

UCHICAGO Charter School



University of Chicago Charter School Protocols for Layered Mitigation of COVID-19 Risks on UCCS Campuses

Dated August 13, 2021

The University of Chicago Charter School will fully re-open campuses for in-person learning this school year. **Students will begin the school year on August 16, and they will attend full-time in-person on UCCS campuses.**

UCCS has established the following protocols following guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Chicago Public Schools, the Centers for Disease Control, and the University of Chicago, to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 on campus. UCCS is taking a layered approach to risk mitigation, providing multiple measures to lower and reduce risk from exposure to COVID-19 on our campuses.

The Protocols outlined here will be in force at least until October 1, 2021 (“Re-Open Phase One”). UCCS will closely monitor public health guidance sources for any changes needed to this guidance.

Layered Mitigation of Potential Risk at UChicago Charter Campuses

1. Vaccinations are Required for Staff by Oct. 1, 2021, Unless Exempted.

- a. UChicago Charter will require that “every University of Chicago Charter School employee get fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 1, 2021, unless they cannot do so because of a medical or religious reason or other authorized exemptions.”
- b. **Fulfilling the Vaccination Requirement & Proof Required.**
 - i. To establish you have met the vaccination requirement, please upload your vaccination card, or other vaccination medical documents to ADP, following the ADP Guide that will be distributed to all UCCS staff in August.
- c. **Exemptions:**
 - i. More information regarding seeking an exemption will be forthcoming soon.
 - ii. If an employee is granted an exemption, then that employee must:
 - Wear a mask at all times on UCCS campuses.
 - Maintain a distance of 6 feet from others.
 - Be tested weekly for COVID-19 and report any positive tests to the UCCS HR team.

- Other guidance and restrictions related to being exempted from vaccination may be forthcoming as UCCS approaches the Oct. 1, 2021 deadline.
- The UCCS HR team may provide information to UCCS supervisors as to which employees must remain masked and socially distant due to an exemption.
- Failure to follow these protocols for exempt employees may lead to corrective action, up to and including termination.

2. Vaccinations are Encouraged for Students ages 12 and above.

- UCCS encourages all students ages 12 and above to be vaccinated. UCCS will be asking parents above the age of 12 to voluntarily provide their students' vaccination status.

3. Masks are required for all persons on all UCCS campuses at all times during Phase One.

- UCCS requires all staff and students to wear masks in Phase I during the school day both in-doors and outside except while eating.
- UCCS will supply masks for students and staff on an as needed basis.
- Eating periods, where masks may be removed, will be “quick and quiet.”

4. Social Distancing at 3 feet will be maintained to the greatest extent possible, except while eating where a distance of 5 to 6 feet is required, depending on age.

- Classrooms.** UCCS will use a 3-foot distance in all classrooms to the greatest extent possible.
- Cafeterias and Eating.**
 - UCCS will use 5 feet of social distance while eating from grades PreK-5. This may mean eating in classrooms, the gym, or locations other than the cafeteria. The times for lunch periods may be adjusted.
 - In grades 6-12, a social distance of 6 feet between students while eating is required. This may mean eating in classrooms, or locations other than the cafeteria. The times of lunch periods may be adjusted.
- Hallways.** A distance of 3 feet between persons will be observed to the greatest extent possible. All persons at UCCS will move with purpose and not linger or congregate in the halls.
- Restrooms.** Social distance markers will be placed in all restrooms to support social distance.

5. Desk Shields and Plastic Dividers will be used to the greatest extent possible.

- UCCS will use clear plastic desk shields for students and teachers to the greatest extent possible, and especially at certain group or high use tables, such as guided reading tables.

6. Frequent Hand Sanitization is encouraged, especially upon entry.

- a. UCCS will maintain all hand sanitizers placed throughout UCCS campuses. Staff and students will be encouraged to frequently wash or sanitize their hands, including upon entry.
- 7. Ventilation will be enhanced with open windows and air purifiers.**
- a. Air purifiers will continue to be used in elementary classrooms.
 - b. All campuses will open classroom windows to the greatest extent possible during the fall.
- 8. Temperature Check equipment is available on all UCCS Campuses.**
- a. UCCS' temperature check equipment is available at all campuses and will be used when appropriate.
- 9. A One-Time Training and Agreement to Follow Protocols will be Required of all Staff & Parents.**
- a. UCCS will require that all staff and parents take a short Training Webinar in the first 30 days of school, i.e., by Sept. 17, 2021. The Training Webinar will review the layered mitigation protocols set forth here. This Training will be available in August.
 - b. After taking the Training, all Staff and Parents will be asked to sign a short Agreement. In the Agreement, staff and parents will promise to follow the protocols, especially staying home if ill. The agreement will be available in August and must be completed by Sept. 17, 2021.
- 10. UCCS will monitor symptoms of staff and students, requiring some to stay home.**
- a. Staff and Students exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, especially of the Delta variant, which include fever, sore throat, and headache, will be required to leave campus.
 - b. UCCS will distribute a new protocol for symptoms requiring persons to stay at home in August. The protocols may be different for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.
- 11. The University of Chicago Contact Tracing Office will continue to assist UCCS.**
- a. UChicago Charter School will continue to utilize the services of the University's Contract Tracing Office, and UCCS staff will contact the Contact Tracing office when a staff or student presents symptoms as identified above.
- 12. Quarantine**
- a. UCCS will develop quarantine policies for distribution to staff and families in August.
- 13. Students and Staff Engaging in Sports and Music Activities must be Masked.**
- a. UCCS intends to participate in sports as permitted by the Illinois High School Sports Association.

- b. UCCS requires all students and staff to be masked while playing or supervising sports.
- c. Students and staff engaged in music, chorus, band and performing arts must be masked.

14. Building Access at UCCS Campuses is extremely limited to educational needs only.

- a. UCCS will maintain a limited access policy during Phase One.
- b. Visitors are restricted to small numbers, where the goal of the visitor is the educational advancement of the students, i.e., tutors, will be permitted.
- c. Any and all visitors must wear masks and adhere to UCCS mitigation protocols.
- d. UCCS will grant other in person visitor requests very sparingly if at all, in order to control exposure of students and staff.
- e. UCCS encourages communication be had with potential visitors via Zoom and phone wherever possible, rather than by in person visits.

15. In-Person Event Size is limited to Groups Less than 30. Events above 5 attendees require approval.

- a. There will be no in-person in-door group meetings of over 30 persons at UCCS in Phase One.
- b. All larger meetings (over 30) such as Fall Parent Open Houses, Fall Staff Trainings and Professional Development, will either be held over Zoom or held serially in small groups in person of less than 30.
- c. Even meetings of less than 30 are Zoom-encouraged.
- d. Any Event planned by UCCS must be submitted for Event Review, where the in person event involves between 5 and 30 persons, excluding classroom activity. Contact the Unit Reviewer at jnowaczewski@uchicago.edu for an Event Form. 3 weeks advance notice is preferred.
- e. Outdoor events, such as start of year picnics, of 30 or more may be held outside, subject to Event Review. Masking will be required at outdoor events. All outdoor events of over 30 persons must be submitted for review to the Unit Reviewer 3 weeks in advance of the event, so that mitigating protocols can be put in place.

16. Communications.

- a. UCCS will communicate these protocols to staff and parents via email, PowerSchool, and in meetings. Additional Information on Trainings, Agreements, Symptoms, and Contact Tracing will be distributed by email to staff and families in August, with follow-up training provided.

Dated August 13, 2021/UCCS