
Westchester Hebrew High School

CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR REOPENING

July 29, 2020
Av 5780



Introduction

July 2020 / Av 5780

Dear WHHS Family:

We are very proud of how our students, teachers and staff rose to the many initial challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Last semester, your support and commitment to a WHHS education allowed us to successfully complete our academic program despite an unexpected shift to online learning.

In approximately six weeks, we will face the next challenge, our reopening as an in-person school. In preparation, we are excited to share the following detailed vision for our safe reopening. This plan is guided not only by our commitment to the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff but also to the recognition that, whenever possible, in-person learning is the most effective way to educate the broadest range of our students. In creating this plan, we have consulted with medical experts, followed the recommendations of the CDC, New York State Department of Education, and our local public health authorities and shared in the collective wisdom of our colleagues across the United States. We have intentionally created a plan that can be revised if and when circumstances of the pandemic require. However, at this time, **we believe that this reopening plan and our newly created and detailed procedures will provide our community with the necessary safeguards to allow the school to begin as scheduled on September 8, 2020.**

Sincerely,



Rabbi Jeffrey Beer
Head of School



MITIGATION STRATEGIES

There is no single solution for fighting COVID-19.

An effective approach must be multi-tiered and balance physical safety with the social, emotional and psychological health of our students and staff.

Our approach to mitigating the risks of COVID-19 involves multiple layers, none of which stands on its own, but which, all together, form a significant barrier against the spread of the virus.

SYMPTOM SCREENING: All students, faculty and staff members must be screened for symptoms prior to leaving home (via a certification form) AND prior to entry into school (in person). Anyone with acknowledged COVID-19 symptoms will be prohibited from entering the school. In addition, there will be a “no visitors” policy until further notice.

SICK POLICY: Students, faculty and staff must adhere to all policies and procedures with regard to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection. Self-quarantine is necessary for anyone traveling to an area with a high COVID-19 infection rate.

FACE COVERING: All staff and students will be required to wear face masks at all times (with the exception of lunch) while on campus, whether indoors or outdoors.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING: Seating in all rooms will be changed to allow for the most possible physical distancing. Classes with a larger number of students will be held in larger spaces (i.e. lab, shul).

HAND HYGIENE: Sanitizing stations will be placed throughout the school building and students will be educated about the importance of hand washing and sanitizing.

DISINFECTING: High touch points will be disinfected multiple times throughout the day and the school building will be thoroughly cleaned each evening.

SYMPTOM SCREENING

Everyone who enters WHHS will be required to complete a daily screening survey.

The online survey will screen for:

- fever
- a variety of symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, chills, aches, etc.)
- loss of sense of taste or smell
- contact with COVID-19 positive individuals
- travel to areas with high COVID-19 rates

Anyone with a fever of 100F will not be allowed into school. Other combinations of screening results will also result in non-admittance to school.

Anyone whose screening is cleared will receive an email with a certificate that they must show to WHHS personnel before entering the school building.

Anyone who does not have a completed screening survey will not be able to enter the school building.

Students and faculty who develop symptoms during the course of the day will be evaluated by the school nurse, isolated and sent home if deemed necessary, in the sole discretion of WHHS.

SICK POLICY

The following policies and procedures will guide the school's response to students and staff who have had suspected exposure, symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed COVID-19.

TRAVEL TO HIGH RISK AREAS: In keeping with requirements set by New York State, WHHS requires that all students, faculty and staff members returning from geographic areas, both within the United States and abroad, where there have been travel alerts issued related to infectious diseases or high rates of infectious disease, including but not limited to COVID-19, as indicated by country, federal, state, local governments and/or public health agencies, to self-isolate off campus if ill or to self-quarantine off campus to monitor for symptoms of illness for 14 days, irrespective of any negative COVID-19 test result received by the individual.

COVID EXPOSURE: All students, faculty and staff members who have been in close contact (defined as greater than 15 minutes of unmasked interaction less than six feet away with a symptomatic individual) with someone who has been infected by COVID-19 within the United States or abroad, or have been in contact with any individual who exhibited symptoms consistent with COVID-19, must self-quarantine for 14 days from last time of contact, or as otherwise required by the Department of Health. This policy is irrespective of any COVID-19 test result received by the individual.

SUSPECTED COVID-19: Anyone with a body temperature over 100F will not be permitted in school. Anyone who displays two of the following: chills, rigors, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, lack of taste or smell OR one of the following symptoms: persistent cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, will be asked to isolate in a designated isolation location until he or she can be picked up by a parent or relative.

CONFIRMED COVID-19: WHHS will contact the Westchester County Department of Health for further instructions. All students and staff in any of the same classrooms/bus as the infected individual or who have come into close contact with said individual may not attend WHHS and must quarantine at home for 14 days. Anyone who develops symptoms during that time should contact their healthcare provider to request testing and notify WHHS.

FACE COVERINGS

Face masks are the single most effective means of limiting the spread of COVID 19.

The evidence is clear that wearing a face mask significantly reduces the transmission of COVID-19. Therefore, in accordance with the guidelines published by the NY State Department of Education, all students and faculty are required to wear a mask properly at all times (mask must cover both mouth and nose).

Please note: students must bring their own masks, but the school will have surgical or cloth masks on hand to provide to anyone who needs them.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

In order to maximize physical distancing throughout our school day, students will sit in designated areas in all classrooms and gathering spaces.

Schedules and classroom assignments will be done in a manner that reduces traffic flow in the hallways and allows for maximal distancing. **Additionally, the school day will be begin at approximately 8:50am and go until approximately 3:00pm.** This will reduce student exposure and allow for thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the school building. Students should daven Shacharit and eat breakfast at home.

Until further notice, students will not be assigned lockers. Students will have to carry their backpacks and personal items with them throughout the school day. These must remain on their person and not left in any hallway or other location.

There will be unstructured moments over the course of the day. We ask that students, faculty and staff members commit to social distancing even at these times.

HAND HYGIENE

Frequent hand washing prevents the spread of COVID-19 on surfaces.

In order to facilitate maximal hand hygiene, hand sanitizing stations will be placed throughout the hallways, and both students and faculty will be asked to apply hand sanitizer, immediately upon entry to school, and before entry to a classroom.

Students should also bring small bottles of hand sanitizer for personal use, though there will be automatic dispensers throughout the school.

Students must wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the restrooms.

In addition, students will be asked to wash their hands or use the hand sanitizer before and after eating lunch as well as prior to dismissal.

DISINFECTION

While surface spread is the least likely cause of COVID-19 transmission, WHHS will be placing an emphasis on increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfection.

Bathrooms and other high-touch surfaces will be cleaned with EPA-sanctioned sanitizers multiple times throughout the day and the entire school will be cleaned and disinfected each evening.

Classroom doors will remain open throughout the day as will some of the windows in each classroom, in an effort to circulate the air. Students may not touch, open or close any doors or windows.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Student immunizations must be up-to-date and documented at the start of the school year.

Additionally, should a vaccine for COVID-19 be developed and recommended for high school students, WHHS will require all students to be vaccinated.

To maintain the health of and well-being of our students and staff, WHHS requires all students entering any grade be fully immunized in accordance with the laws of New York State and the schedule recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). This schedule may be viewed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>.

As a yeshiva high school whose policies reflect the requirements of Halacha, religious exemptions will not be accepted. Requests for a medical exemption must be made by a board-certified pediatrician and will be referred for approval to a panel of physicians appointed by the WHHS Board of Trustees.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prior to the new school year, there will be a mandatory online meeting for all WHHS students to review the reopening policies.

Please remember that on the first day of school, the Wellness Survey will ask if students have traveled out of the area in the previous 14 days. If you would like to attend school on the first day (and subsequent days), be mindful not to travel out of the area for the two weeks prior to the start of school.

Please note that this is an evolving situation and our procedures and guidelines will be reviewed regularly and will be adapted as needed.

Every student and his/her parent(s) must read the Reopening Plan carefully and sign the Reopening Plan Acknowledgement Form to affirm that you have read, understand and will abide by these policies at all times. Students who are in violation of any of these procedures may, in the sole discretion of WHHS, risk suspension or permanent discharge.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WHHS STUDENT...

Here's what things will look like at the start of the school year.
Please daven before coming to school.
Classes will begin at approximately 8:50am and
dismissal will be at approximately 3:00pm.*

Put on your mask and...
Ready...Set...Go!

*This schedule will be in place through Sukkot. It will be reviewed regularly and is subject to change. When COVID-19 circumstances permit, it will be changed and/or adjusted back to our regular schedule.

7:00AM: AT HOME

- Every day, students, faculty and staff members must complete the WHHS Wellness Survey in order to obtain an Entry Certificate which, upon arrival, must be presented at the entrance to our school building. Each individual must certify that he/she does not have a fever above 100F, that they are symptom-free and that they have not traveled outside of our area in the past 14 days.
- Students who do not complete this process will not be allowed on WHHS-arranged transportation.
- Students who arrive to school by car or carpool will not be permitted to enter the school building without this certification.
- Students should daven Shacharit and eat breakfast before arriving at school.

7:15-8:30AM: TRANSPORTATION

WHHS-ARRANGED TRANSPORTATION

- Drivers will check their temperature each morning before beginning their route.
- Drivers and students must wear masks at all times.
- Students will be assigned permanent seats and may not change seats on their own.
- All vans/buses/cars will be cleaned after each use.

ARRIVAL VIA CARPOOL & STUDENTS WHO DRIVE

- Students arriving by private vehicle will enter the school building via the front door and follow all other arrival procedures.

8:30-8:50AM: ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

- There will be a number of entry points into the school building. Each student will be assigned a specific entry point. Students may not change their entry point, and risk suspension should they do so at any time.
- At each entry, there will be markings to help people maintain distance before entering the building.
- At each entrance, there will be a mask check and temperature monitoring. Any person with an elevated temperature will not be allowed to enter any further into the building.
- Anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms, e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, the new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, will not be allowed to enter the WHHS building. A physician's note of permission to attend school must be sent to the WHHS office (office@whhsny.org) before readmission to school. WHHS will review and notify the student and his/her parents if and when he/she will be permitted to return to school.
- Upon entry, students will proceed immediately to their first period class.
- Students should use one of the hand sanitizing stations before entering their first period classroom.
- Students who need to use the bathroom must first report to their designated classroom.
- Before the start of first period, we will make announcements and recite some Tehillim over the speaker system while students and faculty members remain in their first period classes.

LOCKERS

- Per NY State guidelines, student lockers will not be in use and may not be touched or used by any student. As a result, students will need to use their backpacks to keep their texts, notebooks and all other personal belongings.
- Teachers will use as many digital resources as possible to limit the number of items students must carry from class to class.
- Students will be allowed to store some larger texts in classrooms.

THROUGHOUT THE DAY

- Masks must be worn at all times when indoors and outdoors, except when eating lunch.
- Throughout the day, we will be sanitizing high touch surfaces and the restrooms.
- Drinking fountains will be turned off and students should bring their own bottled water to school as needed.
- Students' personal property should not be shared with others (i.e. school supplies, cell phones, books, pencils, pens, etc.)

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

- Classroom doors and two windows will remain open throughout the school day.
- Each student will receive a plastic desk covering for use on his/her desk. Students are responsible for taking the covering from class to class, and using it each time they sit at a desk.

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- Students will be assigned seats in each classroom and are expected to sit in the same seat each day. Assigning seats will allow for better contact tracing if G-d forbid it may be necessary.
 - Small group activities will be permitted only if social distancing can be preserved.

MOVING FROM CLASS TO CLASS

- At the end of a period, teachers will dismiss students in small groups.
- Students should proceed directly to their next class.
- There will be designated “one-way lanes” for traffic flow to facilitate students’ movements from class to class.
- Students going from the first floor to the second floor should use the stairway opposite Room 2.
- Students going from the second floor to the first floor should use the stairway opposite the gym entrance.
- There will be indications on the floors and signs throughout the school reminding students to observe social distancing.

BATHROOMS

- It is vital that restrooms are not used to congregate and social distancing must be observed in the restrooms.
- To that end, no more than two people may be in a restroom at any given time.
- Only one student per classroom will be allowed out at any given time.
- All restrooms will be sanitized throughout the day and at the end of each school day.

FOOD SERVICE

- At this time, there will not be food service for breakfast. Students are encouraged to eat breakfast at home.
- Additionally, at this time, there will be no lunch program. Students will be required to bring their own lunch and snacks.
- Microwaves will not be available for student use. Please prepare lunches that do not need to be heated or refrigerated (please use ice packs if necessary).
- Because there are limited ‘washing stations,’ we ask that students bring lunches that will not require a bracha of Hamotzi.
- Lunch will be eaten either in the room that precedes lunch period or outdoors with supervision and social distancing. There will be areas where social distancing can be maintained, either in classrooms, the lunchroom or outdoors.
- Weather permitting, there will be socially distanced spaces available outside that will rotate between grade levels.
- The meal service will be re-evaluated after Sukkot and if safe, breakfast and/or the lunch program may be re-introduced.

FREE PERIODS

- Students will be assigned a specific location for any free periods in their schedule. Failure to go to that location will result in disciplinary measures.

LEARNING CENTER

- Subject to social distancing limitations, students will be allowed to use the Learning Center to do homework or request assistance from Mr. Klaiber or Ms. De Marco.
- There will be no gaming in the Learning Center, on either school computers, student laptops, or student devices.
- Keyboards should be wiped with disinfecting wipes or microfiber cloths between users.

OFFICES

- Only one student at a time will be allowed to enter any of the administrative offices.
- Students will be required to make appointments with College Guidance via email. Only one student at a time will be allowed in the College Guidance office.
- If additional space is required for larger meetings, alternate arrangements will be made.

MEET THE TEACHER & ASSEMBLIES

- This year's Meet the Teacher Night will take place online, along with pre-recorded messages from the faculty. Additional details will follow.
- There will not be in-person school-wide assemblies until further notice.
- Assemblies, Yemei Iyun or other special programs will continue online.
- Grade meetings or programs, as needed, may take place in the Shul or outdoors.

SPORTS

- As of now, Fall sports will not take place. We will continue to monitor the situation and should things change, we will re-evaluate.
- The gym is off-limits to all students, at all times, unless accompanied by a WHHS faculty member.

DISMISSAL

- Students must wait in their last period classroom until dismissed by a faculty member or administrator.
- Students must proceed directly to their bus, van or car, and once inside, must remain in the vehicle.
- Only students on the official transportation roster may ride on their assigned bus/van/car. Students may not invite friends to travel with them.
- Students must sit in their assigned afternoon seats.

EVENING

A full cleaning and disinfecting will occur following all CDC, NYS Department of Health, and NYS Department of Education guidelines.