LearningSpring School

REOPENING PLAN 2020-2021
Introduction

LearningSpring School (LSS) is a NYS approved non-public day special education school for children diagnosed on the autism spectrum in grade K through 8. This reopening document has been prepared in compliance with the NYS Education Department and the Department of Health guidelines.

The LSS Leadership Team was responsible for creating this reopening plan. Our team is made up of our Head of School; Academic, Social Skills and Clinical Directors; Directors of Administration/Finance and Development; Facility Manager and HR Manager. Feedback and input was obtained from our school nurse, staff and parent body via conversations, meetings, and surveys. In addition, this plan was shared with our Board of Trustees prior to submission for their review and comments.

LearningSpring School prides itself on its open communication with families. We will use all methods of communication needed to educate families about our reopening plan and all required safety measures that we have adopted. We share information via our website, weekly email, quarterly newsletters, and video meetings. Our Head Teachers are in contact with families at least weekly either by phone, email, and/or video meetings.

Our reopening communication plan includes:

- Posting our reopening plan on our website and updating it as needed
- Providing resources and education on COVID-19 prevention and safety, including information on CDC and DOH COVID-19 guidelines
- Ensuring that students and faculty are trained in how to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette
- Both verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE.
Section I: Health and Safety

Admittance to the Building

For the safety of our students and faculty, access to the building will be limited.

- Faculty, staff, and students will be permitted to enter the building after passing a health screening.
- Essential vendors will adhere to the use of PPE and social distancing, will undergo a health screening prior to entry. Vendors are accompanied by Facilities staff at all times when in the building.
- Deliveries will be made at the door and will be accepted by our Security Guard/Facilities Staff. All deliveries will be placed in a “disinfection room” under UV light before they are passed on to the intended recipient.

Health Checks

Mandatory Daily Online Screenings

For those entering the building, including students, faculty, staff, and when necessary, vendors, LSS will require mandatory health screening to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. The screening will be available via an online form for students and staff. Vendors will have the option of completing the form online on the day of their visit or completing a paper version upon arriving at the school. All individuals entering the building must have their temperature checked before they enter the building each day. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.4°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, or sent directly to a dedicated area prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.

For students, parents or guardians will certify whether or not any of the listed symptoms/conditions apply.

Our screening program will have the following components:

- A daily online screening questionnaire filled out at home (paper copies available to those who need them) and submitted before arriving at school in the morning. These forms will be required
for any student enrolled in the school or faculty member who would normally be present at the school, whether or not they are in attendance that day.

○ For students, staff and vendors, the questionnaire will provide a short list symptoms or situations that might indicate a COVID-19 positive status. The individual or the student’s parent or guardian will certify whether or not any apply to them that morning.

The questionnaire will include (but is not limited to):

1. Have you experienced a fever of 100.4 degrees F or greater, a new cough, or shortness of breath within the past 10 days?
   - No. Go to the next question.
   - Yes. No further screening is needed. The student/employee may not attend school.

2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a positive result from a COVID-19 test that tested saliva or used a nose or throat swab? (not a blood test)
   - No. Go to the next question.
   - Yes. No further screening is needed. The student/employee may not attend school.

3. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 14 days, have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes) with anyone while they had COVID-19?
   - No. The student/employee may report to school.
   - Yes. No further screening is needed. The student/employee may not attend school.

4. Have you traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?
   - No. The student/employee may report to school.
   - Yes. No further screening is needed. The student/employee may not attend school.
○ These forms will be updated periodically to make sure they reflect any updated understandings of the Covid-19 as expressed by the CDC and/or DOH.

○ The school will not retain individual medical or health information from this online questionnaire. Only the “clear/not clear” status of the individual as determined by the questionnaire will be available to the school or kept on file.

● Students and staff will be met prior to entry by the school’s designated COVID monitors. The monitor will confirm that the form has been completed, or will provide one to be completed prior to permitting entry.

The monitor will screen all individuals entering the building with a handheld temperature scanner to confirm that the individual’s temperature is within acceptable parameters as determined by the CDC.

Parents and staff will be required to complete the health questionnaire each day by 7 am. A dedicated staff member will be responsible to review the questionnaires each morning at 7:15 am and contact any individual who has not submitted the questionnaire.

Staff or students who indicate that they have a temperature or have been exposed to COVID-19 will be asked not to come to the school and will be required to visit their healthcare provider to be cleared to return to school.

Reporting of any “not clear” statuses, whether through the questionnaire or health screening, will be given to the school nurse for follow-up according to DOH guidelines.

Positive Screens

Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing. If a student arrives at school and has a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) he or she will be immediately separated from other students and supervised in a safe, contained area until their parent or emergency contact can come to pick them up from school. The parent will be provided with information on health care and testing resources. LSS will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if the individual tests positive for COVID-19.
Teachers will receive training in how to identify pediatric symptoms of COVID-19, and will refer any students they see exhibiting such symptoms to the school nurse. LSS will follow the local DOH requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment. At a minimum, a return to school will require documentation of evaluation from a health care provider, negative COVID-19 testing, and symptom resolution.

**Protections for Individuals Conducting Screenings**

Personnel performing screening activities will be trained by Hudson Valley Safety Associates, consultants identified and approved by LSS who are familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols. Screeners will be provided and will use PPE, which includes at a minimum, an N-95 mask, and may also include gloves, a gown, and/or a face shield.

**Staff and Student Testing**

In compliance with CDC and NYSED guidance, LSS does not require COVID-19 testing or antibody testing of students or staff as a part of the screening process. Only a healthcare provider or the local Department of Health may decide whether a test needs to be conducted. LSS may require testing to “clear” the individual to return to school following a positive COVID-19 test result.

**Management of Ill Persons**

The following will be in place to care for students or staff that develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day:

- An office adjacent to the nurse’s office has been modified to serve as an isolated space for students and staff to stay until they are able to leave the school building.

- An LSS staff member will monitor the room to ensure students are safe. This staff member will be provided with the appropriate PPE, which includes an N95 face mask; gloves; and gown and maintain social distancing.

- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be followed as specified by CDC guidelines.
Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols

If COVID-19 cases are discovered at school, we will immediately close the school building, wait the required 24 hours to clean the building, deep clean the building and reopen the school building the next day.

Contact Tracing Support

LSS is required by NY State to support the DOH in tracing all contacts of any student or staff who test positive in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. LSS will follow all guidelines related to contact tracing, which currently include:

- Confidentiality
- Cooperation with all state and local health department isolation requirements
- Notification of faculty and families, identifying those who have come in close proximity without providing individual specific information.

Return to School

Individuals diagnosed by a healthcare provider as not having COVID-19 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 a non-COVID-19 related illness, and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, or those who did not take a COVID-19 test but had COVID-19 related symptoms, will remain at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
- 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.
Face Coverings & Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

We will require all students and staff to wear masks throughout the school day. We do understand that this may be difficult for some students due to sensory issues. We have initiated a mask tolerance training for all students during our summer program and have shared these resources with parents and guardians to assist all students in developing the stamina to wear their masks. There are exceptions and special circumstances as noted:

- Students may be given “mask breaks” at the discretion of the teacher when students are able to maintain social distancing.
- Students sitting at their desks in classrooms that allow for proper social distancing may also take mask breaks.
- A student who is having difficulty breathing should immediately be given a mask break. Should it continue, the students will be evaluated by the school nurse.
- Students may remove their masks to eat at their desk which will allow for social distancing.
- A teacher has discretion in determining if a child is safe or not to remove their mask, as all teachers receive training on COVID-19 specific hygiene.

Types of Masks and Protection

Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Face shields must be used in conjunction with a face mask.

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, N-95 respirators, or other PPE used under existing industry standards will be used, in accordance with OSHA guidelines.

Provision of Masks

LSS will provide reusable masks for all students and staff. Students will be provided with 3 masks, labeled with their respective names. At the end of each day, the Facilities staff will wash and dry the students’ masks and return them to their respective classrooms for the next day.

Staff will be provided with 5 reusable masks and will be responsible for the care of their masks.
For students and staff who forget their masks, disposable masks will be available.

LSS will provide all students and staff with training on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including face masks.

Hygiene

Handwashing

LSS follows all hygiene requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH. These currently include:

- Training all students and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, including providing information to families on ways to reinforce this at home;

- Creating extra time in the schedule for hand washing, especially after restroom breaks, recess, using shared equipment, or other higher risk activities;

- Installing touchless hand sanitizer dispensers filled with at least 60% alcohol-based sanitizer for areas where hand washing is impractical. Hand sanitizer use will be minimized in areas serving younger children, where hand washing is preferable for safety reasons;

- Providing hand sanitizer and wipes in common areas or near shared workplace items (copy machines, computers).

Cleaning & Disinfection

The school’s Facilities staff are primarily responsible for cleaning and disinfection along with the outsourced cleaning service, which operates from 3:30 - 7:30 pm daily. A comprehensive COVID-19-specific cleaning plan per State guidelines has been developed for the school and is available from the Facilities Manager. Per DOH guidelines, the custodial staff will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfection. In addition to the work of the custodial staff, classrooms and common areas will be stocked with child-safe, CDC-approved disinfectant wipes so that teachers can also contribute to cleaning efforts at periodic intervals during the day. Extra time has been built into the schedule for hygiene maintenance—both hand washing and the disinfection/cleaning of surfaces. In addition to these measures, the following extra steps will be taken in classrooms, offices and common areas:
• Water drinking fountains will be closed. Students and staff are encouraged to bring individually labeled water bottles for refilling at sinks supplied with filters.

• In general, students remain in their own classroom with their cohorts. However, shared items (i.e.: therapy materials, APE materials) will be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort’s use. Such cleaning will be primarily the responsibility of the teachers involved in supervising the cohorts. Shared items, which the teachers are unable to clean sufficiently, will be isolated in a box and cleaned and disinfected by Facilities staff at the end of each day.

• Children will each have their own personal classroom supplies (of pencils, crayons, paper, etc) that they will draw from rather than using common materials. Each child’s supply will be labeled and stored either in a desk, individual file, or other method that ensures separation of materials.

• Materials and tools used by staff or employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, LSS will supply disposable gloves and/or place limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.

• Facilities staff will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfection.

**Food Service**

LSS does not have a cafeteria and students generally bring their snacks and lunch to school each day. Sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet style meals, snacks) is prohibited.

Teachers will:

• Always wash hands before preparing or serving any snack or meal.
• Be alert to hygiene protocols during all mealtimes.
• Model appropriate social distancing and hygiene while eating with children.
• Remind students of safety rules at mealtimes.
• Always wash hands before resuming work after a meal.

Students will:

• Always wash hands before and after meals.
• Will receive individual snack portions directly from staff.
• Will be seated at their desks which allows for social distancing.
• Children will always wash hands after eating, before resuming the school day.

Restrooms

• All multiple use restrooms will be restricted to one individual at a time.
• Signage noting the maximum capacity will be posted on doors.
• Faculty and staff will use designated bathrooms to limit cross-exposure.
• Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently during the day, following recommendations established by the DOH.
• Toilets will be refitted with lidded seats, and students will have regular reminders to close lids before flushing.

Cleaning & Disinfection After a Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

In the event an individual at the school is confirmed to have COVID-19 while at school, LSS will immediately:

• Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
• Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
• Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting.
• Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
• Reopen the area once it has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected.

If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection would not be necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection would continue.

Social Distancing

LSS will work to maintain appropriate social distancing (generally 6 feet, 3 feet between edges of desks) among all individuals while in school facilities and on school grounds, unless safety or the core activity (e.g., instruction, moving equipment, using an elevator, traveling in common
areas) requires a shorter distance. Mask-wearing and barriers (sneeze guards, e.g.) will also help address cases where six feet of distance cannot be maintained.

Creation of Cohorts

LSS has 2 class sizes. Our nine lower school classes (K-5 grades) each have 8 students with one head teacher and two assistant teachers. Our three upper school classes (6-8 grades) each have 12 students, one head teacher and two assistant teachers. Given the capacity in each classroom, we will split the classes into two groups. One group will come into the school building on Mondays and Tuesdays and the other group will come in on Thursdays and Fridays. Wednesdays will remain a remote learning day. Each class will be its own "cohort" with a specific schedule and space that does not overlap with any other group.

Organizing the students into cohorts allows for extra space and makes social distancing and movement in the classroom easier for students. The smaller class size will allow for mask breaks at the teacher’s discretion, and will allow the students to engage in developmentally appropriate play that is not considered “high risk.”

Changes in Use of Space

Space configurations and usage will change for the duration of the COVID-19 period. Some of the changes include:

Classrooms

- In the lower school classrooms, only four desks/tables will be available. In the upper school, only 6 student desks will be available. This will allow our students to socially distance. All desks/tables will be facing one direction so that students sit side-to-side rather than facing one another.
- Shared surfaces or workstations will be disinfected between use.
- Some larger spaces in the building will be reconfigured to allow adequate space for staff lunch and therapy spaces

Common Areas

- Hallways will be marked with signage and tape arrows on the floor to ensure safe two-way traffic.
- Staircases will be designated separately as either an up staircase or a down staircase.
- The Library will be closed to students for the year. Instead, we utilize online e-books and individual copies as needed.

**Arrival, Departure, and Scheduling**

LSS staff are able to arrive between 6:30 am and 8 am. Social distancing markers will be placed at the entrance to allow for screening as staff enter the building. Staff may sign in on the 2nd floor using a hands-free time and attendance machine.

The same process can be used for staff departing in the afternoon.

Many of our students are dependent on the NYC OPT for transportation. As of today, we have not been updated as to their protocols, so we are surveying parents to see which parents are able to bring their children to and from school. For students being brought to school by their parents, they will socially distance as they line up outside of the building to await the screening process. Parents will not be permitted in the school building. Parents will be provided with a staggered dismissal schedule if they are picking up their child.

Should the NYC OPT offer busing to our students, we will unload one bus at a time, ensuring that the students have on their masks, and that they maintain social distancing as they enter the building. LSS staff will accompany the students from the bus to the school building. For dismissal, parents will be required to wait outside of the building and students will be brought down to the entrance. For students on the school bus, we will load only one bus at a time.

Recess times will be staggered so that each class has time to use the play roof with cleaning and disinfecting between each use.

**Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff**

Staff schedules will be developed so that only needed staff will be in the school building any given day. Staff that are able to work remotely will do so. We will reconfigure certain spaces to allow space for staff to have lunch. In addition, staff lunches will be staggered to ensure everyone has a quiet space and is able to maintain social distancing.

For staff with shared offices we will rotate staff between in-person and remote, and we will reconfigure other spaces in the building to limit the number of staff in each office and to ensure
space for social distancing. In small spaces, such as elevators, storage closets, small offices, or break rooms, no faculty/staff will be present together for longer than 15 minutes and will be expected to wear a face covering and maintain distance to the extent possible.

All meetings will happen remotely until further notice, except when social distancing can be maintained appropriately for smaller groups.

**Decision Making Process for Closing the School Building**

School administrators will work in close collaboration and coordination with local health officials to make dismissal and scope of cancellation decisions. School dismissals and cancellations may be extended if advised by local health officials. The nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves.

Administrators will seek guidance from local health officials to determine when students and staff should return to school and if any additional steps are needed for the school community. Students and staff who taking care of or share a home with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 will be required to follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

**Section 2: Social-Emotional Well-Being**

The social-emotional well-being of our students, parent body and staff is a priority, as without it, learning can't take place.

Each of our classroom teams is led by our Head Teachers and consists of two Assistant Teachers, an Occupational Therapist, a Speech Therapist, a Physical Therapist and a School Psychologist or School Social Worker. They meet weekly to review student and classroom needs. These meetings allow staff to problem solve any concerns that arise and to collaborate on class activities.

The School Psychologists or Social Worker maintain consistent contact with all of our students and parents. They meet weekly with the Clinical Director to communicate and collaborate around individual student or family needs or concerns regarding their mental health or emotional well-being. Our mental health clinicians have kept close contact with students and families who have been disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 crisis due to varying social and economic factors, including parents who are first responders or those who are of a lower
socioeconomic status to ensure that they are receiving necessary supports from our school and linking them with additional resources in the community when needed.

LSS has a history of developing a strong home/school connection; it is a critical component of our program. This connection has been key during the recent remote learning environment. Parents regularly share how supported they feel during this process. Our small class sizes allow for close relationships with students and their families. Our staff meet regularly with our students individually, in small groups and with the full class.

LSS has made numerous efforts to engage in shared decision making with our staff, families, board members and other constituents. These efforts have been strategically implemented to monitor the emotional climate of our community, gather innovative ideas, and maintain a sense of community belonging and emotional investment in our school. These discussions have been well documented and have informed our decision making in all departments, academic social, and clinical. We have also had virtual “parent coffee chats” via online video meetings. These chats provide families with opportunities to share their concerns, ask questions, and learn from each other.

**School Procedures & Teacher/Staff Professional Development**

In addition to our curriculum, we will provide support for students and faculty to process reactions to COVID-19 in the upcoming school year by:

- Beginning the school year slowly, with ample time to re-orient students to the “new normal;” give them time to get acclimated to the school environment; process the previous sixth months; and focus on rebuilding our school and classroom communities.
- Offering support to staff, as well as families, through individual appointments with members of our counseling department. In addition, our health plan provides for mental health care and this benefit has been shared and highlighted with staff.
- We are fortunate as a school to have 7 staff members who have been certified as trainers in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI). This intervention was developed through Cornell University and has enabled our entire organization to respond effectively to children and young people in crisis situations. This has been critical in establishing not only a safe environment, but also one that promotes growth and development. We plan to continue to utilize this training and support for staff in order to meet the emotional needs of our students during and after the covid-19 crisis.
Section 3: Facilities

Utilization of Space

LSS is housed in a recently constructed building, which includes an advanced climate control system. The system is capable of controlling the level of fresh air circulating throughout the building. The HVAC will be fitted with MERV-13 filters to remove COVID-19 particles from the air as it flows through the system.

Each classroom is equipped with windows, which can be open to provide additional fresh air.

The building includes a rooftop playground that can be used by the students and disinfected after each use. Rooms throughout the building such as the library, RDI, Music, gym, and Lunchroom, among others, are available to ensure there is sufficient space for social distancing for both staff and students.

Safety Drills

LSS maintains an internal guide for conducting drills entitled “Emergency Procedures.” This will be reviewed and updated before the start of the 2020-21 school year. The revisions will include provisions to ensure social distancing because our arrival/dismissal plans for the regular school day involve signage for social distancing on the sidewalks, maintaining the proper spacing should be relatively easy to achieve.

Ventilation & Plumbing

As mentioned above, our school’s HVAC system has options to increase air circulation throughout the school. In areas with more limited air circulation, we will open doors and windows as we are able. We will provide additional, portable air filters in high-risk rooms such as the nurse’s office.

There are sinks throughout the building, including in all of the classrooms for frequent hand washing, along with 23 existing bathrooms used individually by classrooms or by floor. There are dedicated bathrooms for the younger students in several classrooms. The shared bathrooms will be designated for use by a class cohort where possible or by class floor. Staff will use facilities separate from the students.
Section 5: Fiscal and Data Collection Compliance

LSS collects information both electronically and hard-copy for compliance purposes and to maintain our fiscal records. We will continue using the current systems and make adjustments as additional requirements are communicated by the state.

Attendance

The school collects attendance data every day, and will continue for both in-person and online settings.

Attendance records are collected and maintained digitally.

Chronic Absenteeism

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

- Check-ins with the class teacher to provide contact and academic/social support.
- Additional support from related service providers based on the student’s IEP mandates.
- Help obtaining the necessary technology to ensure continuity of learning
- Resources provided for any needed additional outside services.

To achieve these goals we will use phone, email, and even video calls to engage and converse with family members and students who are experiencing difficulty.

Section 6: School Schedules

The LSS school schedule for 2020-2021 prioritizes student and staff physical and social/emotional safety. With these foundations, we can address the continued development of our students’ academic and social skills development.

We are planning for three scenarios based on directives from the NYSED. If we cannot offer an in person program, we will have a completely remote program in place for all students. If we can have an in person program, we will continue to offer a remote program to those families that choose to do so. For all other students, we will offer a hybrid program, as we cannot safely socially distance with all students and staff in the school building. We will split our classes into
two groups. Group A will come into the school building on Mondays and Tuesdays and Group B will come in on Thursdays and Fridays. Wednesdays will remain a completely remote day for all students.

We will be providing synchronous learning four days a week which will include whole group morning meetings, small group literacy, math and writing instruction and whole group science and social studies lessons. In addition for students learning remotely (both the students who are fully remote and the students who are remote on the days they are not in school), assignments will be posted to Google Classroom daily.

Each class cohort will be grouped with their Head Teacher and two Assistant Teachers. In addition to our academic offerings, students will be provided with our specialized social skills curriculum, our arts curriculum, and our adapted physical education program. Rather than adding additional staff to the class cohorts, these programs will be offered via Zoom into the classrooms and to our students learning at home.

We will prioritize any in-person learning time to conduct targeted assessments that were missed during the 2019-20 school year due to COVID. This will allow us to continue tracking and noting students’ strengths and needs in math and literacy. In addition to our computer based assessments, we will use observation and targeted individual assessments conducted by our special education staff.

Our students also receive related services, which may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and/or counseling. We will limit our therapists to working with no more than two classes per day and continue to offer teletherapy where appropriate.

For the 2020-2021 school year, we will take extra care to provide the following:

- Scheduled outdoor time in our play roof space
- Age-appropriate education about mask-wearing, handwashing, social distancing, and other health precautions
- Reserved space within the classroom for students needing “mask breaks,” where they can socially distance
Section 7: Technology and Connectivity

Access to Technology

In March 2020, LSS worked closely with families and staff to ensure that they were equipped with the technology needed to participate in remote learning. We provided Chromebooks to all who needed them and we were successful in getting internet services for those who needed these services.

Our staff will continue to work with students and their families to ensure that any equipment or supplies are available for remote learning.

Platforms and Security

LSS has expanded its use of Google Classroom as the online platform for our remote learning program. We will continue to use Google Classroom and Zoom meetings for students participating in the remote program.

In the use of Zoom, LSS has employed all of the security options available, including passwords, use of unique meeting identification, and the waiting room. We will continue to monitor and implement additional security measures as they become available.

Education for Families and Teachers

LSS provides professional development for its teachers on the use of platforms for remote learning. On-going training, both in-house and via webinars, is available as new features and options are implemented.

For parents, our IT consultant has worked with families, and will continue to assist with troubleshooting to resolve technology issues.

Section 9: ELL Services

LearningSpring does not have a formal ELL program. When needed, we have staff available to provide translation services for meeting and for written communication with parents.
Section 10: Staffing & Human Resources

Staff Handbook

LSS is updating its 2020-21 Staff Handbook with a COVID-19-specific addendum covering all points of HR policy as they relate specifically to the pandemic. Copies are available from our HR Manager and a digital copy will be available on our intranet and via our Staff Daily Announcements email.

Certification

Our HR Manager will continue to monitor staff certification to ensure that all staff are appropriately certified based on their position at LSS.

We currently anticipate for both our teaching and therapeutic staff that we will be fully staffed for the 2020-2021 school year. Staff will be working both in person and remotely as needed.

Professional Evaluation and Development

Our formal annual evaluation process was interrupted by the pandemic this past spring. However, our Academic and Clinical administrators have done observations and met weekly with their respective teachers and therapists to provide feedback and resources. Our Leadership Team will meet to determine best practices for annual evaluations for the upcoming school year.

Conclusion

In preparation for reopening, LSS is implementing a broad range of controls and procedures to ensure that the school is as safe as possible for our students and staff. By monitoring students, staff, and vendors, we will minimize exposure. By organizing our staff and students into cohorts and by providing masks and PPE to staff and students, we will limit any potential spread. By continuing to offer remote services, we will ensure that all students receive the best education possible during the pandemic and throughout the reopening.

There will be challenges - from educating students on maintaining social distancing and wearing masks, to addressing potential exposure. At LSS we are committed to the safety and education of our students and will work with staff, parents, students, and government health departments to provide the safest environment for all.
We anticipate that the further release of guidelines from both the city and state will cause us to revise this document, and to that end, we will maintain updated copies on our school website and will distribute the updates to parents via email, if requested.