**Sample Provider Letter to School**

### Priorities for a Safe Return to School for Children with Complex Health Needs

XXX is a child with complex health needs managed in the XXX clinic. We suggest that XXX’s school implement the following expert consensus priorities to facilitate a safe and health-promoting school environment.

It is important to note that XXX is at high risk of a severe or complicated case of COVID-19 due to their underlying health conditions [*include additional relevant information here*]. We and XXX’s parent(s)/guardian(s) are in agreement that if XXX is in a school environment that prioritizes the considerations described below, the benefits of in person school attendance outweigh the risks. In addition, XXX should not attend school if they have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or [*include additional relevant information here*]. Their parent(s)/guardian(s) should be alerted as soon as possible if there are any illness outbreaks in the school so that they can reassess the risk/benefit balance of in person school attendance for XXX.

* Encourage all school staff who work in close proximity with children with complex health needs to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and wear a mask whether vaccinated or not.
* Ensure a respiratory protection plan is in place for school staff that includes N95 mask fit testing or availability of Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) for those performing high-risk care, such as aerosol-generating procedures.
* Assign and maintain individual seats for children with complex health needs during transportation to and from school.
* Educate school staff and families about the increased health risks of contracting COVID-19 for children with complex health needs.
* Discuss COVID-19 mitigations strategies for children with complex health needs in Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings. Specifically, develop plans that outline the child’s daily routines and contingency plans which account for COVID-19 safety.

* Ensure that each child with complex health needs has their own medical equipment or single use disposable equipment at school.

* Plan to provide COVID-19 testing for staff and students at school.
* Have at least one medical staff (such as a school nurse) available to address acute COVID-19 symptoms or questions.
* Provide families of children with complex health needs with the opportunity to change between in-person and virtual or homebound school based on illness or COVID-19 spread.

In addition to the considerations above, we recommend that schools should also follow COVID-19 mitigation strategies outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and American Academy of Pediatrics.