



Pierre and Marie Curie School COVID-19 Protocols 2021-2022 Academic year

As of July 2021, there are said to have been 7044 reported cases of COVID-19 and 193 deaths and a vaccination coverage of 5.7% of the population (MINED). While vaccine availability is broadening, it is not yet available to individuals under the age of 45. Public and private schools in the country are practicing combinations of in-person, hybrid and full online options that shift according to local levels of COVID-19 cases.

At Pierre and Marie Curie Universal School we too are balancing the needs for student's academic and socio-emotional development with the critical needs of health and safety. We understand that in-person school-based learning optimizes opportunities for academic and social engagement, while allowing caregivers and guardians opportunities to work (CDC, 2021). We also know that health and safety are of the utmost importance.

In principle and practice, SARS COV-2 which causes COVID-19, is a communicable disease passed from the aerosolized particles from an infected person's mouth or nose that then become inhaled or absorbed into eyes, nose, or mouth of another individual (WHO, 2021). The World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control, and Ministry of Health of Nicaragua concur that vaccinations, proper mask-wearing, ventilation, physical distancing (1.5 mts), and regular handwashing are the principle means of preventing transmission of COVID-19. When overlapped, these measures increase their preventive capacity.

In preparation for Pierre and Marie Curie's re-opening of its 2021-2022 academic year to expanded in-person learning, the school has adopted overlapping prevention, detection, and mitigation strategies to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission within its' school community. The following guidance outlines current school protocols to follow by all school community members, that is students, caregivers, school staff at all levels, visitors, and family members.

Community Responsibility

We want to stress the importance of community responsibility, communication, and trust. The human-to-human transmission means we are each not only responsible for ourselves, but those around us. As a member of the Curie community, you are responsible for supporting the health and wellness of yourself and loved-ones, as well as fellow Curie community members'. Curie's capacity to offer in-person learning depends on our collective ability to practice preventive measures and be prudent about avoiding situations of risk of exposure. This may imply making difficult choices, or having uncomfortable conversations, but the health and safety of our community relies on each of us.

At this time, the following protocols will be followed by all Curie community members, regardless of vaccination status. This guidance is subject to changes and updates in response to new scientific evidence, metrics, or recommendations.

In order to attend the Curie Campus, all individuals must be able to answer “no” to the following screening questions:

- Have you been diagnosed or suspected of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- Have you had a fever of 100.4F or 37.5C or over?
- Have you had a new cough?
- Have you had a shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
- Have you had a loss of taste or smell?
- Have you had diarrhea or vomiting?
- Have you had unexplained or unusual sneezing and nasal secretions?

If the individual answers “YES” to any of these questions, she/he should not attend the campus, and should inform the School Nurse as soon as possible.

Preventive Measures

THE PRIMARY PREVENTION MECHANISMS CONTINUE BEING:

1. PROPER MASK WEARING
2. COVID-19 HYGIENE AND SANITATION PRACTICES
3. VENTILATION & PHYSICAL DISTANCING
4. ENTRANCE AND UNIQUE SETTINGS GUIDELINES

1. PROPER MASK WEARING

- A. Masks are required for both indoor and outdoor settings throughout the Curie campus and on the buses or school-facilitated transportation.
- B. Proper mask use is required which means that masks should cover both nose and mouth simultaneously.
- C. All those entering the Curie campus should wear a mask upon entry.
- D. Individuals may also choose to wear face shields in addition to, but not as replacement of the face mask.
- E. Students needing breathing breaks will be taken into an area outside, distanced from other individuals so that they may remove their masks for the time needed for the student to feel refreshed (approximately 5 minutes).

- F. If a staff member is in a classroom, office, or workspace alone, s/he may remove her/his mask, but is required to put on a mask should another individual enter the classroom, office, or workspace.

2. COVID-19 HYGIENE AND SANITATION PRACTICES

“The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to [regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer](#).” (CDC, 2020)

HYGIENE

- A. Upon entering the school gates, all entering will receive disinfectant hand spray.
- B. Frequent hand washing of both students and staff is recommended and facilitated. Hand washing is mandatory before and after consuming food, after the break, and as necessary.

Additional outdoor hand washing stations have been installed throughout the campus to facilitate access to clean water, soap, and disposable paper towels.

- C. Students and staff should carry their personal hand spray for disinfection of their own hands.

SANITATION

- A. Classroom, office, and transportation surfaces are cleaned with disinfectant spray on a daily basis.
- B. Shared materials, such as doorknobs, white board markers, desktops etc. are frequently cleaned with disinfectant throughout the day by the school and sanitation staff.
- C. Facilities are fumigated on a bi-weekly basis and undergo facility-wide sanitation every weekly.
- D. Each person entering the buildings should place soles of both shoes on the shoe sanitation mats which are located at each of the three entrances.

3. VENTILATION, BARRIERS, AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Despite “recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented.” (CDC, 2020), at Curie School physical distancing is supported at all times possible.

VENTILATION

- A. Ventilation is one of the primary ways in which transmission of COVID-19 transmission can be prevented. This is supported in all Curie school facilities by maintaining windows and panes open and fans on.

BARRIERS

- B. Desks and classroom spaces have been equipped with clear shields to further support the prevention of COVID-19 airborne transmission within the classroom and office settings. Classroom layouts were modified for space distancing and acrylic shields attached to each desk.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- C. Physical distancing will be supported when students and staff have lowered their mask, in cases of food or water consumption, or during swimming class. In these situations, there are additional guidelines available in the Unique Settings Guidelines section.
- D. As a means of reducing exposure and increase the capacity for physical distancing, caregivers are being asked to limit their presence on the campus to the parking and pick-up area, the reception, administrative offices, and Radium Bookstore. Students will be taken to parents at their corresponding gate or the reception area during dismissal or when students need to leave the campus with their caregiver. Caregivers must have appointments in order to meet with a Director or teacher, preferably made when classes are out of session. In the interest of reducing exposure, we ask that caregivers and visitors have limited circulation within the school

4. ENTRANCE AND UNIQUE SETTINGS GUIDELINES

ENTRANCE

- A. In order to attend the Curie Campus, all individuals must be able to answer “no” to the following screening questions:
- Have you been diagnosed or suspected of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
 - Have you had a fever of 100.4F or 37.5C or over?
 - Have you had a new cough?
 - Have you had a shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
 - Have you had a loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had diarrhea or vomiting?
 - Have you been experiencing unexplained sneezing and nasal secretions?

If the individual answers “YES” to any of these questions, she/he should not attend the campus, and should inform the School Nurse as soon as possible.

- B. Student entrances and exits should be at their designated section gates. Preschool children enter through the reception area. Primary school enters by the west-side gate, and Middle and High school enter through the east-side gate.

- C. Each student and staff member must pass through the facial recognition and temperature control at their corresponding gate, as well as use hand sanitizer and the shoe disinfection pad before entering the inner campus.

Students or staff that have a temperature of 100.4F/37.5C or higher will be denied entrance into the facility and will be referred to the School Nurse for identification and notification. Please refer to the section on Communication and Contact Tracing for further information.

LUNCH AND RECESS

- A. GIVEN that part of students' social-emotional health comes from proximal and physical engagement, other effective preventive guidelines are prioritized (such as ventilation, proper hygiene, and correct mask-wearing) during recess and other moments where students are free to move around. Recesses have differentiated schedules according to each section:

Preschool: between 9:30-10:30am

Elementary: 9:20 am – 9:4 am Recess and 11:45 am – 12:05 Lunch

Middle School: 10:00 am – 10:20 am

High School: 10:40 am – 11:00 am

- B. Students in Preschool-5th Grades will be having their lunches at their desks, utilizing desk barriers, physical distancing, and ventilation as the overlapping protective mechanisms to prevent COVID-19 transmission.

The reason for keeping younger children at their desks is to enforce greater prevention control while eating and drinking.

Middle and High School students will be allowed greater mobility during their breaks, as long as they are able to practice distancing and ventilation guidelines.

Students should bring a little bag in which to store their mask when not in use (while eating), so that they are not placed on surfaces where they may be contaminated or contaminate.

Students shall wear their mask once done eating or drinking, and should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water before their next activity. Middle and High School students should maintain minimum distance of 6 feet while eating or drinking. Students are not allowed to share their food.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- C. During PE class, students have the option of wearing a mask or a face shield during classes given in outdoor space and where social distancing can be maintained.

- D. To avoid crowding in the changing areas, Elementary, Middle and High School students will be permitted to come to school wearing their PE uniform and not need to change after the class.
- E. It is recommended that students should bring an additional mask for use after the class.
- F. Students should thoroughly wash hands upon finishing the PE class.

SWIMMING & CHANGING ROOMS

- G. Limited groups of ten-twelve students at a time will enter the swimming changing rooms.
- H. In cases where group sizes are of 20 or over, the group will be divided in two for both changing room and pool time. While one group is in the water, the other will be undergoing instructional material or dry-practice, and then they will rotate.

COMPUTER LAB

- I. In cases where students use the computer lab and not their individual laptops, students will apply disinfectant on their hands prior to entering and upon leaving the lab.
- J. Between class groups, keyboards, mice, and other touch-points will be cleaned with disinfectant.

PIÑATAS AND PERSONAL PARTIES

- K. In the current situation, no birthday or other personal parties will be held on-campus.
- L. Should a family wish to celebrate a student, the family can arrange with the school chef to provide an on-site treat agreed upon between the family and the Boulangerie chef.

Detection and Mitigation Measures

PRIMARY TRANSMISSION REDUCTION MEASURES ARE:

1. DETECTION, QUARENTINE & ISOLATION
2. CONTACT TRACING
3. COMMUNICATION

1. DETECTION, QUARENTINE & ISOLATION

- A. If a Curie community member has had a positive COVID-19 test or been diagnosed by a doctor as suspected of having COVID-19, **she/he must go into isolation and inform the school nurse and must stay home for 14 days, maintaining distance, and practicing strict measures of prevention until symptom-free for 24 hours without treatment and symptoms have reduced without aid of medication.**

- B. **CURIE STUDENT RETURN:** To return to Curie school in person after a COVID-19 diagnosis or suspicion, students must have medical clearance from their doctor allowing them to return.
- C. **CURIE STAFF RETURN:** To return to Curie school in person after a COVID-19 diagnosis or suspicion, staff must have medical clearance from their doctor allowing them to return to work. Additionally, staff must have lab work completed (PCR, CBC, and Ferritin) and analyzed by a doctor*. The results are sent to the school where the Health Committee gives clearance for the staff member to return to work.

*Staff can use their own laboratory for lab work or can obtain the tests and consult through the school's contracted laboratory.

- D. If a student or Curie staff member has had one of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours, they need to stay home. If a student or staff member present one of the following symptoms, s/he will immediately be isolated and sent home. In order to be considered for a return to school, she/he should submit a medical clearance.
- Have a fever of 100.4F or 37.5C or over
 - Chills
 - New cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea or vomiting
 - Unexplained sneezing and nasal secretions
 - Muscle aches from unknown causes
- E. If there is suspicion of COVID-19, a PCR test should be taken, and results shared with the School Nurse. The School Nurse will report results to corresponding Directors only.
- F. If a Curie student or staff member has been exposed (15 minutes over a 24 hour period within six feet in an enclosed space with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 positive person), s/he should quarantine for 14 consecutive days. This quarantine time may be reduced if after 5 days of the presumed exposure the Curie community member is asymptomatic and presents a low PCR test. The PCR test must be done only on or after the 5 days after presumed exposure.
- G. Upon entering the Curie facilities, all personnel, students, and caregivers will have their temperature checked. In the case that a temperature of 100.4F/37.5C is detected, s/he will be directly referred to the School Nurse.
- H. Students or staff with COVID-19 symptoms during the school day, are taken immediately to the nurse's office. The nurse notifies caregivers who should immediately retrieve their child from the school. The school nurse is not able to

prescribe any medication and will not administer medication without parental consent.

- I. If students or staff have traveled outside of the country, they should follow the quarantine guidelines (stay at home for 5-14 days. If on the fifth day the person has a low PCR test, and no symptoms s/he may return to school).

2. CONTACT TRACING

- A. If a Curie student or staff member has had a positive COVID-19 test or been diagnosed as a suspected COVID-19, his/her identify will be kept strictly confidential beyond the authorities (School Nurse and corresponding Directors).
- B. If a Curie student or staff member has had a positive COVID-19 test or been diagnosed as a suspected COVID-19 case, s/he and his/her primary teacher(s) will be interviewed to identify those who may have had possible exposure.
- C. These individuals will be informed of their possible exposure and must follow the exposure guidelines of outlined in point C under Detection and Quarantine. Students needing to quarantine for possible exposure and who do not show symptoms will be engaged in distance learning during the period s/he is required to stay in quarantine.

3. COMMUNICATION

One of the primary ways in which Curie Community members can support each other and support the prevention of COVID-19 is through open and constructive communication. It is in this interest that Curie authorities will keep lines of communication open while also protecting the anonymity of individuals.

- A. No identifying information will be shared of confirmed or positive cases beyond the School Nurse and corresponding Directors.
- B. Caregivers and staff will be notified of confirmed positive COVID-19 test or been diagnosed as a suspected COVID-19 cases, sharing only the school section and no identifying information.

4. CLOSURES

In the event that there are two¹ people or more in a class testing positive for COVID-19 or diagnosed under suspicion of COVID-19, the rest of the group in that class will move to online classes for 14 consecutive calendar days.

¹ The CDC considers three people within a classroom to close the in-person group. Curie is using the count of two in a classroom in order to aid in the prevention of transmission.

In the event that there are five people in a section (Preschool / Elementary / Middle or High School), with a positive test for COVID-19 or diagnosed under suspicion of COVID-19, the section will move to classes online for 14 consecutive calendar days.

If there are five or more possible exposures named within one classroom, that class may be moved to online classes for at least 5 days.

The Curie Universal School reserves the right to move a class to hybrid or full online in response to new information and needs. The school directors monitor the cases of the Curie community, and will continuously be making decisions and adapting class models in response to this data.

GLOSSARY

Curie Community	Students, staff, caregivers and those who live in their immediate households.
Contact Tracing	Means to identify and inform individuals exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 positive individual or diagnosed COVID-19 suspected case. This is done by designated Curie staff (school nurse and directors).
COVID-19 Exposure	Exposure is determined by proximity and duration: within 3-6 feet of a confirmed COVID-19 positive individual or diagnosed COVID-19 suspected case, for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24 hour period. In cases where all individuals properly wore masks, the distance is reduced to 3 feet.
Quarantine	Required when a person has been exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 positive individual or diagnosed COVID-19 suspected case. Quarantine requires minimal contact with others, minimal public contact, wearing a mask in public, and following strict COVID-19 prevention practices for 14 days following exposure. The quarantine period can be shortened if the individual continues symptomless and receives a negative PCR test 5 days after presumed exposure.
Isolation	Used to separate a confirmed COVID-19 positive individual or diagnosed COVID-19 suspected case. Isolation requires the individual to stay at home, isolating as much as possible from others even within the home, and wearing a mask around all other people. Strict COVID-19 prevention practices should be followed. Isolation ends after a minimum of 14 days of isolation, and 24 hours without symptoms without support of medicine

(fever reducing etc.). You must have medical clearance to be considered for return to school.

PCR Test

Protein-C Reactive Test is a test that measures the protein-C levels in the blood and are an indication of inflammation. While the inflammation be caused by a non-COVID related medical issue, it is also an indicator used in COVID cases. This test can be done by any laboratory in Nicaragua, is a blood test, and is relatively inexpensive.

RT-PCR Test

This test is the Polymerase Chain reaction Test is a swab of the nose and/or throat sent to a laboratory for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 genetic traces. In Nicaragua it is only administered by MINSA, and is a nasal swab.

REFERENCES

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ⁱ Curie Community members: Students, all staff, caregivers, and those that have regular contact with students and staff. Regular contact refers to spending more than 15 minutes within six feet of distance within a 24 hour period, especially if this contact is without mask use.