



## OPENING SCHOOLS IN SEPTEMBER 2020

### AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

With schools closed for an extended period during the end of the 2019-20 school year due to COVID-19, there are many new considerations that require thought and planning in re-opening schools for September 2020.

Torah Umesorah presents you with an extensive list of items to consider in your re-opening plan. Not all items may be relevant to your school, and there may be some that are not included. This list is meant as an aid for thought and planning.

It would be recommended that each item be assigned to a specific person, with a timeline by which the item should be finalized. This will help to ensure as smooth a transition as possible into the uncharted waters of opening schools during COVID-19.

#### School Entrance Protocols

- Procedures for morning drop-off for students
- Protocol for students arriving late
- Health checks upon entering school (temperature checks, questionnaires)
- Place to which students proceed when entering the building – directly to classroom, or other location...
- Entry doors to be used
- Protocols for parents/visitors entering the building
- Handwashing – is it required, and how will it be accommodated?
- Staff protocol – temperature check, or other health safety checks, on entering building?
- Parents providing information about student's health – how will this be done, and how often?

#### School Dismissal

- Hallway protocols
- Management of bus riders, car riders, walkers

- After-school programs and activities

### **Positive COVID-19 Case in the Building**

- Addressing confidentiality issues
- Accommodations for a separate area where a student/employee testing positive can wait
- Assuring that all follow CDC guidelines
- Protocol for contacting the local health department
- Procedure for school to communicate to family and community
- Having substitutes available for a staff member that becomes sick
- Ensuring updated emergency contacts for all students

### **Tuition and Financial Considerations**

- Consideration for families struggling financially due to COVID-19
- Plan for meeting the school budget under adverse financial circumstances

### **Hygienic Precautions – Education, Training, and Resources**

- Training, or printed guidelines, for students, teachers, parents/ visitors, vendors who enter the building.
- Direction to cleaning staff for increased cleaning and disinfection
- Training for students on wearing masks, washing hands, etc.
- Arrange for necessary supplies for proper hygiene
- Protocol for how often, and where, students must wash their hands – (set hand sanitizing stations throughout school building)
- Deep cleaning of building – setting frequency of process and budgeting
- Plan for frequent cleaning of classrooms, restrooms and other high-touch areas
- Cleaning of playground equipment

### **Social Distancing in the Classroom**

- A plan for teaching, coordinating and supporting social distancing
- Visual supports – distance lines, directional arrows on floors, hallway traffic

- Protocols if masks are required; plans for students with sensory issues and preschool/kindergarten
- Reorganization of classroom furniture and placement of classes
- Consideration of study dividers
- Adjustment of class schedules
- Plan for students with physical disabilities

### **Social Distancing in Common Areas**

- Protocols for masks being worn in common areas
- Managing traffic flow in hallways, locker areas, cafeteria, shul, library, gym, recess and playground area, restrooms
- Teacher's Room

### **Faculty and Staff**

- Address needs and concerns of faculty and staff
- Provide forum for faculty and staff to share concerns

### **Parents**

- Develop channels of communication with parents about plans and precautions in place for back to school this year.
- Safety protocols for PTA, parent conferences, and other parent meetings

### **Social/Emotional Learning Supports**

- Training for teachers to work with students who were traumatized due to tragic deaths that occurred during COVID-19, as well as students who were orphaned
- Plan for identifying students who need extra support

### **Staff Education and Training**

- Plan for staff training about teaching in COVID-19 environment, both practical and inspirational
- Safe logistics for staff meetings

## **Instructional Collaboration**

- Plan for teachers to collaborate with previous teacher to be updated on what was taught or skipped at the end of school year, and any concerns regarding individual students

## **Remote Instruction**

- Plan for students of families who are not comfortable returning to the building, but want to remained enrolled in the school.
- Grading for students learning remotely.

## **Possibility of Transitioning to Remote Learning After School Starts**

- Plan for a transition, and notification of such to teachers, parents and students
- Establish a medium for remote learning and assure all teachers and students have access to such
- Set protocol for attendance and grading
- Training and support for teachers teaching via remote learning
- Support system for teachers and students who are struggling



## SUGGESTED LETTER FOR SCHOOLS TO SEND TO PARENTS

**Torah Umesorah encourages schools to maintain open and frequent communication with their parent body, keeping them informed about the school's plans in re-opening during COVID-19.**

**Below is a sample letter that will enable you to compose a letter to your parent body. We are suggesting topics and possible options you can choose to include.**

Dear Parents,

We are writing to share information about our planning for in-person return to school on [specify first day of school].

The following list outlines our protocols to safely welcome back our staff and students, in accordance with CDC guidelines. These protocols will be re-evaluated periodically.

### **1. MASKS – Faculty, Staff, Students, Visitors**

- List who will be required to wear masks
- Give guidelines as to whether masks must be brought, or will be provided.
- Policies for visitors to school

### **2. Temperature Checks and Health Screenings**

- Temperature checks – either at home or school
- Stay at home policy for students – i.e., 100.4 fever and above or other symptoms.

### **3. Entrance of Parents with students into School/Classrooms, and Arrival and Dismissal**

- Specify visitor limits into the schools
- Staggered arrival and dismissal times of different grade levels
- Utilizing different entrances and exits for different grades.
- Procedures for parents dropping off and picking up children

### **4. Social Distancing**

Describe what the school is putting in place to enable social distancing:

- marking off 6 ft. visuals in hallways, cafeteria and common spaces
- reorganizing classroom setups/schedules
- utilizing outdoor space
- limiting shuffling of class groups

### **5. School Supplies**

- Specify whether school supplies list will be the same or different this year.
- Indicate individual supplies needed by student in order to avoid use of communal supplies.

### **6. Cleaning and Sanitizing the School**

- Specify method(s) of standard cleaning, and deep cleaning, of school, and frequency.
- Specify sanitary supplies being installed to ensure increased hygiene, i.e. sanitizer dispensers, disabling water fountains with the exception of a designated water station to fill bottles
- Specify protocols established for students to maintain hygiene, i.e. mandatory handwashing

### **7. Lunch and Snack**

- Policy for Lunch and Snack to ensure children do not share their food.
- Policy disallowing food being brought by students for parties or siyumim.
- Accommodations for drinking water – advise all parents to send a refillable water bottle with their child.

## **8. Extra-curricular activities**

Specify if school will be offering activities, trips and events.

## **9. Remote Learning Option**

Remote learning accommodations for students who are immunocompromised or self-quarantined.

## **10. Positive COVID-19 case in School**

Specify policy if a member of the staff or student body tests positive for COVID-19.

## **11. A Parent's Role in a Smooth Re-opening**

Advise Parents to explain the above policies to their children in advance of the first day of school.

## **12. Contact Information for Further Questions**

Provide contact information, including hours of availability, of school personnel whom parents can contact with questions or concerns.

The pandemic is unpredictable, and we cannot know how it will affect the rest of the school year. We will remain in close contact with you if any changes are implemented.

We look forward to working together with you towards a most successful school year ahead.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Sincerely,