

**HUDSON COUNTRY
MONTESSORI SCHOOL**



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**REOPENING PLAN
AUGUST 2020**

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SECTION 1 : REOPENING

CAPACITY

Administration reviewed building plans and determined capacity for each classroom so that students and staff are able to social distance. In order to facilitate social distancing, the school has purchased additional work desks so that each student has their own individual work space. Our gym and multi-purpose room will be used as a spare classroom if needed.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Classrooms will be arranged so that students will be able to social distance 6 ft apart in all directions. Each student will be provided with an individual desk. All staff and visitors will be required to wear a face covering if they are unable to social distance.

PPE AND FACE COVERINGS

All Staff are required to wear a face covering. Students over the age of 2 years old will be asked to wear masks during school drop-off, school pick-up and whenever students are unable to practice social distancing. They must wear face coverings when engaged in contact sports. Students will be given breaks throughout the day so they are not wearing their face coverings at all times (independent work time, lunchtime, etc.). An extra supply of face coverings will be available for students, staff, and visitors.

- Faculty and staff have been given an allowance to purchase face coverings for themselves so they can perform their duties at work safely.
- An extra supply of face masks were purchased for adults and children (face coverings for students will be added to our school supplies list).
- Faculty, staff, and students will be asked to clean their face coverings daily.
- PPE has been provided for staff conducting health screenings.

RESTART OPERATIONS

Our school has been in operation since June 22nd. All buildings have been checked and maintained and will be ready to open before the new school year begins.

HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND DISINFECTION

Hygiene

- Students, faculty and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Parents/legal guardians will be provided with information on how to reinforce this at home.
- Proper hand hygiene stations are available around the school for handwashing and/or hand sanitizing.
- Signage is placed around each station as a reminder to practice proper hand/respiratory hygiene.
- Receptacles are placed next to each water source to discard soiled items such as paper towels.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- All buildings are cleaned every evening by an outside cleaning company., Throughout the school day, faculty and staff will maintain logs that will include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. The log will also have information that will include the frequency for everything that is cleaned and

disinfected. Each teacher will be responsible for their own classroom. Administration will be assigned to clean and disinfect office areas.

- Our school has purchased a new school-approved chemical cleaning/disinfecting system with improved formulas that eliminate harmful viruses (incl. COVID-19), bacteria and other microorganisms.
- For routine classroom disinfecting/cleaning we have switched from a diluted bleach solution to a new product called Oxivir. Oxivir is on the EPA List-N and rated with an exceptionally short contact time of only 10 seconds. Apart from being highly effective, it is so safe that users of the product are not required to use PPE. If/when we are unable to purchase Oxivir, we will disinfect with a 6% solution of hydrogen peroxide.
- All classroom materials that are shared by the students will be coated with a new product called Bioprotect <https://bioprotect.us/the-science/>. The product is an antivirus, antimicrobial coating that remains active on porous and nonporous surfaces for up to 90 days. All shared classroom materials will be treated with Bioprotect every 60-75 days.
- To reduce high touch surfaces, we have touch free amenities such as hand sanitizer dispensers, soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers, and trash receptacles.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected after each use for the toddler and primary level (ages 18 months -5 years old. Elementary and Middle School bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected three times a day (morning, after lunch, end of the day).
- We are encouraging students to bring their own reusable water bottles to school.

COVID-19 SAFETY COORDINATOR

Neeru Bhambree, the Director of the school, is designated as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. Her responsibilities include being the communicator and point of contact for any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 and ensuring that all aspects of the school's reopening plan is followed. The following people will assist her in doing this:

1. Sharon Tufo
2. Dorothy Murray
3. Agatha Serafin
4. Sureka Perera
5. Beena Thomas
6. Angela Rambukwella
7. Marybeth Rose

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Cohorts

Our school will be using a cohort model. We have four buildings that can provide each cohort with their own classroom space, their own entry/exit doors, and their own bathrooms. Cohorts will not intermingle with other cohorts at any given time. With the exception of a few siblings because of a larger age gap, we were able to pair siblings together in one cohort.

MODELS OF INSTRUCTION

In-Person Instruction

- We plan for in-person instruction 5 days a week. During intermittent closings, we will switch to distance learning for our preschool age students. We have prepared four one week units of distance learning

curriculum. Each unit of study includes a package of home study materials that each student will work on with their teacher via Zoom. Parents will be asked to pick up their packages from school each week so that their child can participate in distance learning when needed. All Elementary/Middle School teachers are planning a live learning curriculum with the possibility that they will need to switch from live learning to distance learning at any time without notice. In the event a cohort is asked to self-quarantine, we will switch only that cohort to distance learning. Art, music and Spanish lessons will be conducted remotely via Zoom either to the classroom or to the child's home.

- Distance learning will be an option for families that include members that have underlying health conditions or who are in quarantine. During live instruction, distance learners will participate in class digitally as if they were actually in the live class. They will share the teachers with the live class and they will not have a dedicated distance learning instructor.
- Teachers that are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 will be able to teach remotely.

Distance Learning

Students will learn mostly through synchronous learning experiences using a remote platform. Asynchronous learning experiences will occur when students are unavailable to attend virtually or it works for the activity or lesson being taught.

TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT DISTANCE LEARNING

Each multi-age level will use different types of technology to support their Distance Learning program (Zoom, Google Classrooms, Seesaw, IXL, Razkids, Email).

SPECIALS CLASSES

In order to continue specials such as art, music, drama, Spanish, we are equipping the classrooms with large monitors so that specials teachers can conduct their classes via Zoom. We will adhere to 12 feet between students when engaging in physical activity such as gym or yoga classes.

FIELD TRIPS

Students will attend trips virtually instead of going on offsite trips.

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

The school will collect and report daily teacher and student engagement regardless of the instructional setting, specifically for Kindergartners through 8th grade. Attendance will be taken everyday for students because it is required by the State but "absenteeism" only relates to school age children and only school age absenteeism will be reported to the state. It is understood that the current circumstances may influence attendance. Therefore, staff will keep the lines of communication open with families to avoid chronic absenteeism.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

One of the foundational principles of Hudson Country Montessori School is to nurture the social emotional well-being of all children, from toddlers to middle school, based on the pedagogical work of Maria Montessori. The objective is for the children to understand themselves and their interconnectedness to other humans and all living things in their immediate environments. Each year, the child develops a broader connection to the world around them in order to develop an understanding of universal equity and unity. When school reopens for in-person instruction, we will implement programs that build off our current social emotional pedagogy to address the mental health, behavioral and emotional needs of students, instructional staff and

non-instructional staff as it relates to the pandemic, recession and civil unrest. In recognition of these factors, we are prepared to establish the following guidelines:

1. A SEL Team will be created to identify and analyze resources currently available at the school. It will consist of students, families, the School's Director, teachers and non-instructional staff. The team will represent the school community in expertise, role, experience, gender, race, culture and background. The team will lead a coordinated approach, ensuring schoolwide SEL implementation. The team will meet monthly to reflect on data, plan for school improvements and lead schoolwide SEL initiatives. These initiatives, in the traditional Montessori approach, include lessons on grace and courtesy, cultural presentations and education, lessons on self-empowerment and mutual respect as well as Cosmic Education (i.e. universal values and the common good). Likewise, the team will develop and implement an equity improvement plan where any short-comings may be identified in order to have a school wide understanding about equity, creating a safe space for dialogue and revise curricular and instructional practices to reduce barriers and create educational equity for all students.
2. School staff will be provided with SEL professional development to ensure that the whole school community is engaged in the adoption and implementation of sustainable SEL practices. Staff will be trained on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. Additional professional development will address issues of equity through a Culturally Responsive Educational approach.
3. Assessment materials will be reviewed and revised. Implementation of new changes will support the continued monitoring of children and youth in regard to the five competencies of SEL (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making) and to monitor the delivery of services and supports to those in need.
4. In addition to data collection, Hudson staff will continue to perform nonacademic check-ins related to social-emotional well-being for all students as they had before the pandemic. Hudson Country Montessori staff engage in daily observations of the social-emotional well-being of the children. For very young children, staff communicates daily with parents/ guardians and other caregivers. Lessons will be developed to include alternative ways to communicate feelings since social distancing and mask wearing hinder traditional forms of verbal and nonverbal communication. Instructional time may be spent teaching a positive message on the importance of social distancing in the classroom and on the playground.

SAFE CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Shared Objects

- Each cohort of students will have their own set of school supplies such as laptops, notebooks, lockers, cubbies, writing utensils, and workspace. Individual kits for high-touch supplies such as scissors, markers, pencils, erasers, etc. will be assigned to each student to limit sharing of supplies between students.
- With any shared objects, students will practice hand hygiene in between use and the objects will be cleaned and disinfected in between each use. All classroom materials that are shared by the students will be coated with a new product called Bioprotect <https://bioprotect.us/the-science/>. The product is an antivirus, antimicrobial coating that remains active on porous and nonporous surfaces for up to 90 days. All shared classroom materials will be treated with Bioprotect every 60-75 days.

Napping

Students that are napping will be spaced 6 ft apart in all directions. Napping materials will be sanitized daily.

Ventilation

Our school will open windows and doors wherever possible to increase ventilation. Teachers will also be asked to hold classes outside weather permitting. Ventilation systems that are typically shut down at night are to be left running to maximize fresh/outdoor air exchange. Many of our classrooms have windows that open. In classrooms with windows that do not open, we will add portable HEPA filters with UVC lights that destroy and trap COVID-19. We are following recommendations to upgrade HVAC filters from a rating of MERV 11 to MERV 13.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Teachers will be provided with technology devices and internet access if they do not have sufficient access. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch will be assisted in attaining devices and internet connectivity. Students at the Elementary and Middle School level are provided with technology devices each school year.

LARGE GATHERINGS

Small Spaces

Gatherings in small spaces will be limited. Staff and students are required to enter and exit through their own classroom doors instead of coming through our main office building.

Faculty and Staff Meetings

Most faculty and staff meetings will be held virtually via Zoom with the exception of our back to school meeting. This meeting will be held in our gym and staff will be required to wear face coverings and sit 6 ft apart in all directions.

Common Areas

Because we are using the cohort model, staff will no longer be allowed to use our staff lounge for lunch.

Schoolwide Events:

Any events that require a large gathering will not be permitted until further notice.

EXTRACURRICULARS

After-school activities will be offered virtually.

BEFORE AND AFTERCARE

A Toddler cohort and two Primary cohorts specifically for students that attend Early Session, Late Session and/or Year Round, which includes Vacation Program will be created. There will be one Elementary cohort for Early Session/Late Session/Year Round. Children of families that need extended day care must be in one of the extended care cohorts.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Parents/legal guardians will not be allowed to enter our buildings unless absolutely necessary. All families will arrive and park in the designated parking spots. Parents/legal guardians will walk their child to the assigned gate where their temperature and their child's temperature will be taken. At the gate, information will be collected regarding their child's exposure to COVID-19. There will be color-coded signs that coincide with car name tags we will provide for them. These signs will help direct them where to drop off and pick up their child.

Families will be instructed to stand 6 ft apart while waiting in line for their screening. Tape will be placed on the ground to help them stay 6 ft apart.

Adults and children must wear a mask during arrival and dismissal. Before children are admitted to the building, their temperature will be taken using a touchless thermometer. If the child's temperature is 100 degrees or higher, we will test it again using a second thermometer. If the second thermometer displays the same temperature as the first thermometer, the child will not be allowed to enter the building. The same protocol will apply to people providing essential services.

TRANSPORTATION

Consistent with our plan to maintain the integrity of the various cohorts, we will not be offering a bus transportation option until further notice. In addition, we are encouraging all families to transport their own children to school and to avoid public school bussing.

FOOD SERVICES

Students will be asked to bring their own lunch and snacks in an individual lunchbox with a cold pack. The school will continue to provide milk, apple/orange juice and dry snacks. Students in Early Session (extended care), will continue to be provided with breakfast items that do not require preparation. Late Session (extended care) students will be served dry snacks. Individuals will be 6 ft apart in all directions while eating snacks or lunch in their own classroom. They will be seated at individual tables/desks. Individuals will be prohibited from sharing food and beverages with each other. Prior to eating, students and staff will practice proper hand hygiene. Eating areas will be cleaned and disinfected before and after use. We will not be offering catered lunch or pizza until further notice.

Food Allergies

Our school nurse will provide allergy information to our staff. The information will be kept in each students' classroom along with their emergency medication so it is easily accessible.

SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

Our school will conduct standard operations and procedures to the best of our abilities without deviating from current requirements. Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills are required by Education Law and regulation and the Fire Code and they must be conducted without exceptions. Fire Code Section 404 requires that schools maintain Fire Safety, Evacuation, and Lockdown Plans and these plans include how lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted. All staff and students will be required to wear a face covering and social distance during safety drills.

VISITORS

- People providing essential services will be required to wear a face covering and their temperature will be checked before they enter the building. If they have a temperature of 100 degrees, they will not be allowed to enter.
- Special Education Services are considered an essential service. Services will be provided in an outdoor space weather permitting. We will designate an indoor space that is separate from all cohorts. This space will be cleaned and disinfected in between each use.

- Parents/legal guardians will not be allowed to enter our buildings unless absolutely necessary. They will also be required to wear a face covering and their temperature will be checked before they enter the building. If they have a temperature of 100 degrees, they will not be allowed to enter.
- An individual in our main office will be responsible for signing visitors in and out of buildings.
- Deliveries will be brought to the side of our main building to limit person to person contact.

FACILITIES

- Our school will comply with the scheduled 2020 visual inspection
- Our school will conduct lead testing while we are in operation
- Sprinkler inspections are done quarterly
- Fire inspections are done annually
- Alarm company inspections are done annually
- Playground safety inspections are done annually
- Air conditioning and heating systems are inspected annually

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school will encourage all students, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding social distancing, the use of PPE, and other information relevant to a safe reopening of our school through verbal, digital, and written communications. This information will be communicated to staff prior to the start of school.

The following is signage that will be posted in all four of our buildings:

- Wash hands/use hand sanitizer
- Stay 6 ft apart at all times
- Wear a face covering, covering your nose and mouth when you cannot stay 6 ft apart
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Stay home if you are sick
- Report symptoms of COVID-19 by calling the school and send the Director, Neeru Bhambree an email

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- Distance learning will be an option for families that include members that have underlying health conditions or who are in quarantine. Parent/legal guardians will be asked to inform the school through a written communication and will need to provide appropriate medical documentation.
- Employees that have underlying health conditions must inform the school through a written communication and provide appropriate medical documentation to the school. Each case will be reviewed individually to determine if any accommodations are warranted and can be provided, or if the employee is eligible for a leave of absence.

SECTION 2 - MONITORING

SCREENING

- Prior to departing for school, parents/legal guardians of students are required to screen their child every day for COVID-19 illness. This screening will include a symptom checklist and a temperature check.
- Prior to departing for work, employees will be required to complete a health questionnaire and take their own temperature on a daily basis. A supervisor will review the health questionnaire before the employee enters the buildings.
- Upon arrival, parents/legal guardians will walk their child to the assigned gate where their temperature and their child's temperature will be taken. At the gate, information will be collected regarding their child's exposure to COVID-19. There will be color-coded signs that coincide with car name tags we will provide for them. These signs will help direct them where to drop off and pick up their child. Families will be instructed to stand 6 ft apart while waiting in line for their screening. Tape will be placed on the ground to help them stay 6 ft apart.
- Employees, parents/legal guardians, and children must wear a mask during arrival and dismissal. Before employees and children are admitted to the building, their temperature will be taken using a touchless thermometer. If the employee or child's temperature is 100 degrees or higher, we will test it again using a second thermometer. If the second thermometer displays the same temperature as the first thermometer, the employee or child will not be allowed to enter the building. The same protocol will apply to people providing essential services.
- Employees and children will not be allowed to attend work/school if they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms in the past 14 days, even if a fever reducing medication was administered and the individual no longer has a fever.
- If an individual traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days, they will not be allowed to enter our buildings.
- Staff performing in person screening activities will be given PPE and will be trained on how to screen potentially infectious individuals.
- Staff will be trained prior to the start of school on how to observe for signs of illness in students and other staff.

POSITIVE SCREEN PROTOCOLS

- If any individual screens positive for COVID-19 at school, they will be sent home immediately with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.
- Students that have a positive screen (onset of COVID-19 symptoms) will be separated from other students and staff. They will be brought to an isolated area outside of our buildings and will be supervised there until a parent/legal guardian can retrieve them from school.
- The school will provide the individuals with information on health care and testing resources.
- The school will notify the NYS Health Department and Westchester County Department of Health immediately if the test results for COVID-19 are positive.
- Individuals will be required to disclose if and when responses to the health screening questionnaires changes (during or outside of school hours).
- Individuals will be able to return to school if they provide the school with documentation from a healthcare

provider evaluation, negative COVID-19 testing, and symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation. We will consult with the local health department if it is safe for the individual to return after providing us with all the aforementioned documentation.

- Neeru Bhambree, the Director of the school, will be the point of contact for all COVID-19 related cases.

CONTACT TRACING

- If COVID-19 cases are discovered, the local and state health department will be contacted immediately.
- The school will support the local health department in tracing all contacts of the individual infected.
- A log of all visitors, guests, vendors, and contractors will be maintained and it will include contact information, where they visited, and whether they were screened or not. This information will be useful for contact tracing.

SECTION 3 - CONTAINMENT

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION FOLLOWING SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE

- In the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, the area will be closed off for at least 24 hours before it is cleaned and disinfected.
- Windows and doors will remain open during this time to increase air circulation.
- The Health Department will be contacted immediately so they can instruct us on what next steps should be taken.
- After the 24 hour period is over, the area and anything else the suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 came into contact with will be cleaned and disinfected.
- The area will be reopened for use after it is cleaned and disinfected.
- Individuals that have not had contact with the suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 can return to the area after it has been cleaned and disinfected.

QUARANTINE, ISOLATION, AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

- If an employee/student tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether the employee/student is symptomatic or asymptomatic, the employee/student may return to work/school upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms.
- If an employee/student has had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee/student may return to work/school upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms and receiving negative test results.
- If an employee/student has had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is not experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee/student may return to work/school upon completing 14 days of self-quarantine.
- Employees and students will be able to return to school if they provide the school with documentation from a healthcare provider evaluation, negative COVID-19 testing, and symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation. We will consult with the local health department if it is safe for the individual to return after providing us with all the aforementioned documentation.

COMMUNICATION

- Faculty, staff, parents/legal guardians, students and visitors will be provided with information regarding our safety precautions and protocols we are taking because of COVID-19. They will be notified through email, texts, signage on campus, and information posted on our website.
- Faculty, staff, and students will be trained to follow the procedures for social distancing, respiratory and hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing and any aspects related to COVID-19.

SECTION 4 - CLOSURE

CLOSURE TRIGGERS

- The school will consult with the local health department to determine if the level of COVID-19 transmission may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.
- If cases are discovered, the local and state health department will be contacted immediately. Based on the guidance of the departments, the impacted (one or more) classrooms will be closed until we are given permission to reopen.

COMMUNICATIONS

School closures will be communicated through email correspondence, text messaging, and they will be posted on our school website.

APPENDIX A: Committee Members

Neeru Bhambree

Mark Meyer

Sharon Tufo

Agatha Serafin

Dorothy Murray

Vanessa Morales

Westchester County Department of Health