico Academy and Central Schools.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the rights and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

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As the authorized official of the Mexico Academy and Central School District, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.

Signed on this day:

By: Dr. Donna Runner

Signature: _____

Title: Superintendent of Mexico Academy and
Central School District

Record of Changes

Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by
January 7 th 2021	Planning, discussion, and review of structure of document	Mexico Academy and Central School District Administration
January 20 th 2021	Planning, discussion, and formation of subcommittee to review and finalize plan	Dr. Donna Runner in coordination with the District Safety Committee
January 27 th , 2021	Committee met to review draft and suggest revisions	Charlene Walthert Safety Officer and District Safety Sub Committee
February 1 st , 2021	Draft revisions submitted and Final Draft presented.	Charlene Walthert Safety Officer and District Safety Sub Committee with approval by Superintendent.
February 3 rd , 2021	Draft Accepted and published for public comment.	Charlene Walthert Safety Officer and District Safety Sub Committee with approval by Superintendent.
March 30 th , 2021	Final copy ready to post on District Website.	Superintendent and Public Relations

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Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to Mexico Academy and Central School District. This plan is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Situation Overview

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic for the novel coronavirus which causes the COVID-19 severe acute respiratory syndrome. This plan has been developed in accordance with amended laws to support continued resilience for a continuation of the spread of this disease or for other infectious diseases which may emerge and cause a declaration of a public health emergency.

The health and safety of our employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining our mission essential operations. We encourage all employees and contractors to use [CDC Guidance for Keeping Workplaces, Schools, Homes, and Commercial Establishments Safe](#). The fundamentals of reducing the spread of infection include:

- When applicable, wearing recommended PPE or other safety-related clothing such as a cloth face covering or mask.
- Using hand sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water frequently, including:
 - After using the restroom
 - After returning from a public outing
 - After touching/disposing of garbage
 - After using public computers, touching public tables, and countertops, etc.
- Practice social distancing when possible
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately and go home
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough, or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue, the latter of which should be disposed of immediately
- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle, and end of each shift
- Other guidance which may be published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County health officials.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance.
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations.
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety.
- The public and our constituency expects us to maintain a level of mission essential operations.
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them.
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement.
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services.
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor.
- Per S8617B/A10832, ‘essential employee’ is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job.
- Per S8617B/A10832, ‘non-essential employee’ is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job.

Concept of Operations

The Superintendent of Mexico Academy and Central Schools, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the Superintendent of the district.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of Mexico Academy and Central Schools shall be notified by phone and/or email with details provided as possible and necessary. Additional information and updates will be provided on a regular basis. Staff, parents, guardians, and/students will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email, automated phone call, and social media as pertinent. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by email, as necessary. The Superintendent, with assistance of other administration and technical support will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of Mexico Academy and Central Schools, their designee, or their successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor’s office, directing the implementation of changes, as necessary.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Mexico Academy and Central Schools, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications, as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, Mexico Academy and Central School District is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, and our constituency
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations
5. Uphold the core values of Mexico Academy and Central Schools

The Mexico Academy and Central School District has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

Priority 1 identifies the most essential of functions, with priority 4 identifying functions that are essential, but least among them.

The mission essential functions for Mexico Academy and Central Schools have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Information Technology	Provides all hardware and software for the District employees and students. Maintains the network and phone system in order for the District to function.
Communication	The superintendent, with assistance from other administration and technology support, will lead on all communication to stakeholders.
Teaching and Learning	The District will furnish staff with the resources to provide all students the appropriate educational program (including professional development.
Child Nutrition	The District will provide students with the proper nutritional program whether they are learning remotely, or in-person.
Health and Safety	The District will put first the safety and health of its staff and students when planning in-person or remote learning and working. In determination of the safest number of people reporting physically, the following factors will be considered: CDC and DOH guidance, social distancing, personal protective equipment (PPE), safe transportation, hygiene practices, cleaning and disinfecting supplies, and safety and security of buildings.

Operations and Maintenance	Provides necessary duties to maintain and operate buildings and upkeep grounds in all weather conditions.
Social/Emotional Well Being	The District will prioritize social and emotional well-being for staff and students.
Business Office/Human Resources	The core office will continue the business functions of the District, and for its employees.
Transportation	The transportation department will provide any necessary transportation for the District including but not limited to the delivery of meals if and when necessary.

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Information Technology	Assistant Superintendent, Network Administrator, Lan Techs support staff	<p>The IT manager establishes all priorities for IT tasks and organizes staff.</p> <p>Support staff members provide support in setting up hardware and software, network management, and help desk support.</p> <p>At times, these employees may work remotely.</p>
Communication	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Business Executive, Administrators, Technology support	<p>Communications to stakeholders will be essential to operation of the District in a safe and informed manor. The superintendent will perform communications with support of their administrative staff, and technology staff.</p> <p>At times, these duties may be performed remotely.</p>
Teaching and Learning	Building Principals, Teachers, Clerical Support Staff	<p>The District will support teachers and teaching assistants in teaching and learning however it is safest to ensure, based on the health emergency status.</p> <p>Office support staff will report as necessary to ensure buildings are running properly.</p> <p>At times, these duties may be performed remotely.</p>
Child Nutrition	Food Service Manager, Food Service Staff, Business Executive	<p>The food service manager is vital to ensuring that all students are provided with proper nutrition during in-person, hybrid, and remote learning situations. The food service staff is necessary to cook, package, and hand out food.</p>
Health and Safety	Director of Health, PE and Athletics, Nursing Staff, Director of	<p>Supplies will need to be purchased, received, and distributed as necessary (including PPE and medical supplies) by nursing staff, Director of Facilities and Business Executive.</p>

	Facilities, Business Executive	Nursing staff ensure that immunizations and physicals are always kept up to date. They also follow up with students and staff about symptoms and questions regarding infectious disease, in person as well as when learning is remote
Operations and Maintenance	Director of Facilities, Operations and Maintenance Staff	District buildings will need to be cleaned, sanitized, and maintained in working order by operations and maintenance staff under the direction of the Director of Facilities . District grounds will need to be maintained according to regulation and weather by operations and maintenance staff and grounds staff under the direction of the Director of Facilities .
Social/Emotional Well Being	Director of Pupil Services, School Psychologists, Counselors, School Social Workers	The District will prioritize social and emotional well-being for staff and students through communication of resources and support from Director of Pupil Services, School Psychologists, Counselors, School Social Workers .
Business Office/Human Resources	Business Executive, Business Manager, HR Staff, Clerical Staff	Payroll and purchasing will need to continue to operate even under emergency circumstances. Administrative staff and clerical staff in the business and human resources offices will ensure function and continuity.
Transportation	Transportation Director, Assistant Transportation Director, Transportation Staff	The transportation staff will perform essential transportation means to District students if, and when it is safe to learn in-person whether a hybrid learning model is in place, or not. Staff will work under the direction of the transportation director . Vehicles will need to be maintained in working order by transportation staff . Transportation staff may or may not assist in the delivery of food, supplies, or learning materials for District staff and students.

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites and on public transportation, if applicable.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
 - a. Internet capable laptop

- b. Necessary peripherals
- c. Access to VPN and/or secure network drives
- d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties
- e. A solution for telephone communications
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

Remote work will be pre-approved to designated employees of Mexico Academy and Central Schools. Questions or requests for technology equipment necessary for remote work capabilities may be directed to the technology department, pending approval from a direct supervisor.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, Mexico Academy and Central Schools will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered

Operations and Maintenance	O&M staff may have a shift or hours change to reduce numbers of staff when necessary, or to accommodate special cleanings or projects.
Office Staff	The District will staff offices to ensure the continuation of operations.
Food Service Department	Food service staff will work as needed to ensure students receive a proper nutrition program, whether learning in-person or virtually.
Transportation Department	Student transportation and meal deliveries if/when necessary.

2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours

The Superintendent of Mexico Schools will have ultimate approval of departments listed above having staggered hours.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE and other supplies which may be needed can include:

- Masks, and or cloth face coverings, or respirators
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons
- Hand Sanitizer
- Disinfectants

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. The Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated that supply chains were not able to keep up with increased demand for these products early in the pandemic. As such, we are including these supplies in this section as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location
 - a. The District will review OSHA and CDC requirements in providing PPE. At the time of this plan, the following PPE would be distributed among specified essential employees.

Nurses and staff with health conditions	Face coverings, eye protection, disposable gloves, disposable gowns as necessary (Nurses- N-95 respirators and required fit-tests should be provided and performed)
All other faculty and staff	Face coverings, disposable gloves as necessary
Contractors	Face Coverings
Students	Face coverings

2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, Mexico Academy and Central School must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required PPE type to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least 6 months.
 - b. Mexico Academy and Central Schools will be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement by purchasing and maintaining an appropriate amount of inventory.
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
 - a. PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation, according to the label and type of PPE.
 - b. Employees and contractors must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored. This will be done by the Business Executive, the Director of Health, PE and Athletics or their designee as applicable to ensure integrity and to track usage rates.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following CDC guidelines, we have established the following protocols:

- A. If employees or contractors are exposed to a known case of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency (defined as a ‘close contact’ with someone who is confirmed infected, which is a prolonged presence within six feet with that person):
 1. Potentially exposed employees or contractors who do not have symptoms should remain at home or in a comparable setting and practice social distancing for the current CDC/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question.

- a. As possible, and upon approval of the Superintendent or designee, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill.
 - b. Building Principals, and supervisors should be notified first when an employee has been potentially exposed. The Superintendent of Schools must be notified under these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring that the protocols are followed.
 - c. See the section titled **Documentation of Work Hours and Locations** for additional information on contact tracing.
2. CDC guidelines for COVID-19 provide that critical essential employees may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them, other employees and contractors, and our constituency/public.
 - a. Additional precautions will include the requirement of the subject employee or contractor, as well as others working in their proximity, to always wear appropriate PPE to limit the potential of transmission.
 - b. In-person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.
 - c. Work areas in which the subject employee or contractor are present will be disinfected according to current CDC/public health protocol, as practical. See the section on **Cleaning and Disinfection** for additional information on that subject.
 - d. If at any time they exhibit symptoms, refer to item **B** below.
 - e. The Superintendent of Schools must be notified under these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring that the protocols are followed.
- B.** If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
1. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms in the workplace should be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They should immediately be sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 2. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 3. Employees may not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation per CDC/public health guidance and have consulted with a healthcare provider.
 4. Mexico Academy and Central Schools will require sick employees to provide a negative test result for the disease in question or healthcare provider's note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work; unless there is a recommendation from the CDC/public health officials to do so.
 5. CDC criteria for COVID-19 provides that persons exhibiting symptoms may return to work if at least 24 hours have passed since the last instance of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. If the disease in question is other than COVID-19, CDC and other public guidance shall be referenced.
 6. The Superintendent of Schools must be notified under these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring that the protocols are followed.
- C.** If an employee or contractor has tested positive for the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
1. Apply the steps identified in item **B**, above, as applicable.

2. Areas occupied for prolonged periods of time by the subject employee or contractor will be closed off.
 - a. CDC guidance for COVID-19 indicates that a period of 24 hours is ideally given before cleaning, disinfecting, and reoccupation of those spaces will take place. If this time period is not possible, a period of as long as possible will be given. CDC/public health guidance for the disease in question will be followed.
 - b. Any common areas entered, surfaces touched, or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
 - c. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
3. Identification of potential employee and contractor exposures will be conducted
 - a. If an employee or contractor is confirmed to have the disease in question, the superintendent of Mexico Schools or their designee should inform all contacts of their possible exposure. Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by law.
 - b. Apply the steps identified in item A, above, as applicable, for all potentially exposed personnel.
4. The superintendent must be notified in this situation and is responsible for ensuring that all protocols are followed.

We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. We will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
 - a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected throughout the day, as recommended by CDC guidelines.
 - b. The following areas will be cleaned by building staff specifically:
 - I. High touch surfaces - multiple times throughout the day
 - II. Classrooms- In between classes by staff, and at the end of the school day by Operations and Maintenance.
 - III. Bathrooms- Periodically throughout the day.
 - IV. Common Areas such as hallways- as necessary throughout the day.
 - V. Busses - In between Runs by transportation staff.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned before being disinfected
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Employee and Contractor Leave

Mexico Academy and Central Schools is committed to reducing the burden on our employees and contractors. The *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* provided requirements related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which form the policies outlined below. This policy may be altered based upon changes in law or regulation, as applicable.

It is our policy that employees of Mexico Academy and Central Schools will not be charged with leave time for testing if the test results show a positive result for COVID-19. If the Employee yields a negative test result- sick time will need to be used. Employees will be provided with up to two weeks (80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay for a period which the employee is unable to work due to quarantine (in accordance with federal, state, or local orders or advice of a healthcare provider), and/or experiencing symptoms and seeking medical diagnosis for up to three cycles of positive test results.

New York State's paid COVID-19 leave law still applies. So, going forward as of January 1, 2021, employers will continue to be required to provide up to 14 calendar days of paid leave (10 workdays), without deductions to accrued paid time, to employees who are subject to government ordered quarantine. To be eligible for this paid time, either the County or State Department of Health would have to issue a quarantine order to the employee. If the employee is quarantining under doctor's orders, or because they have symptoms and are seeking a test, those reasons **are not eligible** for paid COVID leave under the New York statute. In these cases, we would instead have to evaluate these requests or circumstances strictly under our collective bargaining agreements.

Additionally, the New York Emergency Paid COVID leave does not cover absences due to the need to care for a family member who is COVID positive or quarantined, or to care for a child whose school or day care is closed due to COVID. Also, employees who are required to quarantine solely because of personal travel are not eligible for NYS Paid COVID leave. (Employees who travel to states which border NY are exempt from travel related quarantine.)

Additional provisions may be enacted based upon need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of Mexico Academy and Central Schools, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by Mexico Academy and Central Schools, unless required by law.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work, and off-site visits. This information may be used by Mexico Academy and Central Schools to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Building principals and Supervisors oversee contact tracing, documenting using the template provided by the Oswego Department of Health. That completed template is sent to the DOH for review and recommendation regarding quarantine and next steps.

Housing for Essential Employees

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of Mexico Academy and Central School's essential operations.

If such a need arises, hotel rooms are expected to be the most viable option. If hotel rooms are for some reason deemed not practical or ideal, or if there are no hotel rooms available, Mexico Academy and Central Schools will coordinate with the Oswego County Emergency Management Office to help identify and arrange for these housing needs. The Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for coordination along with any necessary designees.