Hannah Senesh
Community Day School

Opening Plan

Aligned with NYSDOH and NYSED Guidelines

July 26, 2020
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Section 1: Introduction

During the first phase of the pandemic in Spring 2020, we were limited to distance learning. Now we have a plan for in-person learning, enhanced distance learning should that be necessary, and a remote streaming option for in-person learning, which ensures the health and safety of our children and staff and follows state guidelines.

In addition to guidance from the CDC; NYS Department of Health; NYS Association of Independent Schools; and medical, health, and educational professionals, we have a COVID-19 Task Group including school leaders and medical and health professionals who advise on important decisions related to the pandemic.

Hannah Senesh Community Day School COVID-19 Task Group

- Director: Head of School Nicole Nash
- COVID-19 Safety Coordinator: Director of Operations Nathalie Cabot
- Judy Schoenberg, Board Chair
- JJ Berney, Trustee
- Ariella Golomb, Trustee
- Marcella Kanfer Rolnick, Trustee
- Dr. Eltani Dickman, MD
- Dr. Lawrence Wolf, MD
- Dr. Michele Fagan, MD
- Director of Admissions and Community Engagement Annette Powers
- Lower School Director Shelley Fogelson
- Middle School Director Lauren Goldberg

Section 2: Reopening of In-Person Instruction

Decision Making

In addition to guidance from the CDC; NYS Department of Health; NYS Association of Independent Schools; and medical, health, and educational professionals, we have a COVID-19 Task Group including school leaders and medical and health professionals who advise on important decisions related to the pandemic. Our Decisions are guided by:

- The health and safety of our community
- Guidance from health professionals, state and local mandates, and educational leaders
- Our school’s core values -- responsibility to others, openness to varied perspectives, and perseverance
- Understanding the way the crisis affects members of the school community differently and ensuring equity
- Building an engaging and meaningful academic program
- Reflections and feedback from parents, staff, and students via surveys and meetings
- Analysis of Spring 2020 distance learning program by parents, students, and faculty

We also took into account these teaching and learning considerations:

- The educational, social, and emotional needs of students
- Quality instruction and student assessment
- Technology to support instruction and learning in new models
- Strong relationships between teachers and students
- A safe and nurturing learning environment
- Training and support for faculty and staff
- Flexibility in scenario planning for in-person, remote, and distance learning
- Groupings and schedules to support a lower student density model (smaller groups practicing physical distancing)

Communication

We have a designated person to oversee all communications related to COVID-19. Our communications team has consistently provided clear and transparent notice to parents, staff, students, the board and other stakeholders regarding our plans for the fall and expectations around health and hygiene and will continue to do so via email, website, social media, signage, video, and text. If necessary, the school will communicate with parents, faculty, staff, students and the local community via the aforementioned vehicles regarding cases of COVID in the community, school closure, and any additional protocols and safety measures taken by the school.

Capacity

Senesh will begin this fall by offering three scenarios to parents: a full in person model for lower school, a hybrid model for middle school, and a remote streaming option for K-8 in-person learning. Details of these plans are outlined below. The school has prioritized in-person learning for the lower school (kindergarten through 4th grade) as they need to be in the classroom as much as possible. Middle school students (5th-8th grades) will be on a blended model with in-person learning 2.5 days per week and distance learning 2.5 days per week.

Scenarios

Lower School In-Person Learning

K-4th grades: In-person learning on Mon-Fri.

Middle School Hybrid Model

5th-6th grades: In-person learning Mon., Tues., and alternate Fri.
Distance learning Wed., Thurs., and alternate Fri.

7th-8th grades: In-person learning Wed., Thurs., and alternate Fri.
Distance learning Mon., Tues., and alternate Fri.

Remote Streaming of In-Person Learning

This option is available for all families K-8 who do not want their child to join in-person learning.

Vulnerable Populations

- Vulnerable populations and families who are not comfortable returning to school have a remote streaming option for our in-person learning model. This will also be available for children who are home due to illness.
- The school will also make necessary modifications using PPE to meet specific needs for
vulnerable populations to minimize COVID-19 exposure risk to the greatest extent possible.

- Additional accommodations for staff may include, but are not limited to telework, modified work setting, social distancing or providing additional PPE.

We are also preparing to resume a full distance learning program if necessary for the following scenarios:

- **Intermittent Distance Learning Program**
  We anticipate that there will be times when parts of our school will resume distance learning based on students or family members testing positive for COVID-19.

- **Distance Learning**
  Should New York State mandate that schools resume distance learning, our program will be a refined version of our Spring 2020 program.

**Social Distancing**

To achieve physical distancing measures and to minimize contact to reduce the risk of infection, we have organized students into pods and we will all adhere to 6-feet distancing throughout the school day. A pod is a small cohort of students who only interface with each other throughout the day. Establishing pods will help minimize the risk of infection and decrease the number of people who would need to quarantine should there be a positive case of COVID-19.

- Each grade will have three distinct pods with 8-10 students per pod.
- To minimize exposure to other pods, each pod will have its own classroom, where students will spend the entire school day.
- Students will keep all of their belongings in their classroom as lockers will not be used.
- Students will bring their own lunch and eat it in their classrooms with their pods. School lunch will not be provided.
- Children will only spend time in-person with others in their pod. They will interact with other pods for virtual learning and socializing.
- Pods offer the opportunity for more small-group learning and building a strong community.
- Each grade will have shared teachers who will move from classroom to classroom and teach each pod.
- Students in each pod will have their own individual desk and supplies (including a device), instead of sharing with others.
- Students in each pod will keep a distance of six feet apart from one another and will wear masks.
- Instead of large group PE and recess, students will have daily outdoor time with other students in their pod. We will also ensure students get movement and bathroom breaks throughout the day.

We have altered our program to ensure there will be no projecting of the voice, singing or use of wind instruments and that all aerobic activity will take place outdoors with appropriate distancing of 12 feet.
The hallways and stairwells will be clearly marked to help manage the direction and flow of traffic, with a limited number of students outside the classroom at any one time. For the health and safety of our community, grade-level start and end times will be staggered to ensure there are less people coming and going into the building at a time - details below.

- Instead of gathering in the lobby and gym, all grades will have a specified arrival and dismissal plan where they will be warmly greeted by their teachers.
- For the safety of our community, all parents/guardians and students are asked to wear masks at arrival and dismissal.
- Due to health, safety, and staffing, we will not be able to offer earlybird drop-off and students will enter school only at their assigned arrival time.
- The school is working to secure additional outdoor space for families to wait for assigned arrival times.
- To create a safe routine, K-3rd grade families will have assigned arrival/dismissal spots in the side yard.
- To foster independence, 4th-8th grade students will enter and exit through the main entrance. Physical distancing will be required outside the school.
- Upon arrival, all students and staff will have a daily health screening before entering school, including temperature checks and screening questions. Parents/guardians who drop their children off at school will be asked to wait to ensure their child is able to stay.
- Parents/guardians will say good-bye at their designated school entrance and faculty will take younger students to their classes.
- For the health and safety of our community, we ask parents to do their best to arrive on time for school. Late arrivals will need to wait outside the main entrance until the nurse is available to conduct a health screening.
- For this first phase of reopening, we will not be able to offer our afterschool program.

Staggered Arrival and Dismissal Times

- Middle School (5th-8th grades) 8:15am-3:30pm (Friday 8:15am-2:30pm)
- Fourth Grade 8:30am-3:00pm (Friday 8:30am-2:00pm)
- Third Grade 8:45am-3:00pm (Friday 8:45am-2:00pm)
- Second Grade 8:45am-3:00pm (Friday 8:45am-2:00pm)
- First Grade 9:05am-3:15pm (Friday 9:05am-2:15pm)
- Kindergarten 9:05am-3:15pm (Friday 9:05am-2:15pm)

Extracurriculars

The school will not have any extracurricular activities at this time.

Before and Aftercare
The school is not offering earlybird or afterschool programs at this time.

Transportation

Our community travels to school using various modes of transportation including walking, biking, public transportation, school busing, and cars. We have made recommendations for physical distancing and hygiene to our families including:

- If using public transportation, we recommend wearing a mask, washing hands/using hand sanitizer after exiting, and leaving space between people to allow for physical distancing.
- If carpooling, we recommend that everyone wear masks, ride with windows open, and leave space between passengers.
- Our school bus is operated by the NYC Department of Education and we have no jurisdiction over how they operate. However, we have recommended that if families use the school bus, students should wear masks and sit one child per seat (unless siblings) and only use every other row in the bus. There will be no eating or drinking on the bus and students will practice physical distancing upon entering or exiting the bus.

Safety Drills

Senesh maintains an internal handbook for conducting emergency drills that will be reviewed and updated before the start of the 2020-21 school year to take into account social distancing requirements and other steps to minimize the risk of spreading infection while conducting drills. Senesh will follow the requirement that schools conduct 8 evacuation and 4 lockdown drills each school year.

Evacuation Drill Protocols

- Students and faculty are to maintain a distance of six feet when they gather on the sidewalks outside for our headcount, and by reviewing where each class should gather in order to preserve maximum distance.
- The school will have six-foot markers on the sidewalks where we gather for fire drills.
- Drills will be conducted on a staggered schedule where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once.

Lockdown Drill Protocols

- Instead of sheltering in place; we will provide an overview of how to shelter in the classroom.
- The drills will be done on a staggered schedule while ensuring all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills.

Students will be instructed that if it were an actual emergency that required evacuation or lockdown, the most imminent concern is to get to safety; maintaining social distancing in an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown may not be possible and should not be the first priority.
Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff

In general, faculty and staff schedules will be arranged so that only faculty members who are needed on a given day are required to be in the building. Otherwise, faculty and staff whose work can be performed at home and who are not scheduled to be in the building on that day, will be asked to work remotely. A schedule of who is expected to be on campus will be provided for guidance before the start of the school year. Other changes include:

- The faculty lounge will only accommodate two staff at a time.
- The reconfiguration of shared faculty and staff offices to allow for appropriate distancing. If the size of the space makes this impossible, faculty members may be reassigned office space in an area that allows for proper distancing.
- Under no circumstances should faculty/staff be present together in small spaces (elevators, storage closets, small offices).
- All faculty, committee, and board meetings will happen remotely until further notice, except when social distancing can be maintained appropriately for smaller groups.
- Only staff who are necessary to be at the school during normal school hours will be in the building. Anyone who is not deemed essential to be there in person, will work remotely, including business and advancement professionals. As we have staggered arrival and dismissal and students will not move from classroom to classroom, we will ease congestion in hallways, walkways, and in the lobby.
- We have a designated area for deliveries in our foyer between the outer and inner doors of the school. All staff will be notified that they may not have personal deliveries at the school.

PPE

Senesh is committed to having the necessary PPE in accordance with public health guidelines for the health and safety of our community. We will maintain a three-month supply of PPE.

- Parents will be asked to ensure that children arrive at school wearing masks (cloth face coverings are allowed).
- Students will wear masks throughout the day except when eating.
- Each family is encouraged to purchase or make five cloth face masks (one for each day of the week) per child. Face masks should be labeled with the child’s name or initials so it is clear to whom the mask belongs. Cloth face masks should be washed, disinfected, or replaced after each day’s use and must not be shared. Students and families should take responsibility for maintaining their individual face coverings.
- Senesh will provide all students and faculty with training on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including face masks.
- Faculty and staff will wear masks.
- PPE, such as gloves, gowns, goggles, polycarbonate guards, and face shields will be used by staff as needed.
- We have increased hand sanitizing stations and will provide hand sanitizing supplies at school entrances, classrooms, and offices.
- Gloves, masks, face shields, and disposable gowns will be available for the whole maintenance crew and healthcare staff.
● For staff engaged in workplace activities that require a higher degree of protection due to the nature of the work (e.g. health screenings, nurse’s office work), N-95 masks, or other PPE used under existing industry standards will be used in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
● In case a student or staff member forgets to bring their mask, the school will have a supply of disposable adult and child-sized surgical masks available.

Repurposing Space, Visitors, and Gatherings
Senesh has created a plan that has repurposed space and created new plans for visitors and gatherings. In addition, we offer a remote streaming option for in-person learning to accommodate all families, including those with children in multiple grades or those with compromised immunity.

Repurposing Space
To maximize the number of students in school, all spaces in the building will be utilized as classrooms, including the gym, beit midrash, library, and art room.

● The gym will no longer be used as a lunchroom and school lunch will not be provided. Students will bring their own lunch and eat it in their classrooms.
● To ensure adequate space to care for our children, the art room will become the student healthcare room.
● In addition to our three outdoor spaces, we are looking to secure more outdoor space for our students during the school day as fresh air and movement breaks are so important. Outdoor time will focus on individual pursuits and skills rather than team sports or activities. Games and activities that require no physical contact and do not require students be in close physical proximity to each other will be used. We will maintain 12 feet in all directions if/when participating in aerobic activities that result in heavy breathing.
● We haven’t made any structural changes to the building that require review of building codes or construction.
● Our door functions have not been changed and are up to code.

Visitors and Gatherings

● To reduce the transmission of germs, only students, faculty, staff, and essential personnel will be admitted into the building.
● The use of common spaces and large group gatherings will not be permitted. We will continue to be innovative and create virtual ways to connect and have grade-, school-, and community-wide events.
● SETSS providers and tutors are deemed essential and will be allowed in the building during school hours to work with individual or small groups of students while following 6-foot distancing guidelines.

Section 3: Restart Operations
Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection
The summer months have been spent preparing the facility to reopen in a safe manner while
following NYS Department of Health guidelines regarding hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection.

- The school hired a company to do a full cleaning and disinfection before school opens.
- Improvements have been made to the school ventilation system including power washing, installing higher grade filters and high performance belts, and increasing outside air intake. HEPA air purifiers have been installed in windowless classrooms.
- The school has purchased cleaning and disinfecting agents to last for a minimum of three months.
- All cleaning supplies are secured in a locked room away from all students.
- The school created and will maintain a log with the name of the employees, time of day the area is cleaned and the scope of the cleaning. All employees are required to fill up that log to be reviewed by their supervisor.
- Improvements were made to school bathrooms by eliminating hand dryers that blow air and paper towel holders were installed.
- We installed polycarbonate dividers in the main office.
- Our maintenance team flushed the toilets and sinks daily since the building was closed and a plumber inspected the building to ensure it is ready for school.

**Cleaning and Sanitizing Schedule**

When school reopens we have the following protocols in place:

**Daily cleaning and disinfecting:**

- The school has a maintenance team who will be in charge disinfecting high traffic areas and surfaces throughout the day including: bathrooms, railings, stairwells, door handles, bathrooms, the elevator, the healthcare room, and other high touch surfaces.
- A nightly maintenance staff will clean and disinfect classrooms, hallways, offices, desks, chairs, toys, door handles, floors, and bathrooms.
- On a daily basis the school will maintain a log that the cleaning crew will fill out.
- Disposable Sanitizing wipes and spray will be in the classrooms for commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before/after use.

**Weekly cleaning:**

- On a weekly basis the maintenance team will clean walls in hallways, dust high areas, and buff floors.
- As needed, additional cleaning and sanitizing will take place over the weekend.

**Monthly cleaning:**

- On a monthly basis the maintenance team will clean all windows.
- The HVAC company will inspect the filters on a monthly basis and change as needed.
- The sprinkler company will inspect all our systems once a month.

**Quarterly cleaning:**

- The school will power wash all outside areas and strip and re wax some of the floors quarterly.
- The elevator company will do quarterly maintenance.

**Annual cleaning:**
• The school has an ongoing contract with a cleaning company that does an annual summer cleaning and sanitizing.

As needed:
• The school will increase staff to fully clean, disinfect, and sanitize areas where students or staff who have been ill were present.

Signage
• The school will have signage by sinks, in classrooms, and by the school entrance about proper hand washing.
• “Stop the Spread” posters will be posted throughout the school.
• Signs requiring hands to be washed with soap and water when visibly soiled will be posted by all hand sanitizers to remind people that hand washing is required and not to use hand sanitizer if hands are visibly soiled.
• The school will have divided stairwells and hallways as well as directional arrows and six feet distance from each other throughout the building including stairwells.
• The school will also post customized and age-appropriate signage in entrances, classrooms, hallways, offices, and restrooms to remind individuals to:
  • Stay home if you feel sick.
  • Cover your nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering
  • Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
  • Adhere to social distancing instructions.
  • Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19, and how to do so.
  • Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
  • Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
  • Wash your hands with soap and water if they are visibly soiled.

Healthy Hand and Respiratory Hygiene Practices

Healthy hygiene practices will be taught and re-taught in school for both students and staff. We will provide instruction to the school community in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time to allow for frequent hand hygiene.

Hand sanitizer is available throughout common areas. It is placed in convenient locations, such as at the building entrances, classrooms, and offices. Touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers are installed where possible. Soap and paper towels are available at all sinks; including bathrooms.

A supply of tissues and no touch trash will be available in each room. If no tissue is available, students will be instructed to use the inside of their elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover their mouth or nose instead of using their hands. They will be taught to always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

If students or staff are unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers for health reasons, they will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water at any time. The school will remind individuals that alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be flammable and may not be suitable for
certain areas in school facilities and on school grounds.

**Teachers Will Remind Students to:**

- Sanitize when entering the school building and classrooms
- Wash hands before/after eating
- Sneeze and cough into tissues
- Wash hands and/or use Purell after blowing their nose
- Discard tissues into the trash immediately after use
- Avoid touching their face
- Use soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds) and use alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty.

**Ventilation**

In order to increase ventilation all doors and windows will be open in the school.

Improvements have been made to the school ventilation system including:

- Power washing
- Installing higher grade filters and high performance belts
- Increasing outside air intake
- HEPA air purifiers have been installed in windowless classrooms.
- All of our classroom doors are fire rated and are not able to remain open due to fire code. All our classrooms will either have windows that will be open or will have air purifiers.

**Food Service**

- All students will be instructed to wash/sanitize their hands before and after meals.
- Students will eat with their pods inside the classroom, at their desks, which are 6 feet apart.
- Our gym/cafeteria will be used as classroom space and will not be used for lunch.
- The school will not offer a hot lunch program and parents are instructed to pack a snack and lunch everyday for their child(ren).
- Parents are also notified that there will be no communal snacks for birthdays or other such events.
- There will be signage throughout the school building promoting healthy hand hygiene and reminders to wash hands before and after meals, after using the restroom, and throughout the day.
- The teachers are given a list of children with allergies at the beginning of the year and these children are accommodated. Teachers are taught how to respond to food allergies and allergic reactions. Children are instructed not to share food and to wash hands before and after meals.

**Faculty and Staff Meetings**

- To protect the health and safety of our staff, larger staff meetings will take place through ZOOM.
Smaller teacher meetings may take place in well-ventilated classrooms with the expectation that teachers will sit 6 feet apart and all wear masks.
Additionally, in person small group teacher meetings can take place during the day using ZOOM with faculty sitting at their own desks.
Faculty and Staff will always have the option to ZOOM into a meeting.

Section 4: Monitoring of Health Conditions

- Students and staff should not attend school when they are sick.
- The school will rely on students and their parents, guardians, and/or caregivers to initially identify when a student may have signs and symptoms of illness and to take action (such as staying home and calling their pediatrician).
- This will limit the risk of transmitting illness to other students and to school staff.
- This process will also be followed by school staff who will monitor children for overt symptoms of any infectious illness that may develop during the school day and help the student and family take needed actions.
- There will be a new threshold for health care with a zero tolerance policy for sick children and staff.
- We will not allow anyone with a fever of 100 or above, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, muscle aches, cough, stomach aches, or any other maladies to remain at school. Any such students may participate in class from home via our remote streaming of in-person learning option.

Screening

- Upon arrival, all students and staff will have a daily health screening before entering the school.
- In addition to staggered arrival times, there will be designated spots for students to wait in line to prevent intermingling and enforce social distancing measures.
- The screening will include temperature checks using a touch screen thermometer and screening questions conducted by a staff member utilizing appropriate PPE.
- Questions for students and staff will cover both symptoms and close contact/potential exposure to a person with COVID-19 symptoms or who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- It will also identify those who have traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

The school will not retain individual medical or health information from this screening. Only the “clear/not clear” status of the individual as determined by the questionnaire will be available to the school or kept on file. An immediate review each morning of all the data from the forms by the staff responsible for attendance, including follow-up calls to families of children who are not in school that day.

Screening Questions

Have you had a temperature of greater than 100.0°F at any time in the past 14 days?

Do you have any of the below symptoms?

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills, muscle pain, or headache
- Diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion, runny nose, or sore throat

Close Contact/Potential Exposure

- Have you had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19?
- Have you had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person under quarantine for possible exposure to COVID-19?
- Have you traveled to or lived in an area where the state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases within the past 14 days?

Protocols for Students/Staff with Positive Screening Responses

- Students may not attend school if they have had a temperature of greater than 100 degrees F at any time in the past 14 days, even if a fever-reducing medication was administered and the student no longer has a fever.
- If the student/staff/parent/caregiver answers YES to any question related to symptoms but NO to any questions related to contact/exposure: the student will; be isolated from other students and staff, aside from the staff supervising them, and immediately sent home with instructions to contact a health care provider for evaluation and testing.
- If the student/staff/parent/caregiver answers YES to any question related to COVID-19 exposure but NO to any questions related to symptoms: the student will be isolated from other students and staff, aside from the staff supervising them, and immediately sent home with instructions to contact a health care provider for evaluation and testing.
- Additionally, individuals with recent international travel or travel within a state with widespread transmission of COVID-19 as designated through the New York State Travel Advisory, must quarantine as directed by the state before they are allowed to return to school. We will not accept “testing out” of the 14 day quarantine after returning from a hot spot; negative COVID-19 test results are not a substitute for the 14 day quarantine after returning from a “hot spot”.
- If the school determines a child is ill during the school day, parents/guardians will be required to pick up their child as soon as possible. Children will wait in the healthcare room (a classroom designated for this purpose) monitored by a nurse.

Asthma Care

- Children who can use a nebulizer at home will be asked to do so.
- Parents will be asked to send an inhaler and spacer to school for use during the school day.
- In an emergency, If a nebulizer has to be used in school, a fitted N95 mask will be provided to the nurse who will execute the nebulizer treatment.

Testing Protocols

- Based on recommendations from the CDC, NYSDOH, and our COVID-19 Task group; Senesh will not require routine mandatory COVID-19 testing or antibody testing of students, faculty, and staff as a screening mechanism.
COVID-19 testing is an important resource for keeping the school open and Senesh is partnering with PM Pediatrics as a testing resource for the fall.

Our COVID-19 Safety Coordinator: Director of Operations Nathalie Cabot is the Senesh coordinator for testing; including for Senesh and PM Pediatrics.

PM Pediatrics is a for-profit pediatric urgent care facility with 55 locations in 11 states and they have experience supporting seven camps with testing this past summer. There is a location less than a mile from the school where Senesh will have a dedicated contact to facilitate efficient scheduling and testing for both students and faculty if needed.

PM Pediatrics is currently offering the nasal swab (PCR) COVID-19 test with a 2.4 day turnaround time. HIPAA waiver forms signed by parents and faculty will allow the school to collect real time test results. Students and faculty may opt to utilize other testing facilities, but the hope is that the ease of having access to the nearby PM Pediatric resource will support the school community in quickly identifying potential COVID-19 cases.

PM Pediatrics may also provide parent COVID-19 education through webinars as well as the flu vaccine.

Section 5: Containment of Potential Transmission

Protocols for Caring for a Student or Staff Member with COVID-19 Symptoms or COVID-19 Positive

If students or staff become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 at school:

- They will be isolated in a designated healthcare room, supervised by an adult, socially distanced, and utilize appropriate PPE.
- Our art classroom will be converted into a healthcare room where sick individuals can wait in isolation. If more than one child is in the isolation room; they will be separated by 6 feet and wear a mask. Ill individuals will be under supervision of nursing staff who will have the following PPE:
  - N-95 face masks
  - Face shields
  - Eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield)
  - Gloves
  - Gowns
- Parents/guardians will be notified immediately if their child is sick and be asked to pick them up immediately. Parents/guardians will not enter the school. The child will be brought to the parent/guardian at the main entrance.
- Parents/guardians will receive instructions to contact their health care provider or to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center for assessment and testing. Senesh has developed a partnership with a local urgent care center that will be a resource and testing site for our community.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19:

We will notify the state and local health department and follow the CDC and NYS Department of Health guidelines.
Exposed Individuals

In coordination with the local health department, the students and teachers in the specific pod that had a person test positive for COVID-19 and other direct contacts such as siblings and those that carpool together will be considered primary contacts/exposed individuals and will follow these steps:

- They will be sent home from school with instructions to contact a health care provider for evaluation and testing and quarantine for 14 days.
- Returning to the in-person learning environment will entail, at a minimum, documentation from a health care provider evaluation, negative COVID-19 testing
- During this time the entire pod will do distance learning and then return to in-person learning.
- In addition to the 14 day quarantine: exposed students who present with symptoms or test positive of COVID-19 during a period of self-quarantine need the below before returning to school:
  - Documentation from a healthcare provider evaluation
  - Negative COVID-19 testing and symptom resolution
  - If COVID-19 positive, release from 10-day isolation

There may be situations in which teachers themselves fall sick, in which case Senesh will make every effort to find substitute coverage. Depending on the number of faculty sick at the same time; Senesh may need to alter the distance learning schedule.

Return-to-School Policies

Following COVID-19 Symptoms or positive PCR COVID-19 testing, returning to learning protocol must include at a minimum:

- Documentation from a healthcare provider evaluation
- Negative COVID-19 testing and symptom resolution
- If COVID-19 positive, release from 10-day isolation
- In rare cases where the symptoms are from a chronic condition, this will require documentation from a physician and have to be cleared by the school nurse before the child returns to school.

Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing is a public health function performed by the local public health department to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus.
- If there is a Senesh community member who tests positive, we will work very closely with the state and local health department to provide them with necessary and accurate information. We will not perform our own contact tracing.
- To ensure adequate support; Senesh will keep accurate attendance records of students and staff members; ensure student schedules are up to date; and keep a log of any visitors, including date, time, and where in the school they visited.
• Whereas state and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of COVID-19 infected or exposed persons, Senesh is responsible for notifying faculty or families of students that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.
• Please note that medical privacy laws explicitly prohibit Senesh from revealing the name of the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. We may only reveal that the student or faculty member has come in close or proximate contact with an unnamed person, and how we came to know this information (school tracking systems, governmental contact tracing, or another mechanism).

Cleaning and Disinfection Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

If COVID-19 cases are suspected or discovered at school, the immediate response will include closing off areas or classes where individuals were infected and engaging in a process of “deep cleaning” either in the affected area, portions of the school, or more broadly the entire school, as determined in consultation with DOH guidelines or conversations with our local DOH contact.

• We will open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
• We will wait 24 hours before we clean and disinfect, and clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas.
• We may choose to modify operations prior to instituting school-wide closures to help mitigate a rise in cases.
• We will allow individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection, per DOH instructions.

Section 6: Closure of School Facilities and In-Person Instruction, If Necessitated by Widespread Virus Transmission

Metrics Used in Decision-Making

During the coming year, there may be times when we are ordered to close the school by the governor. The state has established metrics that they will use to order a regional or state-wide lockdown. However, there may be situations within our own borough, neighborhood, or school community when community spread of COVID-19 needs to be addressed.

Under guidance from the state and local authorities, Senesh has identified the following policies to help us track and trace the levels of transmission in the school setting, so that we can responsibly provide for the health and safety of our students, families, faculty, and staff.

• The Senesh Safety Coordinator will track data of all COVID-19 positive cases in the Senesh community.
• Data will be reviewed in many ways; including by cohorts, grade level, division, whole school, and staff.
• The distribution of positive COVID cases in these various categories is critical to
monitoring against positive COVID-19 cases that may increase beyond an acceptable level, as established by state and local health departments.

- We will review data on a daily basis and should it be deemed necessary, will work in consultation with the state and local health departments to plan for orderly closure and a switch from in-person learning to distance learning.
- Senesh is prepared to modify operations prior to closing to help mitigate a rise in cases; this includes select staff and students working and learning remotely.

Section 7: Teaching and Learning

As our school plans to welcome students back into the school building during this time of uncertainty, we are guided now, more than ever, by our school’s mission of fostering a love of learning, intellectual curiosity and social responsibility. Though the year ahead will be unlike any other, we take comfort in knowing that while our school building may have closed, our school community is stronger and more connected than ever. We will hew close to our values of kindness, openness, responsibility, perseverance, and journey as we re-envision our school to meet the challenges of this moment.

Orientation: We will begin the school year with an orientation/phase-in program that will allow students to visit their classroom with their teacher and pod-mates. The goals of this orientation program are as follows:

- Reduce anxiety on the part of students and parents so everyone feels comfortable and safe walking into the building.
- Take away the newness and the unknown; allow students to practice routines prior to the first day of school.
- Orient students (and families) to new spaces and in-person protocols.
- Build trust and confidence in the school on the part of parents, students and faculty/staff.
- Allow faculty to develop routines with students so they can focus on supporting students and teaching.
- Ignite a sense of joy about returning to school.

During the in-person visits, students will:

- Practice school arrival and departure procedures.
- Visit their classroom
- Participate in a community-building activity/project with their teacher and pod-mates.

Following the in-person visits, middle school students will participate in a Zoom Q&A with their teachers and classmates to process the changes.

Academics

Senesh teachers rose to the challenge of remote teaching during a global pandemic heroically. We learned new technologies and developed new modalities to teach content and skills. We built on the foundation of strong relationships so that students continued to feel known and cared for, all while juggling our own family responsibilities and the anxiety-producing unknowns.
of a global pandemic. As a community, we modeled resilience and compassion. We lived out our mission and emerged as a stronger community.

As we plan for the year ahead, we are focusing on the following challenges:

- Structuring the curriculum to account for any gaps in skills and content that may have resulted as well as finding ways to provide enrichment for students who thrived during remote learning and may be ahead of their classmates.
- Providing students with additional time to adjust new classroom and school routines for in-person learning and guiding faculty on how to support students through this experience.
- Training faculty to identify and support students who will return to school with a range of social-emotional needs that may interfere with learning, focus, and working memory including the following:
  - dysregulated sleep and eating habits
  - anxiety about a return school due to COVID fears
  - social concerns/challenges due to extended separation from age-mates and/or related to the pod structure
  - disappointment about the nature of school/“grief” for school as they remember it

To meet these challenges, our academic roadmap will be based on the following tenets:

1. Learn joyfully: Prioritize community building, relationships between students and teachers and the fun and joy of school! Celebrate the opportunity to return to school and be together!

2. Work together to a) prioritize the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each grade level and subject area and b) predict gaps based on remote teaching.

3. Plan the first unit: to reduce student anxiety and ease students back into learning, teachers should design a first unit that will:
   a. engage students
   b. re-ignite a love of learning
   c. ensure that students have a high probability of success while setting standards and providing support to meet expectations.

4. Use pre-assessments to identify students who have gaps in their learning or who flourished during remote learning and will require either support or enrichment to meet their needs.

5. Build in time to help students develop skills such as self-regulation, time management/executive functioning, self-reflection/goal setting, and effective teamwork.
6. Use a variety of assessment tools (formative, summative) throughout each unit to determine progress and mastery of the essential skills and content.

Assessment
At each grade level and in every content area, teachers are re envisioning the start of the school year to focus on student well being, connection/relationships and helping students adjust to in person learning.

As a progressive school, non-traditional, targeted assessments are woven into our practice. Teachers at every grade level will use these tools to surface gaps in learning and adjust the curriculum accordingly. In this way, we benefit from being a small school with a connected and collegial faculty who know all of our students well, have already identified students who struggled with remote learning, can be nimble and flexible in the delivery of skills and content, and can adapt curriculum to prioritize key skills and content.

As the year progresses, whether in-person or remotely, we will continue to track and remEDIATE gaps in student achievement and flag students who need further follow up and targeted support from their classroom teachers or our learning support team.

Professional Development
Senesh is a learning community with a long-standing tradition of learning and inquiry on the part of our administration, faculty and staff. During this time, we have focused our professional development on the following three areas:

1. SEL Support
   ○ Professional development for administrators and teachers around identifying signs of depression, anxiety, and trauma in children of different ages, and how to appropriately refer them to support staff for follow up.
   ○ Training in how to normalize, process and discuss the range of student experiences during these months in developmentally appropriate ways and in a variety of settings, such as morning meetings, advisory, and within academic classes.

2. New modalities for teaching, learning and assessment in a hybrid or remote setting.

3. Diversity, equity and inclusion
   ○ Empowering teachers to discuss issues of systemic racism and oppression at all grade levels and across content areas.
   ○ Help students understand and process the social unrest happening in their neighborhoods/communities and across the country.
   ○ Strengthen students civic engagement and awareness and prepare students to engage with an understanding of the upcoming election season.

Over the summer, our administrative team and school counselors have attended numerous trainings, workshops and conferences on the topic of social-emotional awareness in the context of COVID. As a Jewish school, we are part of Prizmah: the Center for Jewish Day School. This
organization has provided schools with a wealth of SEL information, training, and support, including specific guidance for re-opening schools. These include suggestions for how parents can prepare students to return to school, social-emotional resources for teachers as we transition back to school, guidelines for recognizing trauma, and discussions of the kinds of emotional challenges students may have experienced during quarantine and as they prepare to return to school.

Our August in-service meetings focus on social-emotional issues including meetings on the following topics:

1. Understanding and recognizing trauma
2. Understanding the unique social-emotional needs of students during this moment and as they transition back
3. Weaving social-emotional support and community building into our pedagogical approach and classroom practices

A focus on diversity, equity and inclusion is at the heart of our school’s mission and values, and our community is inspired to take our work to the next level of antiracism. Programs that will foster this evolution include the following:

- Many faculty members are attending summer workshops and trainings through organizations such as Facing History and Ourselves
- An antiracist faculty reading group is meeting regularly this summer and will continue to meet during the school year
- Antiracist training, provided by an outside organization, for all faculty and staff during August in-service, with continued/regular meetings throughout the school year
- Parent workshops, organized by our parent diversity committee
- On-going curricular examinations to ensure
  - Discussions about race and identity begin in the younger grades and continue in all years
  - Teachers have had opportunities to discuss and reflect on their own racial identity and are willing to and comfortable with discussing race and identity with students
  - Our DEI curriculum allows students to understand, recognize and work to dismantle systemic and structural racism and oppression

**Social-Emotional Well-Being**

To quote the NY State Education Department, “Social emotional well-being must be schools’ and districts’ top priority in supporting school transitions, not at the expense of academics, but in order to create the mental, social, and emotional space for academic learning to occur.” To that end, Senesh has and will continue to support students, faculty and staff, and parents during this COVID-19 period in a number of different ways.
Family Outreach and Community Involvement

Small classes and regular communication with families through emails, our blog updates, parent-teacher conferences, parent meetings, and social media updates cultivate a sense of trust and community, practices that continued during remote learning and through the summer. As an example, our parent diversity committee has organized workshops and conversations throughout the summer that have been well attended by parents and faculty members. Our head of school has hosted regular Zoom meetings and webinars during the spring and into the summer to update parents and faculty on our reopening plans. In the spring, we hosted our fundraising gala over Zoom (including a stand-up comedian) and had the opportunity to celebrate eighth grade graduation over Zoom as a community. These moments, combined with our communal celebration of Jewish holidays and rituals over Zoom, have enabled us to stay connected with families, brought parents, students and faculty comfort through community, and mitigated feelings of isolation. Parents have remained connected with each other over email and through text groups. Our divisional leaders have been in contact with families through regular emails, video messages, and 1:1 meetings since remote learning began. Though we have been physically apart, our community has been more together than ever.

Student Support

Families are drawn to Senesh for our sense of warmth and nurturance and because, as a small school, parents know no child will “fall through the cracks.” Our robust social-emotional support system is multi-tied. It begins with the classroom teacher. In our lower school, this year, teachers will “loop” with students. Thus, every child will begin the school year in the care of a teacher who knows them and their family well. In the middle division, our small faculty means that, in many subjects, students will have the same teacher for the second, third or even fourth year. Even when a teacher has not taught a student in their subject area, they most likely know the student from contact they have had in extracurricular programs and community gatherings.

In addition to our classroom teachers, the school is also served by two school counselors (one for each division) who is available to students, families and teachers for individual and family appointments, as well as consultation with teachers about student needs in the classroom. During remote learning, counselors sent out regular emails to parents to address the unique emotional challenges of a public health crisis and met individually with parents. Our weekly grade-level meetings, attended by teachers, the school counselor, learning specialist, and division director are an opportunity to share notes on students of concern and track progress in getting students and families the help they need. When necessary, outside referrals for follow up are made. These meetings continued during remote learning in the spring, enabling us to continue support systems already in place and quickly identify and put supports in place for students who struggled during remote learning -- either academically, socially, or both.

The “back-to-school” season is always a time of heightened emotion, anxiety, and excitement for students and teachers alike. Whether we return to school in-person, remotely or a hybrid of
these two models, our faculty and administration are excited to celebrate our return to school and infuse these days with a sense of joy, fun and community.

Faculty Support

During August in-service and throughout the school year, our school counselors will provide faculty members with opportunities for 1:1 meetings as well as regular group sessions to process and reflect on the challenges of teaching (and parenting) in a COVID context.

Lower School

During the coming school year, Responsive Classroom philosophy will be the cornerstone of our approach to building community and connection in our low density model or if we return to remote teaching. In the lower school, all teachers have been trained in the Responsive Classroom model which weaves social-emotional practices into the structure of the school day. For example, Responsive Classroom morning meetings build a strong sense of community and set students up for academic and social success. These morning meetings will be an integral part of our low-density model. Though students will not be able to be physically close (e.g. in a circle on a communal classroom rug), teachers are putting in place alternative methods to build community and support such as through songs, stories, and games as well as connecting with students over Zoom who may opt for remote schooling by partnering those students with an in-person classmate. In addition to morning meetings, the Responsive Classroom model provides teachers with specific language and practices to implement engaging academics, positive community, effective classroom management and awareness of the developmental needs of their students. These practices carried over effectively into remote teaching in the spring such that students experienced a sense of continuity and consistency.

In addition to the Responsive Classroom approach, our lower school already has a robust social-emotional curriculum in place. Faculty training has allowed us to develop a common language and understanding around the social-emotional needs of lower school students. Teachers in all subjects -- general studies, Hebrew and Judaics, deliver this curriculum through regular lessons and activities on topics such as self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision making. In addition to explicitly teaching social emotional skills, teachers intentionally introduce a social emotional lens to other areas of curriculum. For example, students examine the feelings and motivation of characters in books, the decision making process of public figures in social studies, and the dilemmas and conflicts faced by biblical figures.

Middle School

In the middle school, our advising system is the cornerstone of social-emotional support. This year, each “pod” will be an advisory group, served by an advisor who is a teacher for that grade. At an already-small school, these even smaller advisory groups will provide students with a strong sense of support and pod spirit. Our teachers are already accustomed to serving as
advisors and we are making structural changes to our schedule to allow the advising program to grow, including daily morning homeroom check-ins that will take place on in-person and remote learning days. Regular grade-level meetings throughout the school year will allow us to create an advising program that is both proactive (addressing the needs and challenges we already anticipate) and reactive -- changing as we gain a better understanding of the needs of the particular groups and individuals. Our new middle school director joins our division with over 20 years of experience in education, with a particular focus on the social-emotional needs of middle-school age students, including building advising programs and supporting teachers in the role of advisors. During our August in-service weeks, middle school teachers will work together to reenvision our advising program, define the role of an advisor in our school, and discuss the social-emotional needs of students at each grade level.

In addition to the advising program, teachers in all subjects are reframing their opening units and curriculum to focus on:

1. Community building
2. Student-teacher relationships
3. Re-igniting a love of learning through high-engagement topics, projects and activities that provide students with opportunities to connect with one another and experience competence and success

Our hybrid-model provides us with exciting opportunities to allow students to work and engage with classmates who are not in their pod during the days when they are learning from home. In addition, programs such as electives, student government and our buddy program, which will all happen remotely, provides opportunities for students to connect across grade-levels, building a sense of community and allowing students to connect around shared interests.

**Special Education**

As educators and policy makers across a wide range of fields have rightly noted, students with special needs and/or learning differences need extra attention and prioritization in the coming year. Senesh is fortunate to have a strong Learning Support program in place already, and we expect to make full use of it in any of the three scenarios we might encounter next year. Our learning support team includes two full time learning specialists.

Teachers at each grade level at Senesh meet weekly to discuss student progress and concerns. Meetings in the lower school are also attended by the lower school director and full time lower school learning specialist while meetings in the middle school are attended by the middle school director and full time middle school learning specialist. After hearing about student concerns, the team will make recommendations to the teachers on ways to differentiate instruction and scaffold assignments to support the child. The learning specialist may observe the child in the classroom to gain additional insights. The team will follow up to assess if these interventions are sufficient.

If the student continues to struggle, the next step in the process would be for the learning
specialist to work with the child, one on one or in small groups either in the classroom or in the learning center to provide targeted instruction. The duration of this support will depend on the child's learning needs and progress. The learning specialist will assess the student's progress and adjust instruction accordingly. The learning specialist works with students in each grade of the lower school and is in close contact with the classroom teachers.

If despite targeted instruction a student is not making satisfactory progress, the division director, learning specialist and classroom teachers will meet with the parents to recommend an evaluation in order to gain understanding into the student’s learning profile. Some of our families seek a private neuro-psychological evaluation while others may proceed with an evaluation through the department of education. Once an evaluation has been completed the teaching team will reconvene to review the recommendations and accommodations.

There are a number of students at each grade level who receive support through the Department of Education. This can include academic support from a SETSS provider, occupational therapy and speech therapy. These providers are not employees of the school but use spaces in the building to support the students.

Open communication, a collaborative approach, and providing these necessary interventions and modifications will support student progress and individual learning needs being met.

**Access to Technology**

Senesh conducted surveys of its parents and faculty to determine what access they have to technology and the internet. We worked with families and faculty last Spring to make these determinations (and in more than a few cases, helped families and faculty access the technology they needed).

To prepare for all scenarios and ensure quality education and equity for all students, we will have an individual device for each student in 2nd-8th grades to be used for in-person and distance learning. Students will travel to and from school with their device. In addition, faculty and staff will be provided devices upon request.

We have invested in the following devices:
- Chromebooks
- Tablets
- Video equipment in one classroom per grade to allow for remote streaming student access

**Platforms and Security**

Senesh uses Google Classroom and Seesaw as online platforms for instruction and learning. Zoom is our preferred video conference tool. Our technology team evaluates all of our platforms including security concerns.
Technology Education for Families and Teachers

Last spring, our technology team did a tremendous job providing support for both families and teachers as we pivoted rapidly to remote learning. Having established a successful Google Classroom platform, we now are in the position of simply providing “maintenance” support to families who need troubleshooting here and there with the technology. Similarly, teachers are relatively well-equipped for remote learning. Technology staff have time built into their job duties and schedules to work with teachers who are experiencing technical difficulties. Professional development on the pedagogical side of remote learning will be provided in the form of assigned articles, opportunities to attend NYSAIS-sponsored seminars on the topic, and time in our annual professional development week in August devoted to discussing and brainstorming together.

Attendance

Regular and timely school attendance is necessary for success in school. The school collects attendance data daily, both for in-person and online settings, which is entered into the school’s database, Senior Systems.

Parents are asked to inform the office of a child’s absence by 9:00am. An absence from school for three or more consecutive days must be accompanied by a doctor’s note upon return to school.

Chronic Absenteeism

Senesh will work to identify any children at-risk of becoming chronically absent due to sickness, family situation, or other circumstances by reaching out to families and providing educational support services that include:

- Check-ins with the class teacher to provide work at a rate and level that is appropriate to the student’s situation
- Additional support from our Learning Support team, if needed
- Help arranging or altering any DOE-related services to which the child is entitled
- Help obtaining the necessary technology to ensure continuity of learning
- Appointments with our school counselor who can refer out to additional services, as needed

To achieve these goals, we will use phone, email, and even physically-distant in-person meetings to engage and converse with family members and students who are experiencing difficulty.

If an allegation of educational neglect is warranted due to a custodial parent or guardian failing
to ensure a child’s prompt and regular attendance in school or keeps the child out of school for impermissible reasons; social services may be contacted.