



# REOPENING PLAN 2020-2021

## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
OUR APPROACH TO A SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL	3
OUR PRIORITIES	5
THREE REOPENING MODELS	6
RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES: PROMOTING BEHAVIORS THAT REDUCE SPREAD	9
FACILITIES	15
CLASS SIZES AND COHORTS	19
HEALTH AND HYGIENE	19
ADDRESSING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND REPORTING ILLNESSES	25
DECISIONS TO CLOSE AND REOPEN SCHOOL	26
ACADEMICS	27
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)	31
STUDENT ASSESSMENTS	32
SPECIAL EDUCATION	33
ENGLISH LEARNERS	33
LEARNING PLATFORMS AND DIGITAL TOOLS	34
STAFFING AND PERSONNEL	35
DAILY OPERATIONS	36
TRANSPORTATION	38
FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	40
RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES	42

## INTRODUCTION

Manitou School has created a plan to reopen our school that allows for flexibility, transparency, and prioritizes the health and safety of our community.

Our Reopening Plan is guided by the assumption that, until a vaccine is widely administered, COVID -19 will continue to impact communities and require mitigation responses. This means we need to be able to respond quickly to changing circumstances in our own school community, as well as to conditions in the Mid-Hudson Valley Region, the state of New York, and the United States.

## OUR APPROACH TO A SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL

To ensure the safety of our students, staff, and community, we have created a thorough plan based on the NYSED guidelines. Our Reopening Plan is guided by the following principles:

**Safety:** In order to open campus, we must ensure that gathering together is done safely.

**Striving for a Full Program:** Having all of our students on campus for a full 5-day on-campus program is our preference and ultimate goal.

**Creating Outdoor Learning Spaces to Maximize Time Outdoors:** We are planning on spending time outdoors, with physical distancing, because it is the safest option for our school community. Additionally, we are creating outdoor classrooms under canopies, where students can engage in all the classroom activities that would typically take place indoors.

**Social-Emotional Wellbeing:** Building a caring, safe, and supportive environment for all students and adults is foundational to a successful reopening of The Manitou School. At Manitou, we will continue to embed best practices in social-emotional learning in our daily work to support all members of our learning community. We are committed to providing support in any way possible.

**Education of the Whole Person:** Our in-person and distance learning environments will continue to include meaningful academic, co-curricular, and community components.

We are continuing to review and develop our distance learning program in this light so that it can be used as a tool in the best way possible and support healthy learning.

***Predictability and Rhythm:*** We understand that our students and their parents/caregivers need a predictable routine.

***Building Relationships:*** Regular interaction between teachers and classmates plays a pivotal role in children's experience of their lessons and in their social and emotional growth and well-being.

***Community:*** Maintaining the strength and unity of our community is integral to the student experience and our school culture; we must, therefore, strive to maintain the cohesion of our community through shared experiences and time on campus, to the extent possible.

***Respect and Responsibility:*** As a community, we strive to remain respectful of one another in our words and in our actions. During COVID-19, this includes expanding our awareness to acknowledge that people in our community have varying levels of risk tolerance for personal and familial reasons that we may not always be aware of. In willingly complying with safety guidelines, the adults in our community are communicating this respect to one another and to the children who are watching us for cues on how to handle this "new normal." In this way, we also demonstrate our responsibility to one another and to the relationships we have built.

***Masks and Face Coverings:*** We will comply with NYS guidelines regarding masks for faculty and students, and our program will be structured to allow times and places when it will be safe for the children to take mask breaks. Families will be asked to provide masks for their children, and we will have extra masks at school in case they forget them. Teachers will provide students with opportunities to remove their masks at appropriate times and under appropriate conditions. While students and staff may choose to wear their face coverings at all times, as this the safest thing to do, students will be permitted to remove their face coverings during teacher-directed breaks when they are socially distanced and while eating or drinking. We will require masks when indoors for students of all grades, staff and visitors. As guidance evolves, we will continue to update our policies to ensure compliance with the latest mask guidance.

**Flexibility:** We recognize that considering innovative program models will be advantageous, given the substantial uncertainty about how the pandemic will unfold. In addition, we are reviewing the traditional concept of a school day, week, and year, as well as the traditional timing of our school breaks in an effort to be able to be together on campus as much as possible. Families are asked to be flexible with such things as vacation planning, to allow for as much in-person learning as possible.

## OUR PRIORITIES

### Safety

Our greatest priority is and will always be the safety of our students and staff. One of the primary goals of this plan is to detail the newly developed procedures that we will implement to ensure the safest environment possible. As long as the health of the Manitou community, the surrounding community, and our community at large continues to support this model, The Manitou School will remain open for all students in preschool through grade 8 every day. By reconfiguring spaces, using the outdoors, and developing the comprehensive plan that follows, we are confident that we can offer a program for staff and children that is safe and educationally sound.

### Social and Emotional Well-Being

Building a caring, safe, and supportive environment for all students and adults is foundational to a successful reopening of The Manitou School. The months of this pandemic have been very disruptive and have presented multiple and varied challenges to individuals, families, our community, and our society. Many of us will continue to manage challenging emotions as we navigate our new normal. At Manitou, we will continue to embed best practices in social-emotional learning in our daily work to support all members of our learning community, and are committed to providing support in any way possible.

### Ongoing Communication

Effective, open communication is more critical now than ever. Therefore, we will continue to have frequent and multiple ways of communicating with all members of our community, via email, zoom meetings, phone calls, and one-on-one conversations.

Input from relevant stakeholders across the Manitou community has been taken into account every step of the way when formulating this plan. Our administrative team will continue to be available to ensure students, families, and staff members can voice their concerns and receive answers. We will also redesign our website to ensure that this plan, as well other relevant details, are readily available. We commit to ensuring that:

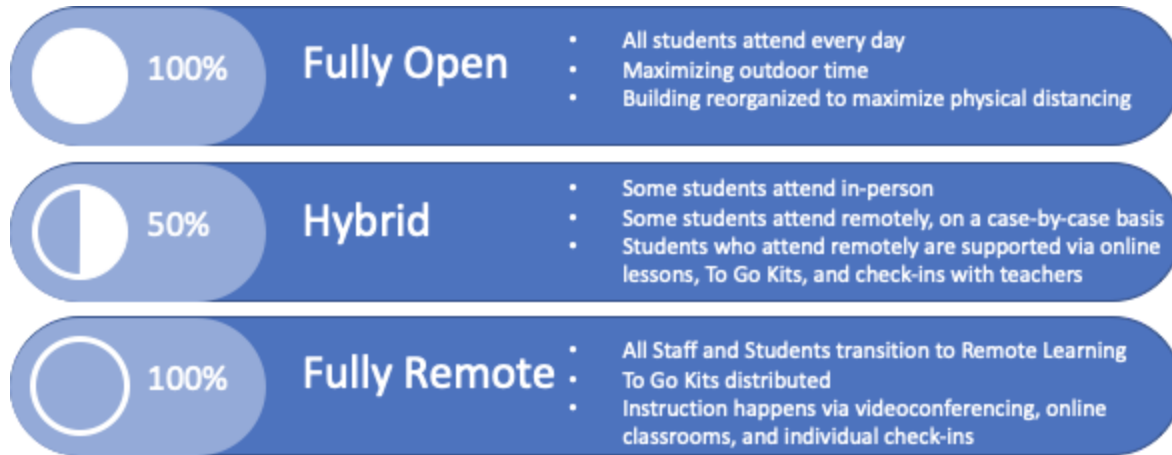
- We include all stakeholders across the Manitou community
- Families are provided with clear and ongoing communication about what to expect, during and prior to reopening. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines
- All constituents receive timely communication regarding changes that may be necessary as we learn more and desire to improve and enhance our plan
- Any family needing translated materials may contact us to ensure their needs are met

## **Equity**

We are committed to ensuring that every student and family in our community has the opportunity to access the tools that are needed to successfully participate in our program. Toward this goal, we stand ready to assist any family who, whether because of this pandemic or otherwise, is in need of devices and/or access to the internet. Please call Maria Stein-Marrison, Head of School, for a confidential conversation regarding your current or anticipated needs.

## **THREE REOPENING MODELS**

Every school has been asked to prepare three reopening models - Fully Open, Hybrid, and a Fully Remote model. These models form a continuum that ranges from a fully open, every student at school every day experience, to fully remote learning where all students and staff work from home.



### Model #1: Fully Open

In this model, students will return to the school daily for instruction. We will implement a learning strategy which will maximize the use of outdoor spaces, allow our teaching staff to interact with students in reconfigured classroom spaces, cohorted groups, and with physical distancing in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

### Model #2: Hybrid

Manitou is planning for a safe return to campus for all our students. We recognize, however, that due to the nature of COVID-19, there may be individuals - students or teachers - who, for a period of time, need to participate in classes remotely for their own legitimate health reasons (e.g. positive COVID-19 test, documented medical condition, or required quarantine). The school will evaluate these requests on a case-by-case basis, applying a standard that seeks to balance the health of the individual with the ability of the school to make an accommodation.

If a student is required to participate remotely, we will work to create a plan that will allow the student to participate in some classes via videoconference, receive materials for independent work, and have regular check-ins with their teachers. If a student is participating remotely while classes are meeting in-person, that student will need to be

cleared by school and/or medical professionals before being able to return to school in-person.

It may also be possible that particular class cohorts will need to move to Remote Learning. If that is the case, the cohort will engage in remote learning while the other cohorts in the school continue to attend in-person.

### **Model #3: Fully Remote (Remote Learning)**

In the event that we are required to close due to health concerns or government mandate, we will transition to a fully remote learning environment. All staff and students will work from home and will be expected to participate in remote learning. This will include daily participation in live lessons, Zoom meetings and accessing assignments and activities through Google Classroom.

Each class will have a schedule that will combine some live (synchronous) instruction, some independent work, and some recorded lessons. Although the schedule will vary significantly based on grade level, the following is a sample daily schedule that a student might follow during remote learning:

<b>Sample Remote Learning Schedule</b>	
9:00 - 9:45	Live reading lesson followed by independent practice of reading and submission of written or recorded assignment.
10:00 - 10:45	Live writing lesson followed by a small group meeting with the teacher to share and receive feedback about writing.
11:00 - 11:45	Live or recorded math lesson followed by independent practice. A small group or individual meeting with the teacher for re-teaching or feedback.
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch break
1:00 - 1:45	Live lesson in one special area class followed up by independent practice and submission of written or recorded assignment.
1:45 - 2:30	Live or recorded STEAM or social studies lesson followed by independent work and/or small group or individual meetings for re-teaching or feedback.

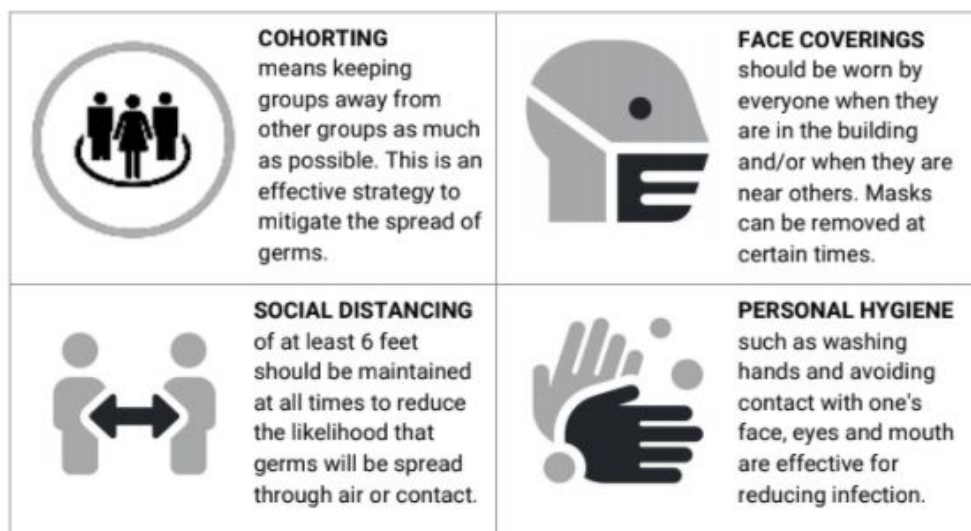


## RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES: PROMOTING BEHAVIORS THAT REDUCE SPREAD

Risk mitigation is at the heart of our new health and safety protocols. In crafting our plan for reopening and for ongoing education, The Manitou School is dedicated to developing procedures and protocols that will **reduce the risk** of virus transmission for students, staff, families, and visitors, while remaining flexible, responsive, and open to new ideas and information. In order to do this effectively, The Manitou School will:

- Use reliable, scientific sources to guide our response to and understanding of COVID-19 and develop best practices to prevent exposure and spread within our community
- Focus on the variables that we can control within our community
- Remain mindful of the factors in our environment that may influence us to change our behaviors and examine if these changes are evidence based
- Actively monitor ongoing adherence to the new practices and protocols to ensure continued compliance, even as we become comfortable with the “new normal”

Guidance from the New York State Department of Education (NYSED), The Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) acknowledge that we cannot stop the spread of COVID-19, we can only mitigate the risk of exposure. The following graphic will be placed throughout the building to reinforce the associated expectations:



The most important and effective strategy for mitigating the transmission of COVID-19 to others in a school setting is to **keep your child home** if they or anyone else in the household are demonstrating any of the known symptoms. According to the CDC, these symptoms include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cough
- Fever (children with a fever of 100°F or greater should not come to school)
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Shortness of breath or difficult breathing
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Please be sure to keep your child home and contact the school and your physician immediately if anyone in your household exhibits these symptoms.

## **Cohorting**

New York's reopening guidance plan has recommended that we establish stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible, by placing students into groups that stay together throughout the day. On the basis of this recommendation, we have taken the following steps to minimize interactions between groups:

- Create class groups that stay together throughout the day, to the extent possible.
- Recreate the Master Schedule so that specials are delivered on a term basis, for a period of time for each class rather than on a daily rotation to minimize exposure to different teachers.
- Restructure the environment so that lunches can be eaten outdoors (our preferred option) or classrooms with students socially distanced.
- Reconfigure teams of teachers to work with students to keep cohorts consistent
- Encourage families to drive children to and from school rather than relying on bus transportation.
- Provide notification of the cohorts to families so they can use this information when scheduling activities, carpooling, and engaging in other activities outside of school.

- Closely monitor students when they need to be outside their cohorts/with other cohorts to ensure the proper use of facial coverings and other precautions.
- Allow teachers to rotate to classrooms, rather than students going to other classrooms wherever possible.
- Assign cohorts to use specific entry and exit points, and other spaces.
- Provide ongoing education to staff, students and families regarding the importance of cohorting and the associated health benefits.

### **Social Distancing**

We realize that students are naturally curious and social, and enjoy getting close together. However, guidance from the medical field indicates that social distancing of 6' is an effective strategy to reduce the spread of germs and COVID-19. Therefore, we will focus on creating an environment that fosters physical distancing. We will take the following steps to ensure this strategy is in place:

- Place desks and tables in measured distances from others.
- Require that teachers (rather than students) rotate to classrooms when possible to reduce the likelihood of contact in hallways with other non-cohorted students.
- Reduce hallway congestion by encouraging the use of direct entrances/exits into classrooms to the outdoors, designing the schedule so that groups of students are using the hallways in unidirectional flows at particular times, and training students and staff on how to social distance while in the hallways.
- Mark spaces in front of the classroom so that teachers can easily access teaching tools such as whiteboards, chart paper, or large interactive displays.
- Provide ongoing education to staff, students and families regarding the importance of social distancing and the associated health benefits.

### **School Routines**

We will update many of our practices to maximize physical distancing and safety.

#### **Drop-Off and Pickup Practices:**

- Staggered arrivals by grade
- Curb-side drop-off, by each classroom's exterior door (rather than the front door)

- No-touch temperature checks at drop-off, while children are still in the car, or at the entrance of their designated drop-off area
- Pick-up at separate, designated outdoor locations for each class

**School-Day Adjustments:**

- Staggered recess periods
- Staggered bathroom breaks
- Minimizing movement between classrooms
- Students and faculty enter and exit the building directly through exterior classroom doors whenever possible.
- Students will need to be prepared with rain gear, cold weather gear, boots, and extra clothing, to be kept at school.

**Additional Adjustments:**

- Only staff and students will be allowed in the school building
- Visitors to the school building will be restricted
- Meetings will happen via phone or video conferencing

**Physical Campus Adjustments**

- Physical distancing in all classrooms, with student desks and learning centers clearly separated and marked
- Keeping each class together while maintaining a mix of indoor and outdoor times (some classes will happen almost exclusively outdoors).
- Repurposing assembly spaces and other larger rooms to accommodate classes that cannot safely spread out and work together in our smaller classroom spaces.
- Classroom spaces throughout the campus will be reallocated to allow students to be indoors for inclement weather and in winter, so that all grades can be on campus year-round.

**Face Coverings**

Guidance from health professionals indicates that consistently wearing face coverings will greatly mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. We will require all staff and

students to wear face masks when inside the building. Requiring the use of facial coverings for students may present some challenges. Therefore, we will implement the following strategies to ensure compliance:

- Families must supply cloth masks for their child(ren) and wash them daily. Cloth masks are typically more comfortable and they can be personalized by students which may aid in motivation to wear them. In the event that a child forgets their facial covering, a disposable mask will be provided by the school.
- Mask-breaks will be a necessary part of the school day. Students will be permitted to remove their face coverings during teacher-directed breaks outdoors when they are socially distanced, and while eating or drinking.
- If a teacher or child is unable to wear face coverings due to certain medical conditions, families must contact the director, [director@manitouschool.org](mailto:director@manitouschool.org), to determine if special accommodations are needed.

Face Coverings Required	Face Coverings can be Removed
School District provided transportation (School Bus)	Family-provided transportation
Indoor Classroom Instruction	Lunch/Outdoor Recess
Transitions in the school building	Physical Education (ensuring distancing)
While using the bathroom	Breaks provided throughout the day

Information and resources to assist in instructing on the proper use and cleaning of face masks are on the [CDC webpage on cloth face coverings](#).

Staff may bring and wear their own masks to school if they choose to, and disposable face coverings will be provided to the staff by the school if they prefer to use disposable masks.

## Healthy Hygiene Practices

It is imperative that students and staff follow the outlined procedures to mitigate the transmission of germs. These practices are time-tested and should apply even after this pandemic has subsided:

- Clean hands often
- Avoid close contact
- Use a face covering when around others
- Cover coughs and sneezes

## Hand Hygiene

Students and staff must practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. We will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene.

Hand hygiene includes:

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method;
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Providing hand sanitizer throughout common areas (e.g. entrances, bathrooms), near high touch surfaces, and use touch free dispensers when able;

Students and staff will be required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer:

- Upon arrival to school,
- Before and after leaving/entering their classroom area (indoor or outdoor),
- before snack and lunch,
- Before and after recess
- After using the bathroom,
- After sneezing, wiping or blowing nose, or coughing into hands;
- Whenever they are soiled.

We will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene.

## **Respiratory Hygiene**

The COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, it is important that students and staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately. A supply of tissues and no touch/floor pedal trash cans is available in each room in the school. If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Students will practice and be reminded to use tissues and cough/sneeze into their elbows when tissues are not available, and to always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

## **FACILITIES**

In an effort to ensure the smallest group sizes possible to promote social distancing, and to minimize contact in large groups, we have reconfigured our school spaces and are planning on creating extensive outdoor learning spaces. We are planning on spending time outdoors, with physical distancing, because it is the safest option for our school community.

Outdoor classrooms will consist of large, sturdy canopies, under which students can engage in all the classroom activities that would typically take place indoors. These canopies will be designated to specific classes at specific times to maintain cohorting.

Additionally, we are creating outdoor learning spaces for classes that do not have dedicated outdoor classrooms. With clipboards in hand, students might engage in outdoor book discussions, journaling, math, and language practice, artistic and hands-on projects, and more. All Specials will take place outdoors.

## **Promotion of Healthy Habits**

Signage will be prominently posted in classrooms and throughout the building (i.e. entrances, hallways, bathrooms/sinks, break/work rooms) with visuals to increase accessibility and promote the actions that can be taken to stop the spread such as

properly washing hands, properly wearing a face covering, and maintaining social distance. Additionally, signs will be placed at entrances indicating traffic flow and identifying assigned bathrooms according to grade level cohorts to minimize exposure.

Training needs of staff related to health and safety protocols will be identified and performed prior to the first day of classes on September 1st. Topics will include, but not be limited to: social distancing; cleaning and disinfecting protocols; and hygiene practices (donning and doffing PPE, handwashing, stopping the spread of germs). This training will be mandatory for all teachers, staff, and substitutes. This information will be communicated to all families, and will be accessible on the school's website.

Manitou School staff will promote healthy habits to keep everyone safe while at school. Daily announcements and reminders related to staying safe and healthy will be communicated by school staff throughout the day. Parents can augment the school's efforts by reminding their children to practice safe and healthy habits at home.

### **Air Quality, Ventilation, and HVAC**

One of the best ways to ensure proper air quality is by spending time outdoors. We will spend as much time as possible outside, both for instruction and for recess and lunch. Following that, all of our classrooms have multiple windows that open safely, allowing proper ventilation and air circulation.

Our school has a state-of-the-art HVAC system that was installed when we renovated the building, and has been continuously inspected and maintained. The HVAC system supplies the building with outside fresh air that is vented into the classrooms. All filters in the system will be upgraded prior to the start of the new school year. The school's HVAC system has been reprogrammed to start 2 hours prior to occupancy and 1 hour post occupancy. Bathroom fans will stay on at all times (24 hours per day, 7 days per week). The importance of not making adjustments to the equipment (i.e. thermostats, fan speeds) and identifying and communicating observed issues with ventilation equipment to appropriate staff as soon as possible will be communicated to all school staff. To the extent possible, fresh air will be vented into classrooms, and classroom windows will remain open. Additionally, we may run portable HEPA filters in certain areas.



## **Water System**

The building was maintained by a small crew for the entire duration of the closure. This maintenance included running faucets on a daily basis and filling drain traps. As such, the school's water system is in compliance with current guidance provided by the DOH. Throughout the closure, we continued to inspect the water quality on a weekly basis, as is our policy for when school is in session.

## **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

In collaboration with our medical advisors, public health consultants, and guidance from the DOH and the NYSED, the school has created a plan to comply with the DOH's guidance related to the cleaning and disinfecting of schools during COVID-19. In compliance with these guidelines, the school has identified "high-touch" surfaces requiring cleaning and disinfecting on a daily, twice daily, or ongoing basis. We have procured state-approved cleaners and disinfectants to ensure the building stays clean and safe. Our plan was created based on the [Guidance for the Cleaning and Disinfection of Schools during the COVID -19 Pandemic](#) document released by the CDC

Our intensified cleaning and disinfection practices will continue to take place every evening. Throughout the day, high-touch or high-use areas like doorknobs, light switches, handles, faucets, sinks, etc., will also be cleaned and disinfected.

Cleaning and disinfecting logs will be kept in the office.

## **Cleaners and Disinfectants**

The school has identified and procured appropriate cleaning and disinfection products to combat the potential spread in the building. In compliance with the DOH's guidance, all cleaning products adhere to CDC Guidelines. We will continue use of several products included on the EPA's registry of cleaners confirmed for use against COVID-19. These products include Virex, Clorox Disinfectant Wipes, Clorox Disinfecting Bleach, and Lysol. Please be assured that appropriate training and use of personal protective equipment are our norms. Staff will be trained in how to use cleaning and disinfection products safely and effectively.

## **Bathrooms**

To minimize exposure, bathrooms will be assigned to grade level cohorts. To the extent possible, bathroom assignments will be made in consideration of a cohort's proximity to the facilities, as well as the ages of the students that will be using them. Bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily. Bathrooms will be labeled to remind students of their assignments. Signs reminding students to stay socially distant (i.e. 6' apart) and safe (i.e. masks must remain on, wash hands) while in the restroom will be posted in all bathrooms.

## **Safety Drills**

Manitou School will continue to hold mandatory safety drills with modifications that ensure proper health and safety precautions.

- We will conduct safety drills in a manner that ensures 6 feet of social distancing in outdoor areas and/or require individuals to wear masks. This may involve staggered fire drills for each building.
- Students will be instructed that, in the event of an actual emergency, social distancing will not be a priority and will not be expected. Immediate safety needs will be prioritized.

## **Emergency Evacuation Protocols**

In the event of an emergency evacuation, we will do our best to exit the building in a safe and orderly manner, following essentially the same procedures with which students are already familiar. Two minor adjustments will be communicated in advance: masks must be worn at all times and cohorts will be socially distanced from one another once safely outside the building. New evacuation routes and procedures will be shared with students as part of their orientation at the beginning of the school year.

## **Classroom Spaces**

In order to maximize space between and among the teacher and students, each classroom was assessed to determine the number of desks that could safely occupy

that space. Desks will be spaced and there will be space by the whiteboard. This configuration allows for plenty of distance between the teacher and the first row of students to enable demonstrations at the board in the front of the classroom. This model conforms to [CDC guidelines found here](#). A combination of face coverings and physical barriers will be used when 6 feet of social distance is not feasible. Where health and safety conditions and physical space allow, we will provide outdoor instruction.

### **Small Group Instruction**

There may be times where teachers and their students need to be in close proximity for instructional purposes, and when facial coverings are not feasible such as during speech and language instruction. In those cases, we will use 36"x24" plexiglass dividers that can be utilized as a physical barrier. When it is possible for students and/or staff to wear facial coverings in addition to the use of the plexiglass barrier, we will consider doing so.

### **CLASS SIZES AND COHORTS**

In accordance with state and CDC guidance, we have reconfigured our staff and student groups to create the smallest class sizes and cohorts possible.

By maximizing all of the available spaces throughout The Manitou School, we are able to achieve class sizes that range from 9-15 students, with an average class size of 12 students. Often, classes will be divided into even smaller groups that will work with teachers assigned to their class - for example, one small group might work on math with their classroom teacher while the other group works on Spanish with their assigned Spanish teacher. We will keep small groups consistent as well.

### **HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

#### **Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing**

According to the CDC, maintaining clean hands is one of the most effective strategies to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy. As such, students must engage in frequent handwashing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly

dirty, hand sanitizer may be used. Staff will teach and regularly remind students to be sure to wash their hands upon arrival, before and after meals, after recess and physical education, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing. School staff will also teach and regularly remind students of proper handwashing strategies, including washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Each classroom cohort will have access to a handwashing station or hand sanitizer dispenser with at least 60% alcohol in their classrooms.

### **Touchless Soap and Towel Dispensers**

In an effort to reduce the possible transmission of germs, we will replace soap and towel dispensers with ones that operate hands-free whenever possible.

### **Water**

Because of the potential to spread germs through the use of water fountains and the refilling of water bottles, we will close our water fountains. Families are required to provide each child with sufficient water for the duration of the school day. Individual bottles of water will be provided in emergency situations.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The school will actively monitor staff and student absenteeism and track the reasons for their absences to identify any trends that would suggest spread of illness such as COVID-19. Attendance will also be taken and tracked during instances of Remote Learning, whether it is for students who are engaged in remote learning while most classes are held in-person or in case the entire class or school needs to shift to Remote Learning.

### **School Supplies, Materials and Equipment**

In order to mitigate the transmission of germs, the school has purchased and will provide each student with their own school supplies to be used while in school. School supplies cannot be shared between students. In addition, we will ensure that materials and equipment that might be used by more than one student will be sanitized before being used again to the greatest extent possible.

## **Temperature Checks**

The Manitou School will be performing daily temperature checks for all students before they enter their classrooms. Temperature checks will happen in the car line, using no-touch thermometers, or upon entry to the outdoor classroom. Additionally, we will require that all faculty and staff monitor their own health, and we request that families also monitor their children's health and the health of everyone else in the household, before sending a child to school.

## **Daily Health Check Screening**

Each family will be required to fill out a daily questionnaire via Brightwheel, confirming that their child does not have a fever, does not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, has not been in contact with an individual that has COVID-19 in the past 14 days, and has not traveled internationally or to a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days. Students will be required to quarantine for 14 days after traveling to any place where there is a COVID warning. This includes quarantine before school starts, if the child has traveled to a place listed in the New York State Travel advisory within 14 days of the first day of school.

## **Management of Illness - Containment Plan/Isolation room**

Individuals suspected of having COVID-19 or other illness will be separated and sent home. Students awaiting transport home by their parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present who will be utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected to have COVID-19 may be in this isolation room/area if they can be separated by at least 6 feet.

Our procedures, consistent with CDC and NYSDOH recommendations, include:

- Closing off areas used by a sick person and not using these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred;

- Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Waiting at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible;
- Cleaning and disinfecting all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.

Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected it can be reopened for use. Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.

For the student who is ill, the following procedures will be followed:

- Student will be separated from the group and wait to be picked up by parent/guardian
- Parent/Guardian will be contacted for pickup
- Student will be escorted from isolation area to the parent/guardian;
- The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center;
- Symptomatic students or staff members will follow [CDC's Stay Home When You Are Sick guidance](#) unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the local department of health.
- If the student or staff member has emergency warning signs such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19

If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, school administrators will notify the Putnam County health department immediately to determine what steps are needed for the school community.

### **Notification of Exposure**

If we learn that one of our students, teachers or members of the extended Manitou community (such as a member of a student's immediate family) is COVID-19 positive, Manitou will notify the community of probable exposure while respecting privacy laws. We commit to keeping the identifying information as confidential as possible. Other members of the Manitou community who have potentially been exposed will be notified and advised to quarantine at home for at least 2 weeks. We may have to disclose the identity of an infected person on a need to know basis, but you will be informed of this need in advance.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student records. Under FERPA, a parent or eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before an institution discloses PII (Personally Identifiable Information), unless an exception to this general consent requirement applies. Pursuant to one such exception, the "health or safety emergency" exception, institutions may disclose PII, without prior written consent if need to know the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other individuals.

To be clear, if a Manitou student or teacher, or a member of their family, tests positive for COVID-19 while the student is attending school in person, if it is possible to share this information with those who need to know (such as the cohort and classmates) without disclosing the identity of the infected person, Manitou will do so and, in such case, consent is not required.

If we determine that disclosure of the infected individual's identity is necessary to the health and safety of members of the Manitou community, Manitou will first seek an authorization from the infected person or his/her/their guardian, and upon consent, will release the identity of the infected person only on a need to know basis.

If the infected individual or guardian refuses to sign a consent form, then Manitou will, on a case-by-case basis, determine if the disclosure is a health or safety emergency such that the person's identity must be disclosed and then only to those who need to know.

## **Return to School after Illness**

In keeping with CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, there are two scenarios. If a person is

diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) to **not** have COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person **is** diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms; and
- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath

The CDC provides specific guidance for individuals who are on home isolation regarding when the isolation may end: [Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings](#).

CDC recommendations for discontinuing isolation in persons known to be infected with COVID-19 could, in some circumstances, appear to conflict with recommendations on when to discontinue quarantine for persons known to have been exposed to COVID-19. CDC recommends 14 days of quarantine after exposure based on the time it may take to develop illness if infected. Thus, it is possible that a person known to be infected could leave isolation earlier than a person who is quarantined because of the possibility that they are infected.

## COVID-19 Testing



Following CDC guidance, **we will not** conduct COVID-19 testing of students or staff members at the school. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted should be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. [CDC Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing](#) If students or staff members show symptoms, they will need to see a healthcare provider who will then determine if a test is necessary, and the school will follow the procedure detailed above in the “Return to School after Illness” section. This policy might change based on NYSED and DOH guidance.

## Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments 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. Manitou School will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, and will assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:

- keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;
- ensuring student schedules are up to date;
- keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited; and
- Assisting local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations.

## ADDRESSING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND REPORTING ILLNESSES

In order to obtain important medical information, reporting illnesses will follow a new procedure during the 2020-2021 school year. In order to report an absence, call the school office at (845) 809-5695. In reporting your child’s absence, please provide the following information in your voice message:

- Your child's name
- Your child's classroom/cohort teacher
- Any specific symptoms your child is experiencing
- Any additional school programs in which your child has participated
- If your child is experiencing symptoms that are consistent with COVID, please provide the date of your child's doctor appointment as well as the anticipated timeline for receiving test results.

We are also mindful of students who have pre-existing health conditions and might require accommodations during this time. School staff will reach out to all families of students who have known health conditions and are more vulnerable to COVID-19. This might include students with heart conditions, asthma, and allergies. Individual plans will be developed for each of these students taking their health and educational needs into account. If you have a specific health concern about your child, including having a high-risk adult living in your home, please reach out directly to the administration in advance of the re-opening so that school team members can plan accordingly.

## DECISIONS TO CLOSE AND REOPEN SCHOOL

The decision to close and reopen school in response to COVID-19 will be made in consultation with health professionals, the Putnam County Department of Health, and the NY State Department of Health. We are awaiting final guidance from the NY State Board of Health and the Putnam County Board of Health on more specific policies regarding school closures in the case of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school community.

Manitou School will follow all local, regional, and state mandates regarding school closures.

### To Go Kits

In the event that a student or group of students will need to transition from in-person learning to remote learning, we have developed "To Go Kits" which contain all of the necessary materials and supplies that students and families will need to participate in

high-quality learning from home. Materials have been curated based on the curriculum as well as what is needed to continue instruction and learning in special areas like physical education, music and art.

## ACADEMICS

Academics at The Manitou School will continue to be meaningful, interdisciplinary, and curiosity driven as we pivot towards the learning landscape of this upcoming school year. As our students return to school in the fall, we will be working with them to learn who they are, what they love, how they learn, and where they are socially, emotionally, and academically. We are planning for a range of scenarios that incorporate varying levels of technological integration into this process. We are relying on our knowledge of our students, our experiences with Learning From Home during the Spring 2020 Semester, and evidenced based best practices to make these decisions. In modeling for our students the skills and behaviors we are working towards, our teachers remain flexible, innovative, responsive and open to collaboration as we create this new path.

### **In-School Learning**

This year, The Manitou School will begin teaching with technology a bit sooner than usual in order to ensure that all of our students have some comfort and familiarity with the tools and platforms they may need to use should they find themselves using a Hybrid or Remote School at any point during the year. This blend of in-person and supported technological introduction and usage is referred to as Blended Learning. Blended Learning will always be age appropriate, incremental, and supportive of our hands-on inquiry based style of learning.

### **PreK-1st Grade**

At The Manitou School, we know that our students' parents will be the primary person with whom we will communicate about plans, lessons, classwork, and schedules during any Hybrid or Remote School experience. Students at this grade level will continue to have nominal interactions with technology during their school day. Teachers and parents may use some of these tools as a way of communicating about homework, class projects, or other school related topics.

## **2nd and 3rd Grade**

During a typical school year, our 2nd and 3rd grade students have very minimal interactions with technology. When The Manitou School went remote during the Spring Semester of 2020, we were pleased by the spirit of confidence and flexibility our middle-elementary school students demonstrated in their eagerness to figure out how to interact independently in their remote environments. Many of our students at this age level learned to respond to their classmates in the Google Classroom, personalize their environments on video conferencing software, and read their daily schedules and begin organizing their time. To build on these successes and maintain this growing comfort with Hybrid or Remote School platforms, students at this age level will receive occasional demonstrations explaining how to use new technological tools and opportunities to practice in a fun and engaging way. Teachers, students, and parents may also use some of these tools as a way of communicating about homework, class projects, or other school-related topics.

## **Upper Elementary School and Middle School**

During the Spring Semester of 2020, our Upper Elementary and Middle School students demonstrated their growing digital literacy and interacted quite independently on Remote Learning platforms. In anticipation of a possible move to Remote Learning, we will continue refining students' understanding of online tools and practices while we are in-person in the classroom. Students in grades 4-8 will work with a consistent team of teachers and assistants to participate in their core content as well as special area classes through a blended learning model. This model will include both in-person and online interaction while students are in school and can adjust to a remote teaching model including live instruction and interaction should the need arise. Our focus during in-person learning will remain on interactive, face-to-face learning in the classroom. With teacher support, students will have opportunities to become more familiar with nuanced ways to use digital devices and virtual tools for learning, communicating, and submitting work. That way, if the switch to remote learning becomes necessary, students will already be familiar with the devices and tools they will need in order to have a successful remote learning experience.

Students will still participate in live lessons as much as possible whether they are in school or at home, but they will also use digital tools to engage in independent learning and practice when their teacher cannot be with them. The Manitou School teachers are looking forward to the opportunities afforded by this model of instruction as they know

it will foster student self-direction, critical thinking, and perseverance. In addition, many of the strategies that would be used in a blended learning environment could also be used for remote teaching and learning should that become necessary. Students will have a less challenging transition to remote learning if they have had experience with the digital tools and devices they will be using at home.

### **Remote Learning (In-Home Learning)**

Our remote learning plan draws on the successful implementation of and lessons learned during the Spring 2020 semester, as well as thorough research of additional models and tools used around the globe. We have refined and improved our instructional model based on feedback provided by faculty and families. We are pleased to be able to present a plan that will allow us to provide our students with high-quality, continuous learning even when we are not in a shared physical space.

Similar to the teaching and learning that took place this spring, teachers and students will interact using digital devices and tools for teaching and learning. Students are expected to participate fully in remote learning and will be assessed based on the work they submit. To increase a student's ability to complete all assigned work, students will participate in only one or two special area classes at a time. Special area and core content teachers will work together to integrate lessons and assignments to the extent possible.

- Should a local or state level decision be made to reduce capacity or close schools for the short term (2-5 days) or for a longer term (2 weeks), all students and teachers will be prepared to shift to remote learning either partially or completely depending on the level of closure.
- The school will be ready to communicate a schedule of classes as well as more detailed plans regarding either of the two scenarios within 24-48 hours.
- A 24-48 hour time period may be needed to make the shift if families will need time to retrieve necessary materials from school such as devices and To Go Kits.
- Teachers will ensure students are familiar and comfortable with online learning tools and platforms from the beginning of the

school year including assigning and requiring submission of work through Google Classroom.

- Teachers will engage in professional development in blended learning models as well as revised curriculum and will implement both at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year in anticipation of time constraints that may be caused by health disruptions.
- The Manitou School will engage in continued efforts to gather feedback from all constituents as well as to professionally develop our staff in best practices in blended and remote learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND THE ARTS**

The Manitou School recognizes the importance of physical education and the arts in providing a well-rounded student experience and fostering the talents and interests of so many of our students. Therefore our intention is to maintain access to these courses for all students, although they may be scheduled in more focused ways to reduce the number of adults with which students interact in a given period of time. We will be rotating “Specials” on a term basis, based on three terms (Fall Term, Winter Term, and Spring Term). Instead of receiving a different special every day, a class will receive the same special for a period of time during the term. For example, a classroom may have three weeks of music, followed by three weeks of art, followed by three weeks of PE, and then three weeks of Drama during the Fall term.

- The Manitou School will follow all CDC, state, and local guidelines related to social distancing and disinfecting areas and equipment used for physical education and physical activity, including recess.
- Physical education will be incorporated into daily activities, to ensure our students continue to get movement throughout the whole term, as well as having a focused PE special once a term.
- Physical education will be provided through a combination of in-classroom and outdoor activities.
- Physical education will focus on activities, exercises, and sports that are teacher-led, but performed individually using marked off areas, stations, or staggered participation to ensure separation of students.

- Students in each cohort will have assigned materials for each special to the extent possible (this includes writing/drawing utensils, texts, art supplies, and PE supplies among others).
- To maintain hydration, students will be required to bring and use individual water bottles.
- For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, music will focus on instruction that does NOT require singing or wind instruments.
- Students will rehearse and perform in small groups rather than large ensembles and/or utilize virtual tools to organize performances.

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)**

SEL provides a foundational set of competencies that serve as tools to navigate challenges in healthy, productive ways. SEL must be culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining to equitably meet the needs of our young people and adults. In order to continue to meet our student's needs and support their social and emotional learning:

- Faculty and staff will participate in professional development in SEL and trauma-informed teaching, especially as these topics relate specifically to COVID-19.
- We will focus our SEL learning on rebuilding the learning community and assessing SEL needs as well as practicing use of the health protocols in place such as social distancing and wearing masks. Faculty and staff will address the needs of identified students (ie. students requiring extra support during Distance Learning).
- The Manitou School will create a communication process for families to share experiences that are relevant to SEL needs of students and connect with families who express a need.

## **Restorative Practices**

Manitou School will continue to use our framework of Restorative Practices. Restorative practices are processes and approaches designed to build community and meaningful relationships, develop shared values, help students better understand their behavior, how it impacts themselves and others, and ultimately to use that self-

and social awareness to repair damage caused to relationships as a result of inappropriate behavior. It focuses on strategies and skills such as understanding and managing one's emotions and behavior, negotiating conflict constructively, building empathy, making constructive decisions about personal behavior, and realistically evaluating the consequences of one's behavior.

Addressing behavior that is inappropriate from a whole child perspective requires students' and adults' acquisition of, and practice in using, all five SEL core competencies, and is strengthened by an understanding of and sensitivity toward Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma-informed practices.

### STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

The Manitou School will base assessment practices for the 2020-2021 school year on our collective experience with our students, as well as assessments in the beginning of the school year to determine the needs of each of our learners.

- We will use what we already know about students from our time with them in 2019-2020 to determine starting points for instruction.
- In addition, The Manitou School will plan our initial units of study of the 2020-2021 school year to focus on re-establishing the learning community, welcoming our students back to our wonderful school, supporting our students' social-emotional needs, and using brief formative assessments in focused academic areas to guide our work with students.
- After our initial units of study have accomplished the goal of starting off the school year in a positive way, we will launch our revised, grade-level units of study within each content area and continue to use formative assessments to guide our work with students and help us determine needed academic and social-emotional supports.
- Finally, we will work toward administering summative assessments in specific content areas, including benchmark assessments such as MAP testing, when we feel our students are academically, socially, and emotionally ready to perform at their best to deliver useful information to teachers about student achievement levels.



Based on guidance from the State, moving forward, students will be assessed based on the work they submit whether they are in-person or learning remotely. It will be very important for students to remain current with their assignments and due dates, check for feedback from their teachers, and take opportunities to improve their work through final submission. If we shift to Remote Learning, teachers will communicate expectations for submitting assignments and share feedback on those through Google Classroom, or other means as is appropriate for the grade level and content area.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

As was the case for Distance Learning in the Spring of 2020, many of the decisions regarding special education will be made on an individual basis. The purpose of the bullets below is to provide information for special education students as a whole and, as a result, the guidance is more general. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our Director if you have any questions about re-entry and/or your child's special education program during in school or distance learning instruction. Manitou will continue to collaborate with the Haldane Central School District to coordinate Special Education Services.

Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs such as IEPs and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan as designed, The Manitou School will facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input. At this point the Manitou School will consider blended learning schedules if needed.

Manitou will not make programming decisions based on a student's disability category. However, the nature and/or severity of a student's disability may require unique considerations. In the case of a unique consideration, Manitou will develop protocols to consider the student's developmental level and skills.

## **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

The Manitou School will ensure that communications regarding the re-opening plan and future remote learning will be delivered in each of our family's home languages, and commit to supporting EL students through our Scientific Research-Based Intervention model.

### LEARNING PLATFORMS AND DIGITAL TOOLS

Based on the feedback from last year's distance learning, we have identified the following platforms and digital tools that we will utilize in our blended learning and remote learning.

#### **Google Classroom**

Google Classroom makes teaching and learning more productive and meaningful by streamlining assignments, boosting collaboration, promoting independence, and fostering communication. At The Manitou School, we will be using Google Classroom in grades four through eight. A teacher creates a Google Classroom and provides a code to students to join. Educators can distribute assignments, send feedback, and see everything in one place. Students use Google tools such as docs, slides, spreadsheets, drawings, and more to create their responses. Once their work is submitted, students can receive feedback from their teacher and, if appropriate, see a score or grade for their submission.

#### **Zoom**

Zoom is a powerful and secure web-based platform that allows for remote meetings. The teacher (or meeting host) has the ability to control speakers, video cameras, and chats, and can even enable generic backgrounds for increased privacy.

#### **Digital Tools**

In an effort to ensure we offer a robust learning environment for students, we have invested in a number of digital tools that can be accessed on a variety of devices both

within the school and at home if remote learning is necessary. We will make the website subscriptions available to our students when appropriate.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Our preparation for the possibility of future remote learning required that we make investments in both classroom and home based technology. We have purchased tablets and chromebooks to be used as needed, as well as projectors and document cameras.

## **MASTER SCHEDULE**

We are in the process of designing our master schedule in response to our learning priorities and to keep children in cohorted groups. We will finalize and share the schedule as soon as it is available. We have established the following priorities for our master schedule:

- Keeping children in their cohort groups as much as possible
- Focused study in special area classes
- Minimize transitions between classrooms
- Additional lunch & recess staggered periods

## **Enrichment Programs and Aftercare**

Until further notice, there will be no school-sponsored after-school enrichment programming. Aftercare will continue to be available and students will be arranged into cohorts, to match their in-class cohorts to the extent possible.

## **STAFFING AND PERSONNEL**

The Manitou School will maximize opportunities for social distancing and cohorting by assigning faculty and staff thoughtfully in support of our students. Although appropriately certified teachers will be planning instruction and assessing students, there will be times when adults will work in supervisory roles outside of their typical responsibilities. During this pandemic, every adult has been called upon to be flexible

during the school day and ready to support student learning and well-being wherever and whenever it is needed.

- The Manitou School will comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including teacher certification, as we plan for teaching and supervising established cohorts of students throughout each school day.
- The Manitou School will engage substitutes or may reassign staff to meet student needs.

## **Training and Professional Development**

Professional development will be delivered before the start of school, on designated Professional Development (PD) days, early dismissal days, and during grade level, department, and faculty meetings. To be responsive to the fluid nature of the pandemic as well as the needs of our students, which will be assessed continually, ongoing training and professional development will be scheduled as needed and as available. We are currently planning on a full two weeks of professional development before the beginning of school.

Possible topics include:

- Training on Health and Safety Protocols
- Training on PPE Protocols
- Training on Social Emotional Curriculum
- Training on Social Distancing Protocols
- Training on Blended Learning Best Practices
- Training on the Use of Technology Platforms
- Training on Remote Learning Best Practices
- Training on Identification of Abuse / Neglect
- Professional Development on the Modification of Curriculum
- Professional Development on the Modification of Units of Instruction

## **DAILY OPERATIONS**

### **Cohorts**

The purpose of cohorting is to limit the number of students who are exposed to or may be diagnosed with COVID-19 to reduce the potential for community transmission in a school. Maintaining stable cohorts helps to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19, and also makes it easier to implement contact tracing.

A “cohort” is a group or team of students and educators with consistent members that stay together throughout the school day. While not foolproof, cohorting has been identified as one of the most effective strategies to reduce exposure.

Student cohorts have been established to minimize the level of exposure to other students and maximize the available space throughout the building. In addition to other protocols discussed elsewhere in this Plan, students in each cohort will have assigned seats and their own materials in their classrooms, including writing utensils, texts, art supplies, and PE supplies among others.

### **Foot Traffic in Hallways**

We anticipate overall foot traffic in the hallways will be greatly reduced given the extensive use of outdoor space, and the reconfiguration of our master schedule so that we stagger breaks and reduce the number of students who will be in the hallway at any one time.

### **Meal Service/Hot Lunch**

We will not be able to provide Hot Lunch this year. We are exploring alternatives with catering companies for providing Brown Bag lunches. For now, expect that students and staff will bring their own lunch and snacks to school. When packing a lunch for your child, please remember that we are a peanut and treenut free school. Again, children should bring enough water to get them through the day. Water Fountains cannot be used.

### **Recess and Breaks**

We recognize the importance of providing recess to all students. In an effort to do this safely, and in consulting the American Academy of Pediatrics guidance, we have reduced the number of students that will be together for recess by staggering lunch and recess periods. When the weather cooperates, students will be outside for recess. Lunch and recess periods will be staggered so that some cohorts will eat lunch while others have recess. Recess locations will also be assigned and alternated to spread cohorts out further. Teachers will be encouraged to provide breaks for their students throughout the day.

### Visitors

Under the guidance of the State Department of Education, non-essential visitors are not permitted unless required by law or in the case of an emergency. In addition, use of the school building outside of school hours will be reduced to allow for thorough, daily cleaning and disinfecting.

Parent meetings will be conducted virtually until further notice. Parent meetings include parent team meetings, parent teacher conferences, meetings with the administration, 504s and IEPs.

### TRANSPORTATION

Although we **encourage families that have the ability to drive their child to and from school to do so**, the NYSED requires that districts work with their transportation providers and with the private schools to which they provide transportation to plan for three different statuses established by the DOH: Safe, Low, and Moderate. This tiered system is designed to allow schools the flexibility necessary to respond to trends in public health data.

#### Safe Status

Where either a vaccine is available or effective treatments for COVID-19 are available, bus transportation can operate as it did prior to the pandemic, with no restrictions.

#### Low Status

Where there is low transmission risk in the community and some restrictions are in place in schools, buses will be able to operate up to full capacity. Passengers will be required to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth before loading, during transit, and while unloading until they are given a mask break by their teachers. Passengers will be assigned seats by grade level and will remain in their seats during transit. Upon arrival at the school, students will unload the bus in a controlled manner from front to back by seat.

### **Moderate Status**

If the State of New York and/or DOH determines the transmission risk in the community to be moderate, passenger density should be significantly reduced. Passengers should be spaced with family members sitting together and non-family members should be spaced 6 feet apart utilizing alternating, diagonal seating.

The same requirements for wearing face masks or cloth face coverings, as well as sitting in assigned seats will be in place.

### **Additional Mitigation Strategies**

Transportation to and from school by parents/guardians will be encouraged to keep passenger density and risk of exposure to a minimum.

- A forthcoming survey will be conducted to find out which students will be driven by parents/guardians at the start of the school year.
- The school will plan to safely accommodate new traffic patterns in the event of increased alternate transportation by families, which may include staggering arrival and drop off times to enhance safety protocols in place.
- Manitou School Administration will develop arrival/departure procedures that limit unnecessary entrance of parents/guardians into the building.
- The school will allow for minimal contact of parents/guardians with school personnel and students while dropping off and/or picking up students during the day.

Proper hygiene habits will be practiced on the bus.

- Parents/guardians of younger students will be asked to assist in social distancing at bus stops and during pick-up and drop-off.
- Parents/guardians of younger students will be asked to secure masks on students at bus stops prior to students boarding the bus.
- Parents/guardians and teachers will be asked to remind students to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to boarding the bus in the morning and afternoon.
- To maintain stable bus cohorts, students will only be permitted on the bus to which they have been assigned.

### **FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

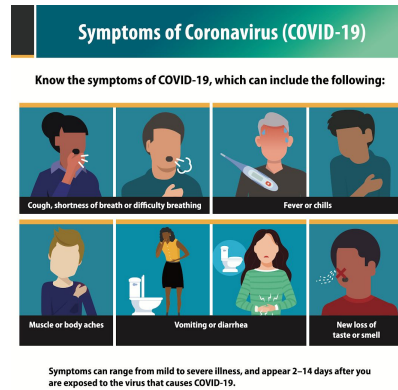
In order to provide the safest possible environment for our students and staff, we need straightforward communication and cooperation with the following strategies to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

#### **Screening for Symptoms at Home**

Every family will receive a chart which highlights the symptoms of COVID-19. We ask that families place this chart in a prominent location in their home, and refer to it before placing their child on the bus, or driving them to school. If there are questions about your child's well-being on a given day, please do not send them to school, and contact your physician for guidance immediately.

Each family will be required to fill out a daily questionnaire via Brightwheel, confirming that their child does not have a fever, does not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, has not been in contact with an individual that has COVID-19 in the past 14 days (this includes ill household and family members), and has not traveled internationally or to a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.





## Face Coverings

Because each child in our school will be required to wear a face covering for large portions of the school day, we require that families provide their child with a comfortable, unique and easily identifiable face covering. It is suggested that families purchase several so that a fresh one can be worn each day while the others are being laundered. Additionally, we suggest that extra masks be left at school. If a child misplaces their face covering, or if it becomes soiled or unusable, and the child does not have their own extra mask available, a disposable face mask will be provided.

In an effort to ensure your child has the stamina to wear a face covering for potentially long periods of time, we encourage families to have their child practice wearing face coverings at home as much as possible, assuming there are no medical exceptions.

## Water Bottles

Because COVID-19 can be transmitted by refilling water bottles, parents are required to send their child to school with a full, leakproof water bottle that will sustain them throughout the day. If your child drinks a lot of water, please consider sending them with two bottles if necessary. It is important that your child's water bottle be clearly labeled so that it can be uniquely identified by your child. In the event that a child runs out of water, we will supply individual bottles of water.

## Nutritious Snacks and Lunches

To keep our children healthy and energized, it is important that they have nutritious snacks and lunches. Please send your child with multiple nutritious snacks and a lunch that adhere to our allergy policy. In the past, we have had many children forget snack and come to the office to get an apple or an orange. This year, we will not be able to provide fresh fruit for when children forget their snack, so we urge you to pack snacks daily.

### **Lightweight, Loose Fitting Clothing**

Please be sure to send your child to school every day with appropriate clothing that will allow them to be as comfortable as possible. Doing so will be especially important in the fall as temperatures and humidity can be an issue for some students.

### **Respect and Responsibility**

In order to provide the safest possible environment for our students and staff, we need the support and cooperation of all our community members. We expect that all of our families and community members will be actively engaging, participating, and supporting the school's strategies to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 and keep our community safe and healthy. Additionally, we expect all of our community members to actively practice our school values of kindness and respect towards each other as we navigate through these new processes.

## **RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES**

### **CDC Instructional Resources**

The CDC has developed a series of resources that are intended to provide instruction on best practices for mitigating the spread of germs, and the transmission of COVID-19. Many of these resources will be shown to students to reinforce expectations. We encourage families to review these videos to support our efforts and provide valuable information about strategies to increase health and safety.

## **Tech Help for Families**

We recognize that many families will need assistance with the digital tools students and teachers will be using for blended and remote learning. To support these efforts, we will provide a curated list of resources that families may reference.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN**

This plan was developed by the Manitou Reopening Committee, headed by the Manitou School's Director/Head of School. All questions should be directed to our Head of School, Maria Stein-Marrison, [director@manitouschool.org](mailto:director@manitouschool.org). This plan was developed in accordance with the guidance provided through the [NY State Reopening Schools: Recover, Rebuild and Renew the Spirit of Our Schools](#); with reference to health information available through the DOH, the CDC; and in consultation with the members of Manitou's Reopening Committee.

## **REFERENCES**

Many resources were utilized in the creation of this document. These resources, include, but are not limited to the following:

[NY State Reopening Schools: Recover, Rebuild and Renew the Spirit of Our Schools](#)  
[NY State Department of Health: INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).  
COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Reentry. American Association of Pediatrics, June 25, 2020.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The guidance and plans provided in this document are based on current guidelines and requirements issued by the State Department of Education and the current input of local entities and public health officials. The COVID-19 public health emergency continues to be a rapidly evolving situation, and consequently, the guidelines, requirements and plans described herein may change as the legal and regulatory landscape and the public health trends continue to change.