



The
IDEAL
School
of Manhattan

Plan to Reopen School
August 7, 2020

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The IDEAL School of Manhattan

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Introduction

Process and Research

The Board of Trustees established its COVID Committee in May 2020 to develop a plan and design for the reopening of IDEAL. The COVID Committee met regularly over the course of the summer to discuss and review plans, guidelines, concerns, research, and feedback. The Administrative Working Group also met regularly over the course of the summer to discuss the Board's priorities and to develop implementation plans reflecting the Board's design and including protocols to comply with all city, state, and federal health protocols and guidelines. Additionally, a member of the Board's Executive and COVID Committees, the Head of School, and the Director of Finance meet regularly with the Director of B'nai Jeshurun, where IDEAL leases space for its Upper School. Additional members of IDEAL's leadership team have also collaborated with B'nai Jeshurun's leadership to prepare for reopening. The COVID Committee also sought feedback from the community through weekly staff and family surveys conducted during the spring on distance learning and through two rounds of staff and family surveys in the summer on reopening considerations. Members of the administrative team have begun and will continue to meet with smaller groups of faculty to fine-tune plans for specific aspects of IDEAL's hybrid model. Essential to the planning of the Board and administrative team has been the school's ongoing consultation and relationships with experts in the fields of epidemiology (Dr. William Greendyke, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine at CUMC and Associate Hospital Epidemiologist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital), school nursing (Dr. Ava Dawson, DNP, RN, CPNP-PC, Health Director at Little Red School House & Elisabeth Irwin High School), and facility management (Gordon Jensen, Facilities Director, Horace Mann School).

In developing a Reopening Plan for the 2020-21 school year, IDEAL's Board of Trustees focused on a design that would allow the school to live its mission and foster a community based on the core values of Inclusion, Diversity, Excellence, Acceptance, and Leadership. We believe that IDEAL's Reopening Plan reflects the vision and mission of the founders while complying with all city, state, and federal health protocols and guidelines to ensure the safety and health of our students, faculty, and staff, and families. This plan prioritizes an in-person reopening, in-person instruction, and support for students, including younger students and students with disabilities, who benefit from and are better able to access instruction in-person, while allowing choice for families and providing the school with the ability to shift easily to distance learning as needed. According to Unicef, "at the height of nation-wide lockdowns in April, approximately 91 per cent of the world's students in more than 194 countries were out of school. This has caused immeasurable disruption to the lives, learning and wellbeing of children around the world."¹ It also provides an emphasis on a scaffolded reentry, with structures for social and emotional support for students, as well as

¹ Heading back to school in the pandemic, [UNICEF](#), July 24, 2020

support for the well-being, planning, and work of faculty and staff as a result of the trauma and loss experienced during this unprecedented time.

The Board and administration of the school recognize that there is an inherent tension between the risk factors presented by COVID-19 and serving our students and our mission. The school's process involved careful consideration of risk factors including transmission to students, families, and faculty and staff and through public transportation; the negative and potentially lifelong impact of not offering in-person instruction to our students, who overwhelmingly represent those underserved populations that are most at risk from the closure of in-person schools; the current state of the virus in New York City and State; and the experiences of other nations and areas of the United States that have reopened schools.

In discussing the shape of the fall, the school considered the risks of transmission to students, families, and our faculty and staff, as well as the risks of transmission through travel on public transportation. Data suggest that the risk of transmission to students, in general, is relatively low. As of July 30, 2020, children 18 years old and under accounted for approximately 8.8%² of cases and fewer than 0.1% of deaths.³ Mortality for children during this COVID-19 pandemic has been lower than in the mortality in each of the last five flu seasons.⁴ Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) is a concern, but the numbers still appear to be relatively low--186 patients with MIS-C in 26 states, 4% mortality rate.⁵ Studies also show that children are less likely to be the first person in a family unit to become infected with COVID-19 and that children are the initial, or index, case in fewer than 10% of COVID-19 family clusters⁶.

Transmission to faculty and staff by students is also an essential concern in weighing factors and planning for a school's reopening. Evidence provided by limited early studies suggests, however, that children are not the primary spreaders in schools. The risk of transmission increases from students age 10 and above and underlying conditions in adults may increase the severity of COVID-19 symptoms.

Transmission as a result of public transportation was also a focus of the school's study. In New York, at the start of the pandemic, before PPE was mandated and new cleaning

² Children and COVID-19: State Data Report, A joint report from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association, Fig 3. Percent of Cumulative COVID-19 Cases that were Children: 7/30/20

³ Ibid., Appendix Table 2C: Summary of Child Mortality Data from 5/21-7/30

⁴ Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality, [CDC Fluview website](#)

⁵ Safely Reopening Schools, Infectious Diseases Society of America, Town Hall Presentation, July 16, 2020, IDSA: Safely Reopening Schools, Infectious Diseases Society of America, Town Hall Presentation, July 16, 2020, p. 6

⁶ Jonas F. Ludvigsson, Children are unlikely to be the main drivers of the COVID-19 pandemic – A systematic review, *Acta Pædiatrica*, Volume 109, Issue 8, August 2020, p. 1525-1530 and COVID-19 in schools – the experience in NSW, National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS), 26 April 2020

procedures implemented, 4,000 transit workers tested positive and there were 131 deaths. Studies of clusters of COVID-19 in Paris and Austria in April and May revealed that there were no clusters of COVID-19 linked to public transportation. There is concern that, while transmission on public transportation is low now, it could rise once more individuals return to work and school. Transmission on the subway will need to be studied on an ongoing basis as schools and businesses reopen in the fall⁷.

In addition to reviewing the health risks of COVID-19, the school also studied the very serious risks of not returning as regards the academic progress and social and emotional health of students, especially those in our populations. Schools provide a crucial source for social-emotional support for all students, and students' relationships with and access to faculty and staff are essential to their health and well-being. When students are not in an in-person learning environment, they face increased risk of depression, isolation, and even suicide. Instances of hunger, neglect, or abuse may go unidentified, especially as children may have a harder time asking for help in instances of hunger, neglect, or abuse due to the presence of family members in the distance learning environment. Younger students and students with disabilities struggle to manage technological requirements of distance learning in a way that can negatively impact their learning.⁸ Students who are at a socioeconomic disadvantage and who have special needs experience an increase in the achievement gap and miss critical experiences and instruction in social-emotional skills, safety, nutrition, and physical activity.⁹ There is significant concern that the deficits children may acquire in reading and math skills without access to in-person instruction compound and can last a lifetime.¹⁰

Recognizing both the health risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the risks to students' health, safety, academic, and social-emotional growth posed by the lack of access to in-person learning, the school also studied instances of recurrence in schools that returned to face-to-face instruction, as well as successful returns to school globally and locally. In Israel, for example, where schools initially reopened in May without appropriate precautions including PPE and social distancing and at the same time as gyms and restaurants, 244 new infections among children and school personnel, including 130 at one school, were reported¹¹. As of July 6, in Texas, where schools reopened while some counties still had a positive test rate of 5%, over 1,300 cases in over 800 child care facilities (894 staff; 441 children). In July, a camp in Missouri closed after 41 campers and staff were infected; 4 days later, 82 total

⁷Christina Goldbaum, Is the Subway Risky? It May Be Safer Than You Think, The New York Times, August 2, 2020

⁸The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall, [CDC](#)

⁹Trisha Koriath, AAP interim guidance on school re-entry focuses on mitigating COVID-19 risks, American Association of Pediatricians, June 26, 2020

¹⁰Emma Dorn, Bryan Hancock, Jimmy Sarakatsannis, and Ellen Viruleg, COVID-19 and student learning in the United States: The hurt could last a lifetime, McKinsey & Company, June 1, 2020

¹¹Isabel Kershner and Pam Belluck, When Covid Subsided, Israel Reopened Its Schools. It Didn't Go Well., [New York Times](#), August 4, 2020

infections reported.¹² In Georgia, a camp that opened in June faced similar high infection rates. The CDC suggested that the measures the camp took to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were insufficient. For example, campers participated in frequent singing, did not wear masks as a requirement, and bunked in large cohorts.¹³ In Denmark and Finland, on the other hand, where reopening of schools was staggered by age, large gatherings prohibited, protective measures such as social distancing, hygiene, and masks required, and small classes, school openings were much more successful, and the countries continued to show declining infection rates.¹⁴ Similarly, in Taiwan where reopening was successful, children wore masks, there were no large gatherings like assemblies, and schools enforced social distancing and hand hygiene.¹⁵ Hong Kong also reopened schools in the spring, emphasized masks, temperature checks, and hygiene, and, from June 13 to July 5 there were no locally transmitted cases in Hong Kong schools. Hong Kong recently closed schools again, however, due to a rise in the number of cases in the general population, emphasizing the importance of monitoring local infection rates as a part of the safety plan for schools.¹⁶ Local success stories include New York City, where there were no clusters linked to city-run daycare centers through June, even at the height of the pandemic¹⁷; Los Angeles, where there were only 75 cases through July in children linked to 7,238 facilities (only about 1% of the facilities had a confirmed case of COVID-19)¹⁸; and YMCAs across the country, which provided daycare to 40,000 children over 1,100 sites and experienced no clusters of COVID-19 through June.¹⁹

As of August 7, 2020, the infection rate and hospital admissions in New York City all continue to be well below the 5% mark the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the New York State Department of Health consider acceptable for opening schools, the Overall number of cases has remained flat since mid-June in NYC (300-400/day, down from a peak of 6,000/day), and test positivity rate remains about 1.5%. Also on August 7, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced that schools can reopen throughout the state “as long as they are in a region where the average rate of positive coronavirus tests is below 5 percent.”²⁰

¹² IDSA: Safely Reopening Schools, p. 9

¹³ Rachael Rettner, 260 kids and teens infected with COVID-19 at Georgia sleepaway camp, LiveScience, July 31, 2020

¹⁴ Emiliana Vegas, Reopening the World: Reopening schools—Insights from Denmark and Finland, [Brookings](#), July 6, 2020

¹⁵ Javier C. Hernández and Su-Hyun Lee, No More Jenga, No More ‘Amen’ as Cities Learn to Live With Coronavirus, [New York Times](#), May 2, 2020

¹⁶ Laurel Chor, How Hong Kong Reopened Schools — And Why It Closed Them Again, NPR, July 10, 2020

¹⁷ Anya Kamenetz, What Parents Can Learn From Child Care Centers That Stayed Open During Lockdowns, All Things Considered, NPR, June 24, 2020

¹⁸ Anna Almendrala, Child care has been safe during the pandemic. That could be a good sign for schools, Los Angeles Times, August 4, 2020

¹⁹ Kamenetz

²⁰ Eliza Shapiro, N.Y. Schools Can Reopen, Cuomo Says, in Contrast With Much of U.S., New York Times August 7, 2020

Mission, History, and Student Body

The mission of the school summarizes its commitment to equity and to providing an independent school education to students with disabilities and students without financial advantages:

The IDEAL School of Manhattan is an inclusion school dedicated to creating a diverse community that affirms and accepts the full identities of all people, while inspiring academic excellence, creative leadership, and a desire to build a more just and equitable world.

In 2005, IDEAL's founders created the school to serve as the first truly diverse and inclusive independent school, with differentiated and individualized instruction to meet the needs and support the identities of all types of learners. The founding families partnered with educators committed to creating a school that teaches and reaches children of all backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, races, genders, cultures, sexual orientations, and religions, as well as a broad range of learning styles, readiness levels, and abilities. The IDEAL School of Manhattan is built on this philosophy of inclusion and is committed to extending the definition of diversity in education to include all learners.

IDEAL has 214 students in Grades K-12 and embraces students of all abilities. The school recognizes that some students will need an enhanced level of academic, behavioral, and related service support. For these students, the Zenith and Dylan Programs provide additional support. IDEAL's Zenith and Dylan Programs include:

- An inclusion model where students are not pulled out of whole-class instruction to receive support
- A team of teachers that includes dedicated learning specialists and general educators, who work together to make the appropriate curricular and other adaptations for the student
- One-to-one and small-group sessions of speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and academic support
- Individual counseling or small group sessions
- Embedded services and carryover throughout the academic day and across disciplines
- A collaborative team approach to all aspects of the child's education
- Extended conference time
- Support from school administration and faculty during the Committee on Special Education process, when appropriate
- (In the Dylan Program) A dedicated associate teacher (1:1 professional) to support inclusion and differentiation of curriculum

IDEAL's Lower School includes approximately 96 students in kindergarten through Grade 5. The Lower School is housed in a five-story building at 314 West 91st Street owned and operated by the school. IDEAL's Upper School encompasses its Middle and High School

divisions and includes approximately 118 students in Grades 6-12, as well as three students completing their High School graduation requirements in IDEAL's Next Steps: 18-21 Program. IDEAL leases three floors for its Upper School from B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue in the Community House located at 270 West 89th Street.

Our student population reflects IDEAL's mission and purpose. Approximately 53% of our students for the coming year have IEPs and benefit and learn best from the reinforcement and reminders that are most effectively provided in person. The school provides financial assistance to the majority of our students, and the vast majority of our students are thus in those underserved populations that potentially are the most negatively affected by distance learning.

Although we are proud of the extraordinary work IDEAL's faculty and staff did to continue to prioritize academic and personal excellence, to provide consistency of care, and to maintain strong bonds within their classrooms and the community as a whole while the physical school was closed this past spring, we also know that distance learning can exacerbate socioeconomic disparities, as families may not have access to caregivers to assist in the learning process, high-speed internet, or spaces for students to work quietly, and time out of school can magnify achievement gaps. Additionally, many of our students rely on the social connections and friendships IDEAL offers. Research suggests that inclusion increases social and emotional gains for all students and that distance learning can result in significant difficulties for students with disabilities, developmental delays, or other cognitive disabilities, including students who have learning differences such as ADHD.²¹ Inclusion is most readily achieved in an in-person learning community.

IDEAL's Reopening Plan: A Hybrid Model

Informed by their study of risk factors and consultation with experts, and with the mission and students of the school at the center of their decision-making, the members of IDEAL's Board of Trustees unanimously agreed that it is in the best interest of our students to offer in-person instruction in September. While the school's goal is to offer in-person instruction, we recognize that this continues to be a fluid, dynamic situation. We are constantly re-evaluating the facts and will continue to act on the best available information, with input from experts. We are also continuing to develop and make adjustments to this plan based on current health conditions in the school, city, and state, as well as feedback from various constituencies in our community.

Beginning on September 10, IDEAL will offer students in-person instruction four days per week, Monday-Thursday, after a phase-in period through September 29. On Wednesdays, the

²¹ Judy Willis, MD, Brain-Friendly Strategies for the Inclusion Classroom, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2007

school day will conclude at 2:30, providing an early dismissal time to minimize rush-hour commute. Instruction on Fridays will be remote, to allow the community to gather as a larger group to honor traditions such as the Assembly and Pioneer Period, to minimize commuting days, and to allow for additional cleaning time. School will close at 12:30 on Fridays, allowing faculty and staff additional time for planning, reflection, and adjustment and providing additional family time to offset the stressful nature of the pandemic. Creative use of space re-prioritized for academic classes and staggered arrival and dismissal times will allow the school to maintain class sizes of ten or fewer students in Lower School and most often of ten or fewer students in Upper School. Also, some staff who do not work directly with students will also work remotely to minimize the number of individuals in the school. Staff who are working remotely may be required to attend work in person on Fridays.

In addition to prioritizing in-person classes, IDEAL is offering a streaming option to provide flexibility for students who need an online option due to preexisting health conditions or other concerns or who are at greater risk from COVID-19. All families seeking the streaming option will be required to contact the Head of School no later than Monday, August 17, to request this option and discuss reimbursement considerations. Families who opt for the streaming option may choose the option through Friday, September 25, and reevaluate their plan for September 29 through Thanksgiving at that point. The streaming option will also be available for students who may need to stream for a short period of time, periodically, due to contact tracing, illness, or travel.

Distance Learning

IDEAL's Hybrid Model also includes plans for the transition to distance learning in between Thanksgiving break and the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend. This shift to distance learning was implemented in response to staff and family feedback reflecting the importance of visiting out of town family members over the holiday break, especially after the separation and isolation from family and friends many individuals in our community experienced as a result of the pandemic. For the duration of the distance learning period, the school will move to its Distance Learning Plan. All individuals who are returning to in-person instruction from an international destination or a state with a high rate of COVID-19 infection must adhere to all federal, state, and local government regulations and mandates in place for quarantining, self-isolation and/or COVID testing prior to returning to school or work.

The school's Distance Learning Plan will also be implemented in the event that a cohort, the school as a whole, or the city or state needs to return for a short or long period to distance learning. The plan utilizes Zoom as a platform and will incorporate a schedule similar to the in-person schedule each division will be using for the coming year incorporating academics, arts, PE, health, therapies and related services, assemblies, and extracurricular activities. This schedule already includes additional planning time and community time and will be easily adapted and distributed prior to the start of school to allow for a seamless transition to distance learning if needed. It emphasizes live, daily instruction and interaction with teachers and therapists, as well as 1:1 support from associate teachers for students in the

Dylan Program, to ensure regular and substantive student-teacher interaction aligned with the school's benchmarks that is accessible to all.

The school will also work with employees who request a reasonable accommodation that allows an individual the opportunity to perform the essential functions of their job in a safe and efficient manner. Employees are directed to inform their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Director, who will inform the Head of School of any accommodation request. The school will consider requests for reasonable accommodation on a case-by-case basis and will engage in a timely and good-faith interactive process to determine if it can make a reasonable accommodation without undue hardship.

As well as careful consideration of capacity, IDEAL's reopening plan also reflects the school's commitment to social distancing; personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings; restart operations; hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection; extracurriculars; extended day; vulnerable populations; transportation; food services, mental health, behavioral, and emotional support services and programs; and communication.

Phasing Into In-Person Learning

All grades will have half-day (through 12:30 PM), in-person instruction through Friday, September 25. This phased-in approach will allow students and faculty to build stamina for full days at school. IDEAL is closed for Yom Kippur on Monday, September 28, and the school plans to implement its full schedule on Tuesday, September 29. This phased reentry will allow students and faculty to build stamina for full days at school. Teachers will have additional time to plan and prepare for instruction within new guidelines and to focus on orienting students to new protocols, attend to their social-emotional development, assess their academic readiness in all areas, and review critical skills from prior years, before introducing new topics.

In the Lower School, the return to in-person learning will be gradual over the course of the first three weeks of school, with Grades K-3 returning September 10, Grade 4 returning in-person September 14, and Grade 5 returning in-person September 17. Grades 4 and 5 will receive live-streamed instruction beginning on September 10. Building up to full attendance will allow our youngest students maximum time to practice new routines and expectations and allow us to manage and assess the flow of students initially with fewer students in the building.

The return to in-person school in the Upper School will also be phased in. A virtual orientation assembly for all Middle and High School students will take place on Wednesday, September 9. This required virtual student orientation day will also include virtual advisory meetings so students and faculty can begin to prepare for in-person learning, review

schedules, and get to know new community members. New families will be invited to an orientation on Wednesday evening, September 9. Additionally, the first week of school will involve a phased reopening for the two Upper School cohorts. Thursday, September 10, Middle School students hold their first day of school; High School will not be in session on this day. On Friday, September 11, High School will arrive for its first day of school; Middle School will not be in session on this day. This staggered reopening will allow Upper School faculty and staff to focus on protocols and reentry with one division at a time. As with the Lower School, all scheduled Upper School class days will be half days from Thursday, September 10, to Friday, September 25. The school is closed for Yom Kippur on Monday, September 28, and will open to its full schedule on Tuesday, September 29.

2020-21 Calendar: Some Important Dates

The dates below reflect the phased-approach to reopening the school, as well as some important changes to the original calendar proposed before the onset of the pandemic. These dates do not reflect the full calendar for the year. For the full calendar, please see the IDEAL website www.theidealschool.org.

- Tuesday-Friday, August 25-28: New faculty orientation
- Thursday-Friday, August 27-28: School opens for faculty and staff planning
 - Faculty and staff will receive PPE, instructions for working in cohorts or zooming if crossing cohorts, and social distancing
 - Student seating will be set up in classrooms prior to teachers' return in accordance with social distancing requirements
- Monday, August 31: Opening Meetings for faculty begin, with days at school for classroom set up and days by Zoom for larger professional development (schedule to come out the week of August 7)
- Tuesday-Wednesday, September 8-9: Optional parent-teacher conferences via Zoom
- Tuesday evening, September 8: New Family Orientation (Zoom)
- Wednesday, September 9: New Student Orientation (in-person and via Zoom)
- Thursday, September 10: Classes begin, half days through Friday, September 25, phased in-person reopening, rebuilding stamina and allowing for additional planning and adjustment time. Students not attending in-person will live stream
- Thursday, September 10: Grades K-3 and Middle School return, High School off
- Friday, September 11: High School returns, Middle School off
- Monday, September 14: Grade 4 returns
- Thursday, September 17: Grade 5 returns
- Wednesday, November 25: Thanksgiving Break begins
- Monday, November 30-Friday, December 18: School resumes, with virtual instruction
- Monday, December 21-January 3: Winter Break
- Monday, January 4 - Friday, January 15: School resumes, with virtual instruction

- Tuesday, January 19: School resumes, with in-person instruction
- Friday, June 18: 2021 Moving Up Ceremony (adds a week of instructional time to our original calendar)

Reopening the Lower School

Capacity and Social Distancing

IDEAL's Lower School consists of Grades K-5 and has enrolled 94 students for the 2020-21 school year. Each Lower School grade level consists of one "class" of 20 or fewer students. IDEAL's Lower School students will remain within grade-level cohorts and avoid intermingling for the duration of each school day to minimize exposure. For the duration of the pandemic, each Lower School "class" will serve as a cohort. By using space differently, we are able to divide each cohort/grade level into two homerooms of no more than 10 students each, allowing students to be seated in a socially distant manner. To the extent possible, Lower School faculty will be assigned to work in person with one cohort although they may instruct in more than one cohort if social distancing is maintained.

To continue to live IDEAL's mission of inclusion, homerooms will be grouped heterogeneously. When there is a whole-group lesson, the students will be in their homerooms with one teacher while the other teacher will stream in so they can co-present topics. Students in the two homerooms within the cohort, however, will be able to move between the two classrooms when directed to learn in flexible groupings throughout the day under the teachers' guidance and oversight. Desks will be cleaned and sanitized whenever students switch rooms.

Classrooms have been measured, and all desks will be arranged with six feet in between them before teachers and students return to school. Physical barriers will be employed when social distancing is not possible.

Each cohort/grade level and associated teaching team will have a designated bathroom for their exclusive use, and all bathrooms will become single occupancy and all-gender (although faculty will be able to assist students as needed, in accordance with the school's boundary policies).

Capacity in entryways, hallways, and stairwells will be designated for use by specific groups to promote social distancing and limit the numbers of individuals using them. Grades 1-3 will use the back stairwell and Grades 4 and 5 will use the front stairwell. Kindergarten will be based on the first floor. Entryways, hallways, and other spaces will have signage and markings to educate and direct the community and promote social distancing.

The Lower School faculty lounge, as well as some repurposed offices, will provide socially distant desks/workspaces for faculty and staff breaks. Faculty are encouraged not to congregate and to maintain social distancing.

Lower School Arrival, Dismissal, and Supplies

Student arrival will be staggered in 15-minute increments beginning at 7:45 AM, using two entrances to allow two cohorts to arrive in a socially distanced manner at the same time. At each arrival time, one cohort will line up in a socially distant line between the front entrance and Riverside Drive and enter through the lower level door. The other cohort will line up in a socially distanced manner between the lower level entrance and West End Avenue; they will enter through the lower level entrance. Students will be dismissed in a similar fashion in 15-minute increments beginning at 2:45 PM, with caregivers arriving at designated dismissal times and requesting their students at the entrance. Students departing on busses will be called to leave when their bus arrives.

Screening will take place at both entrances. Students will wait outside with their caregivers before their entry time, and there will be signs and markers to promote social distance along the sidewalk. Face coverings will be required for entry.

Students will keep their personal belongings at their workspace within the classroom to avoid the use of cubbies, but outerwear will be collected and stored in plastic bags at arrival and redistributed at dismissal. All students, faculty, and staff will have and use their own personal supplies. Student supplies will be maintained in individual supply bins at school. All soft furnishing and toys that are difficult to clean will be removed, and the school will limit shared equipment whenever possible. Any shared equipment will be cleaned thoroughly after each use. Students will be required to travel back and forth to school with their iPads in case circumstances require them to stream from home the following day.

Reopening the Upper School

Capacity and Social Distancing

IDEAL's Upper School enrolls approximately 121 students, divided into a Middle School of approximately 69 students and High School of approximately 49 students, with three students completing their High School graduation requirements in our Next Steps 18-21 Program. Classes within both divisions are often grouped across the grades (i.e. 6-8 and 9-12) to allow for students to participate in a mix of heterogeneous and readiness-based groupings that promote inclusion, academic progress, and social-emotional growth.

For the duration of the pandemic, Upper School students will be divided into divisional cohorts that will meet in different locations to reduce the exposure that might otherwise occur between Middle and High School students. The Middle School will meet in the fifth

floor classrooms, and the High School will meet in the third and sixth floor classrooms. The school is exploring additional classroom and bathroom space with B'nai Jeshurun. Class sizes will be kept to 15 or fewer students at all times and, whenever possible and in most instances, they will contain ten or fewer students. Students and staff will attend classes wearing masks and social distancing where possible. Desks will be cleaned and sanitized whenever students change rooms or seats. Physical barriers will be employed when social distancing is not possible. When possible, teachers will travel to student classrooms, minimizing student hallway transitions.

Upper School faculty and staff have traditionally taught in both the Middle and High Schools. Wherever possible, for the duration of the pandemic, Upper School faculty will be assigned a cohort for in-person teaching. To the extent possible, the faculty member will be assigned for in-person teaching in the cohort where their primary duties lie, and the faculty member will serve as an advisor within their assigned cohort. When faculty and staff are required to teach or work with students outside of their assigned cohort, they will do so virtually. For example, a teacher who is assigned to the Middle School cohort but teaches one class in the High School would do so virtually, while another adult is present in-person to monitor the safety and behavior of students.

Advisories will serve as the “homeroom” space for students during the day to minimize gatherings in hallways. Aligned with IDEAL’s mission, all Middle and High School advisories will be grouped heterogeneously. Students will eat lunch and enjoy social time in a socially distant manner in the lunch advisory (replacing recess).

Classrooms have been measured, and all tables and desks will be arranged with six feet in between them before teachers and students return to school. Physical barriers will be employed when social distancing is not possible. Two-person tables in Upper School classrooms will be divided by polycarbonate dividers to seat two students.

To reduce social density and risk, larger areas such as the gym and rooms such as the art rooms not previously used as general classrooms in the school will be used more broadly for academic purposes, to allow for greater social distancing. The school is also working with B'nai Jeshurun to provide additional space and will be adding to its classroom spaces for one of the two IDEAL pods.

Entryways, hallways, and stairwells will be labeled to indicate a one-way route and to illustrate and promote social distancing requirements. All bathrooms will become single occupancy, on the floor of the cohort, monitored with a pass system, although faculty will be able to assist students as needed, in accordance with our boundary policies.

Upper School Arrival, Dismissal, and Supplies

Arrival and dismissal schedules will be staggered to promote social distancing. Middle School students will arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 AM, and High School students will arrive between 8

and 8:15 AM. Arrival procedures will be strictly monitored with our COVID screening protocol, and students will be spaced on 89th Street when waiting to enter the building. No individual may enter without a proper face-covering except those with an approved medical exemption.

Upon arrival, students will go directly to their first period classrooms. The school will provide supervision in cohorts for students who arrive between 7:45 and 8 AM. No students will be permitted in the building before 8 AM, and all breakfast foods should be consumed prior to entering the building as there are strict procedures for snack and lunch. Dismissal will be staggered between 3:15 and 3:30, with designated pick-up locations on West 89th Street.

All IDEAL students and faculty will enter through the West Entrance where they will be screened. This space will serve as a dedicated IDEAL entrance during the school day so that we can better enforce our contact tracing procedures and avoid unnecessary contact with B’Nai Jeshurun’s employees and members.

Students will carry their individual materials with them during the day, taking them home at night, including their laptops. Sharing materials will be prohibited, and lockers will not be used to avoid congregating in the hallways. Any shared school equipment will be cleaned after use. To the extent possible, soft classroom furnishings and toys will be removed from the classrooms before the start of school.

Teaching and Learning

Learning Models and Identification of Instructional Gaps

Given the increased likelihood and scope of learning loss, the school will open with 14 half days dedicated to the social-emotional well-being of students, assessment, and review, phasing into our full academic program.

In the Lower School, each grade level is comprised of one section co-taught by a learning specialist and general educator who will be focused in partnership on assessing and scaffolding skills in their classrooms during the transition back to school in the month of September. For example, Lower School teachers will create assessments suited specifically to the children in their classrooms to evaluate progress and readiness against grade-level benchmarks. They will also administer Teachers College reading assessments and math assessments aligned with our Turk curriculum. In general, the Lower School’s co-teaching model, differentiated instruction, flexible grouping of students within grade levels, and nurturing student-teacher relationships allow the school to identify gaps and move students forward. In addition to learning specialists in the classroom, the Lower School also has a dedicated Learning Specialist who works across grades with students individually or in small groups who need remediation or additional skill-building. In the Upper School, learning specialists in each discipline partner with general educators in a variety of ways.

Teachers and learning specialists in Upper School will implement a variety of formal and informal assessments to evaluate student progress and readiness and meet students where they are to move them forward. In the coming year, the Upper School is also introducing a new system featuring one learning specialist assigned to each grade level in Middle School and one learning specialist dedicated to the High School as a whole to provide additional academic supervision and support for students, as well as additional support for teachers in those grade levels. As with the Lower School, the Upper School also has an additional learning specialist, trained in PAF, who works in a Learning Center to support students in Grades 6-12 individually or in small groups by providing remediation or additional skill-building.

In addition to the supports above, students in the school's Dylan Program also have associate teachers assigned to work individually with them, providing additional support, skill reinforcement, and additional differentiation to support inclusion. Speech and Language, Occupational, and Physical therapists and school counselors also provide additional layers of support for students in the Zenith and Dylan Programs. By "pushing into" classrooms, attending team and divisional meetings, and partnering with teachers in a variety of ways, therapists not only support the individual goals and growth of students but also serve as another safeguard, ensuring the school can identify areas where remediation is needed and provide support for students.

Assemblies

Community events such as Assemblies, IDEAL Talks, Senior Speeches, Pioneer Period, and other large gatherings including faculty meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice. The Friday streaming day will allow students, faculty, and families to continue to gather, providing an additional layer of community support and opportunities for communication during this challenging time.

Arts

IDEAL's Arts Program provides a robust exposure to music, visual art, and drama. The arts are a key component of the school's program, allowing students to express themselves, strengthen understanding of identity, and develop artistic skills that support academic success, creativity and confidence, and expression of social justice themes. As students return to school during the pandemic, the arts remain an important aspect of their program for those reasons. For the duration of the pandemic, the school has established modifications of how the arts classes are delivered will be implemented to promote safety while continuing to elevate the arts and the critical role they play in the academic and personal growth of our students and the life of IDEAL's community:

- Arts teachers will come to student's classrooms (or may teach remotely depending on their cohort)

- Many music classes will be taught virtually, allowing students to sing strongly and/or as a community only when they are at home
- In-school music classes will focus on the many aspects of music that are non-vocal, including:
 - Personal practice of non-shared, non-woodwind instruments (i.e. drums and guitars)
 - Design and building of own instruments
 - Music appreciation
 - Digital music creation
 - Music in the context of society and social justice connections
- Visual arts students will each have a box of their own materials to use, avoiding shared materials. During distance learning, these materials will travel home with students so that there are common tools available at home for all students in visual art
- Drama students will not share props or touch each other in scenes and will wear masks and maintain social distancing throughout the class

Physical Education

Physical education will take place outside when possible and practical, maintaining the 12-foot social distancing recommendation for PE, with teachers similarly assigned to two cohorts. When outdoor activity is not possible, PE will take place in the individual classrooms, live or virtually with another teacher supervising, with students in masks and activities such as stretching or yoga. Other faculty and staff who, in normal circumstances, work across Lower School cohorts will, whenever possible, be assigned to two cohorts for in-person teaching and teach the other cohorts virtually over the course of the year.

Physical activity and education remain very important to students during the pandemic. Students need to be able to move to stretch, strengthen, and relieve stress through movement. Aerobic activity generating heavier breathing will be avoided where social distancing of at least 12 feet is not possible. PE materials (balls, hoops, etc) will not be shared by students or adults. Therefore, modifications to the Physical Education Program will be necessary. IDEAL is adopting the following modifications to its PE program:

- 12-foot Indoor spacing of students is impractical, so gym space will not be used for PE class
- Outdoor space will be used in the nearby park or on the roof deck for Upper School for more space and better ventilation whenever possible
- Classrooms with small groups will be dedicated for PE use when outdoor PE is not practical. Classroom activities will be stretching and strengthening, maintaining social distancing and sanitizing all surfaces (chairs, desks) after use
- Students will wear masks for PE, and activity levels will be low, especially in the period when students are becoming accustomed to wearing masks for long periods of time

- Health classes will include information about nutrition and independent exercise among other topics
- Students will be guided to maintain social distancing in PE activities
- Cardiovascular PE activities will be conducted during home-based remote classes on Fridays and/or students will be guided and supervised in the development and implementation of individualized fitness plans
- PE staff will be alert to physical responses from students, including exercise-induced asthma, and trained in how to support students in these instances while protecting themselves and other students

Therapies

In addition to academic subjects, IDEAL offers related services--speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling--to students in its Zenith and Dylan Programs. Regardless of whether students choose the in-person or remote options, all therapy sessions will continue to be designed to meet the needs of each individual student. Therapy will continue to be offered to individual students, to small groups of students with similar goals (within cohorts), or through “push-in” therapy support in the classroom.

Teletherapy via Zoom will be provided from school for those students who are streaming from home. Additional PPE such as shields, transparent masks, or barriers will be provided to faculty members including therapists who come in close contact with students. Additional larger spaces such as the gym will be used for therapies when possible, and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized between sessions, and hygiene stations will be installed in all therapy rooms. As in academic classes, therapists and students will use individual supplies. Although therapists have traditionally crossed grade levels and divisions, we are working to assign therapists to cohorts to the greatest extent possible. In some instances, this may mean a student in school will receive therapy via Zoom to maintain cohorts.

Technology, Equity, and Access

The school is in the process of implementing its plan to facilitate streaming for faculty and students. All faculty and students are provided with an iPad (Lower School students), Chromebook (Upper School students), or MacBook (faculty and staff). Additionally, all teachers have been or will be provided with an iPad. In the Lower School, teachers received iPads in the spring so that they would have the same technology as their students. In the fall, all Upper School faculty will receive an iPad to facilitate instruction and streaming in the hybrid model. Over the summer, students, faculty, and staff will be reminded of the requirement to travel to and from school with their school-provided devices in case the school needs to move quickly to distance learning.

To prepare for hybrid learning, the school is in the process of increasing bandwidth on both campuses to eliminate potential lag time and equipping every room with WiFi hardware to address connectivity issues and upgrading all networking equipment.

Throughout the year, faculty and staff will continue to use the IDEAL's Learning Management System (LMS) to share all classroom materials with families. This will facilitate streaming for students working from home in the long or short term. The school will continue to streamline online student workflow and communication with parents regarding the LMS, Google Classroom, etc. The school is also preparing schedules for distance learning so that specific cohorts, a division, or the school as a whole are prepared to move as needed to Zoom. Training will be conducted and next steps will be developed to enhance the hybrid learning environment for streaming days or temporary distance learning during Opening Meetings and throughout the year.

Extracurricular Activities

Field Trips

Field trips will be virtual until further notice. Faculty and staff are encouraged to organize "virtual visits" from experts in their field. We encourage families to share ideas and professional connections for virtual field trips and discussions with the school.

Extended Day

In the Lower School, Extended Day will be offered on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Wednesday's dismissal will be at 2:30 and Friday's at 12:30. During Extended Day, students will remain in their grade level cohorts and engage in safe, socially distant activities and/or have opportunities for reading and homework completion.

In the Upper School, proctored study halls will be offered to Middle School students on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Wednesday's dismissal will be at 2:30 and Fridays at 12:30. During proctored study halls, students will remain in their cohorts for homework completion and help. Play practices will be virtual rather than live to ensure the safety of students from different cohorts working together. No interschool sports are permitted at this time.

Clubs and Sports

Extracurricular activities such as clubs will be offered virtually on Fridays. No inter-school sports are currently permitted by the New York State Department of Health or NYSAIS. The APEX (IDEAL's after-school athletic program) staff is working on virtual and safe, permitted options for the coming fall.

Social and Emotional Well-Being

As students return to school, it is expected that some or many will have anxious, fearful, or grieving feelings, and this may manifest in dysregulated behavior, withdrawal, and other coping mechanisms. At the same time, some or many students may feel elated to be back at school but struggle with the academic executive functioning in a new school environment, generating new stressors. The social-emotional needs of the students will need to be the first priority, before and during the introduction of academic curricular work. The 14-day half-day ramp into a full schedule will provide teachers and the school with flexibility to prioritize the social and emotional well-being of individual students and community building activities, as well as time to assess for learning loss and to practice and rebuild foundational skills.

IDEAL is fortunate to have three school counselors, with one counselor assigned to each division and one counselor dividing time between divisions to provide additional support. In the coming year, the school counselors will continue to be available when students need check-ins, and division heads and other academic administrators will continue to be available to students and to faculty wanting additional help supporting students. In addition to scheduled, weekly students whose IEPs include counseling, counselors will continue to maintain an open-door policy for students needing to touch base. Counselors, faculty, Upper School advisors, and academic administrators are also available to parents wanting to discuss concerns. The counselors will provide resources to the families to help prepare students for the transition back to school.

Lower School

In the Lower School, the following practices will be in place or have been modified to address many of the social-emotional needs of our students when we reopen:

- 14-days of half-day instruction to ramp up to full days, allowing time for students and teachers to acclimate to the return to school, engage in community-building activities, and provide teacher planning time
- Initial school days will focus on routines, relationship-building, and the creation of a safe space for students to process their experiences
- Counselors will continue to implement Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to support students division-wide structured as follows:
 - Tier 1: counselors and teachers setting the groundwork for safe and supportive learning environments
 - Tier 2: student-specific interventions for students who are identified as struggling
 - Tier 3: possible referral to outside, community-based providers
- MTSS will be steered by a trauma-informed screening tool developed by counselors
- The school will continue to hold students support meetings involving teachers, counselors, therapists, and administrators to establish and maintain student support

- Weekly Community Time conversations in homerooms and cohorts will focus on supporting the needs of our students during the difficult period of transition back to school and ongoing stress during the pandemic
- Professional development is being planned in trauma-informed instruction
- The school will host ongoing parent support groups led by our counselors
- Teacher support groups will be offered utilizing outside providers
- Ongoing, general student support will be provided through Community Time and regular counselor attendance at morning meetings. Counselors will consistently be available to all students
- We will revisit our discipline protocols with an eye toward strengthening and enriching current restorative practices

Upper School

In IDEAL's Upper School, we will be addressing the social-emotional needs of the students through the following strategies:

- The formation of an Advisory Council, composed of counselors and advisors, to plan for and ensure the implementation routine advisory lessons addressing social and emotional needs of students, laying the groundwork for a safe and secure learning environment
- Focused training for faculty on trauma-responsive and restorative practices before the start of school, monitored and supported with on-going implementation. Coping strategies and resiliency skills for students, faculty and staff will be central to this training
- Partnership with families in the social-emotional aspects of the return to school through the sharing of information about social-emotional instruction and conversations about their children's experiences during the pandemic and their current state of social-emotional well-being
 - Families will also be strongly encouraged to take advantage of the optional parent meetings before students return to school, where advisors, teachers, administrators, and counselors will gather information about each student's social-emotional state and academic preparedness for the return to school
- The creation of a screening document for families to gauge the social-emotional state of their child before they return to school
- Opening days of school will include small student groupings that provide platforms for information, discussion, sharing, and expression about emotional responses, the new school environment, and the supports in place emotionally, academically, and technologically
- Academic skills and curricular work will be gradually introduced through a diagnostic process designed to assess where the students are right now, and with the social-emotional backdrop in view
- Advisory groupings in each grade-level will have targeted lessons designed to support social-emotional wellbeing, together with attendant executive functioning skills to support academic success, as they have done prior to the pandemic

- Counselors and therapists to work will support individual students, developing student-specific skills and interventions as needed, and, as needed, referring to outside professionals
- Restorative practices have been and will continue to be implemented to help students understand how their behavior impacts others and the community. Through discussion of emotions and behavioral responses to stressors, deepening of empathy, and interpersonal conflict management, students will be supported as they develop shared values, deeper relationships, and more community cohesion
- Additional training for faculty and staff will be implemented through the year
- Modifications to the student plan will be made as the social-emotional needs of the students are monitored over the year

Extracurricular Activities

The school will continue to offer clubs on Fridays to bring different groups of students together, and the Coordinator of Diversity will be implementing student ally groups to foster community cohesion and advocacy in the coming year. Finally, social events for students, using virtual platforms to ensure cohort safety, are being developed. Last spring, the Upper School held an online dance, assemblies, and a sing-along. Similar events will be planned for the coming fall.

Faculty and Staff

To support the emotional well-being of our faculty and staff as they lead students through this difficult time, the school is developing optional support groups with an outside provider and has already shared information about and is providing access to an interschool support group led by two school psychologists. Additionally, IDEAL provides an employee assistance plan to all employees through UNUM. Employees and their families can receive referrals as well as three complimentary in-person or video therapy sessions. Our medical provider, Oxford, also has full mental health coverage. In addition to counseling services, we will continue to offer the free optional weekly yoga sessions for employees that we introduced in the spring, and we will seek opportunities to incorporate open-ended, small group conversations and social activities into our faculty meetings.

Communication/Family and Community Engagement

Reopening Communications

Prior to the start of school, the school will hold divisional faculty and family meetings to ensure that all constituencies are prepared for the transition back to school. Faculty communications will include further and ongoing discussion of the reopening plan, presentation of divisional schedules, and opportunities for collaboration around specific aspects of the divisional schedules and plans. Opening Meetings, before the start of school,

will include professional development on topics including learning loss, streaming, trauma-informed education, and other topics essential to returning, as well as time for planning in teams. Family communication will also include further discussion of the school's reopening plan and divisional models and schedules, as well as support for families and caregivers on preparing students to return to school.

To educate the community about social distancing and hygiene, the school will post signs reminding the community of best practices to prevent COVID-19 transmission, encourage testing, and illustrate social distancing. Administrators will make regular announcements with the same information. The school nurses will educate faculty, staff, students, and families about protective measures they can take to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19, including social distancing requirements, face coverings, and hand and respiratory hygiene. There will be dedicated time during Opening Meetings to train faculty and staff on COVID-related safety protocols, including PPE, hygiene, and social distancing. Counselors, division heads, and other administrators will share resources and information to help families prepare for the upcoming year. Signage, written communication, and presentations for students, families, and staff will encourage all individuals in the school to adhere to the CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of face coverings and PPE. Through Community Time, Advisory, and Assemblies, as well as other natural opportunities for instruction that occur throughout the school day, administrators, faculty, and staff will support students in their understanding of habits and protocols that encourage health and hygiene and promote their safety and the safety of other community members.

Upcoming Meetings

- Faculty and Staff Zoom and Divisional Meetings, follow up to Thursday, August 6 Town Hall Meeting, Monday, August 10, at 5 PM
- PA Meeting and Divisional Discussion of Reopening Plans for Families: Thursday, August 13, 5-6:30 PM
- New Faculty Orientation, Tuesday, August 25 to Friday, August 28
- Opening Meetings for Faculty and Staff, Monday, August 31 to Friday, September 4
- New Family Orientation, Tuesday evening, September 8, on Zoom
- New Student Orientation, Wednesday, September 9, in-person and via Zoom

Schoolwide Communications

Dated, current information and school communications will be made available to families and staff in a dedicated, password-protected area of the school website. In emergency situations, the school uses not only email but also its website, social media sites including Facebook, and OneCallNow, a voice- and text-based communication system, to quickly disseminate information.

Professional Development and Training

To prepare for reopening, the school will provide professional development on:

- Best practices for hybrid and remote learning (including streaming)
- Training for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency
- Developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff
- Training on trauma-informed teaching practices
- COVID-related safety protocols, including PPE, hygiene, and social distancing

The school will also provide:

- Time for our learning specialists to share student information
- Common planning time
- Training on PPE, social distancing, and hygiene protocols
- Update on technology and the LMS
- Protocols that relate specifically to individual roles

Some of this training may be virtual to allow faculty and staff to dedicate more in-person time to planning and set-up.

Attendance

The school will continue to take daily attendance in Lower School and daily attendance, as well as attendance in each class, in Upper School. In Lower School, the receptionist and homeroom teachers are responsible for reporting and recording daily attendance, and, in Upper School, the receptionist and first period teachers are responsible for reporting and recording daily attendance. The Human Resources Director maintains records of faculty and staff attendance. Together, the Human Resources Director, receptionists, and division heads monitor attendance in fire and other drills. For students who have chosen the streaming option and for periods of distance learning for the community, the school will use measures including communication with faculty, presence and contributions in the virtual classroom, and submission of academic work to monitor and record daily attendance. Homeroom teachers and advisors will be responsible for monitoring and recording virtual attendance and reporting attendance to the division heads and divisional receptionists each day. Attendance requirements and procedures will be reviewed during Opening Meetings. All faculty and staff are required to follow the school's established procedures, outlined in the faculty and staff handbook, for reporting educational neglect or abuse through the local department of social services. This policy will be reviewed in Opening Meetings.

Communicating Concerns About Teaching and Learning

If a parent or caregiver has a concern about a particular area, IDEAL's protocol encourages families to begin by contacting the faculty or staff member leading the relevant class, therapy, or activity. If concerns are unanswered, of a serious nature, or overarching, the school recommends contacting the appropriate division head or supervisor, and then the Head of School. Technology concerns can be addressed to the Director of Technology or the Technology Integration Coordinator. Additional and specific protocols for communication are listed in the Family and Faculty and Staff Handbooks.

Below is a list of administrators and staff who can assist with questions and concerns about teaching and learning, technology, nursing, or finances at IDEAL:

Head of School Janet Wolfe jwolfe@theidealschool.org
 Director of Finance Margaret Conklin mconklin@theidealschool.org
 Lower School Head Liz Hazelwood ehazelwood@theidealschool.org
 Upper School Head Sam Keany skeany@theidealschool.org
 Assistant Upper School Head Emily Kuntz ekuntz@theidealschool.org
 Director of Learning Support Margaret Egan megan@theidealschool.org
 Director of Therapies and Related Services Janie Fox jfox@theidealschool.org
 Director of the Dylan Program Tara Fersko tfersko@theidealschool.org
 Lower School Nurse Karlene Kerr kkerr@theidealschool.org
 Upper School Nurse Shauna McPherson smcpherson@theidealschool.org
 Director of Technology Jorge Chica jchica@theidealschool.org
 Technology Integration Coordinator Ari Schwab aschwab@theidealschool.org
 Human Resources Director Amanda Menzie amenzie@theidealschool.org
 Director of Communications Joseph Kemp jkemp@theidealschool.org
 Director of Admissions and Enrollment Lori Murphy lmurphy@theidealschool.org

Operations

Transportation

IDEAL does not provide transportation to students. Families are responsible for transporting their own children to school. However, the school will make recommendations consistent with state-issued guidance for students to wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and maintain appropriate social distancing on public transportation. The school will also encourage parents who can walk or drop off students to reduce density on public transportation, as recommended by the NY State Department of Health.

Additionally, the school has staggered arrival and departure times for each cohort and will coordinate these times with the DOE for students who take DOE provided transportation. Student arrival will be staggered in 15-minute increments beginning at 7:45 AM, and students will be dismissed in the same fashion in 15-minute increments beginning at 2:45 PM. The school has its own daily screening process to be completed before arrival and will also work with the DOE to verify that they are meeting standards for screening on the busses that IDEAL students take. Notwithstanding the bus screening process, the school urges families to observe for signs of illness in their child that would require staying home.

All students will be greeted and supervised by faculty as they arrive at school. Hygiene measures including hand washing or sanitizer will be required at the front entry, and face coverings will be provided to all faculty and staff and to any students who need one.

Visitor Policy

To avoid unnecessary exposure to our cohorts and to promote our contact tracing policy, nonessential visitors are not permitted in the school buildings. Parent and other guardian visits will only be permitted, with the approval of the Head of School, under exceptional circumstances. Whenever possible, parent meetings, including orientations, conferences, back to school nights, and other special events will be hosted online.

The school will maintain a continuous log of every person, including employees, students, family members, and any essential visitors or vendors who may have close contact* with other individuals at the school; this log will be maintained through the Raptor visitor management system. Contact information will be obtained from all visitors to ensure they can be notified of a COVID-19 diagnosis if necessary. Essential vendors must wear face coverings and complete the school's screening process before entering the building.

Office Spaces

For the duration of the pandemic, the school may repurpose office spaces used by non-academic staff who do not work directly with students and who are working from home (i.e. business office and similar personnel).

Food Services

Healthy and fresh boxed lunches and snacks will be prepared by JC Foods, our contracted food service provider, and delivered to teachers for distribution in the classroom. All menus will be reviewed by JC Food's certified nutritionist. Students who wish may opt to bring their own lunch to school. Products with peanuts and tree nuts are forbidden. The school will do a mask check for all students with allergies after meals, as well as asking students how they feel. Epi-pens are stored in the Lower School on the fifth floor near the gym and in the lower level Nurse's Office and in the Upper School in the sixth floor Nurse's Office, at the fifth-floor security desk, and in the technology office near the gym on the third floor. All students will be required to stay on campus for lunch until further notice.

Lunchtime in homeroom or advisory groups will provide additional time dedicated to social-emotional learning and community building. Students will eat lunch with their homeroom or advisory groups in their classrooms while seated in a socially distant manner. Sharing of food and utensils will not be allowed. The school is developing protocols for cleaning and handwashing before lunch, during lunch, and after eating.

Water fountains will be closed. Students arrive at school with full water bottles. The school also has contact-free bottle refilling stations available for use. Boxed water will also be available as needed to students, faculty, and staff at school.

Vulnerable Populations

The school will work with employees who request a reasonable accommodation that allows an individual the opportunity to perform the essential functions of their job in a safe and efficient manner. Employees are directed to inform their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Director, who will inform the Head of School of any accommodation request. The school will consider requests for reasonable accommodation on a case-by-case basis and will engage in a timely and good-faith interactive process to determine if it can make a reasonable accommodation without undue hardship.

There are several avenues available for employees who may need time off due to COVID-19: The Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), NYS COVID Leave, NYS Paid Family Leave (PFL), and sick or personal days (PTO). Depending on circumstances, a faculty or staff member may be eligible for paid time off under one of these policies:

- The FFCRA grants paid sick leave (up to 80 hours) if unable to work or telework because the employee is subject to a quarantine order, has been advised to quarantine, or is experiencing symptoms and seeking a COVID diagnosis or caring for someone in this situation or if their child's school/daycare is closed
- NYS COVID Leave provides up to 14 days of paid sick leave if an employee is symptomatic and is ordered to quarantine by their doctor or the DOH. This leaves runs concurrently with FFCRA
- NYS PFL can be used by employees who are unable to work or telework to care for a dependent minor child or a family member with a "serious health condition." PFL provides up to 10 weeks of pro-rata pay
- PTO: The school will combine all sick and personal days into one category called PTO (paid time off). If a faculty member has used all of their available PTO days by 12/1/20 due to COVID-19, on a case-by-case basis, the school will consider granting additional days to that employee.

*The school defines "close contact" in accordance with the NYC Test and Trace Corps' definition: Living in the same household with a person with COVID-19, providing services in the home of a person with COVID-19, having had intimate physical contact with a person with COVID-19, or having spent at least 10 minutes or more within six feet of a person with COVID-19 without appropriate PPE.

Health and Safety

Policies Adapted or Created in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Creation of Site Safety Monitors
- Travel Policy
- Screening Policy
- Self Reporting Policy
- Isolation and Collection Procedures
- Testing Protocols and Procedures
- Exposed Individuals Policy
- Sick Policy
- Contact Tracing and Communication Policy

Responsible Parties

Janet Wolfe, Head of School, jwolfe@theidealschool.org

Margaret Conklin, COVID Liaison and Finance Director, mconklin@theidealschool.org

Site Safety Monitors

Elizabeth Hazelwood, Lower School Head, ehazelwood@theidealschool.org

Sam Keany, Upper School Head, skeany@theidealschool.org

Building Systems and Maintenance

Lower School Return to School Protocols:

Cleaning and disinfection

- Additional PPE and other appropriate equipment and supplies are being purchased to add COVID-specific disinfection to the facility's regular daytime cleaning protocols
- Training for our facilities staff, who will implement these protocols throughout the day, will be conducted prior to reopening
- The school is working with its contracted cleaning service, Tristate Cleaning, to implement disinfection protocols to their nightly cleaning routine

Building systems

- As there has been essential facilities staff presence on-site for the duration of the pandemic, the water system was never completely shut down. The facilities team will begin flushing the building water system, per EPA recommendations (by running all hot and cold taps and flushing all toilets), 2-4 times per week in the weeks leading up to the school's reopening
- The HVAC service contractor will be brought on-site during the month of August for a full evaluation of the systems in place; the school will work with its service contractor to assess the filtration for the existing HVAC system and to implement other solutions as deemed appropriate, such as ionizers (in HVAC systems and/or portable units) and portable HEPA air filter units.

- The school facilities staff is working to ensure functioning windows in all areas of the building to enhance the flow of air

Operations

- Screening protocols have been implemented for all essential school visitors, with appropriate record-keeping in case of a need to initiate contact tracing
- Informational signage is being installed throughout the building, including social distancing indicators
- The school's facilities staff is working to optimize traffic flow through the building and minimize the possibility of cohorts converging in elevators, restrooms, and other common areas

Upper School Return to School Protocols:

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Additional PPE and other appropriate equipment and supplies are being purchased to add COVID-specific disinfection to the facility's regular daytime cleaning protocols
- The school's operations staff will be trained to implement these protocols throughout the day, to the required degree
- In addition, building management is working with its contract cleaning vendor, Tristate Cleaning, to implement disinfection protocols in their nightly cleaning routine

Building systems

- As there has been building management staff presence on-site for the duration of the pandemic, the water system in the Upper School was never completely shut down. The building management operations staff have been flushing the building water system, per EPA recommendations (by running all hot and cold taps and flushing all toilets), 2-4 times per week
- The HVAC service contractor has been maintaining all package systems and split units on a monthly basis, as was done prior to the pandemic
- The building management is also working with its service contractor and a consultant to assess increasing filtration to the highest degree possible for the existing HVAC systems, and implement other solutions to optimize the environment, such as ionizers (in HVAC systems and/or portable units) and portable HEPA air filter units
- In all classrooms, offices, and common areas, including spaces with limited ventilation, or where there are only window AC units, we are working to ensure functioning windows to enhance the flow of air

Operations

- Screening protocols have been implemented for all building visitors, with appropriate record-keeping in case of a need to initiate contact tracing
- Informational signage has been installed throughout the building, including social distancing indicators

- Building management is working to optimize traffic flow through the building, in order to keep the IDEAL community and other building occupants separate from one another and minimize the possibility of overlapping use of stairwells, elevators, restrooms, and other common areas

Collaboration with B'nai Jeshurun

The administrative and leadership teams of IDEAL and B'nai Jeshurun have been working collaboratively throughout the summer to prepare dedicated spaces in IDEAL's Upper School facility, located on the first, third, fifth, and sixth floors of B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue that maintain the integrity of IDEAL's cohorts and promote the safety of all members of the two communities.

In its own reopening plan, B'nai Jeshurun is using the strict reopening guidelines published by the Jewish Community Relations Council. For the duration of the pandemic, the West Entrance of B'nai Jeshurun will be dedicated to IDEAL students, faculty, and staff. One elevator will be dedicated, whenever possible, to IDEAL students and faculty who require this support. Elevators at B'nai Jeshurun have markings indicating proper social distancing, as well as a stand with tissues to use to press buttons. Passengers will be limited to one student and teacher at a time. All students and staff who are able will be required to take stairs to maintain social distancing.

During the first semester, B'nai Jeshurun's Hebrew School will not meet in IDEAL's spaces to avoid mixing between our cohorts. B'nai Jeshurun is working with IDEAL to ensure proper ventilation and cleaning in all of our spaces.

Emergency Drills

The school will conduct all required fire drills and lockdown drills. The school's Fire Safety, Evacuation, and Lockdown Plans will be posted on our website prior to the start of the year with instructions for how lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted. Any changes to promote social distancing will be reflected in the posted plans. These plans will also be reviewed by faculty and staff during Opening Meetings.

Before beginning drills, the school will consult with its counselors on the best ways to introduce fire and lockdown drills given the trauma and experiences of students during the pandemic. Lower School teachers and Upper School advisors will receive suggestions on how to lead conversations about and prepare students for upcoming drills. To promote and provide for social distancing during lockdown and fire drills, the school is considering the following:

Lockdown Drill

- Practicing before the first drill by having teachers assign students spaces that are socially distant from one another and away from doors and windows

- Organizing students into smaller groups to practice
- Calling lockdown drills “safety drills” instead to avoid undue trauma

Fire Drill

- Posting faculty in the stairwells and halls to promote social distancing
- Marking spaces with chalk on the sidewalk to remind students to maintain six feet of distance between them
- Establishing different assembly points, each with its own fire marshall, for cohorts to avoid intermingling
- Practicing drills with one cohort at a time to map out positions of students before holding an all-school drill

The school will also update those faculty and staff who are working from home on fire drill protocols so they are prepared for the return to school.

Monitoring

Screening

Families, faculty, and staff will be required to use the Magnus Health COVID screening app including a daily screening questionnaire with recommended CDC questions each day, prior to entering the school.

All students, faculty and staff, as well as visitors entering the school buildings, will have their temperatures taken by touchless thermometers. Individuals with a temperature greater than 100° F will be denied entry or sent directly to a dedicated isolation area prior to being picked up or sent home. Students will be supervised until they are picked up.

The school will maintain the confidentiality of these records. The school will only record information about whether the individual screened positive or negative; the temperature checks themselves will not be recorded. All staff conducting screening will be trained in proper CDC and State Health Department protocols and will wear masks, gloves, and face shields while conducting the screening.

Face masks will be required to enter school buildings.

The school will maintain a continuous log of every person, including employees, students, family members, and any essential visitors who may have close contact with other individuals at the school; this log will be maintained through the Raptor visitor management system. Contact information will be obtained from all visitors to ensure they can be notified of a COVID-19 diagnosis if necessary. Parent and other guardian visits will not be permitted unless an exception is made by the Head of School under exceptional circumstances.

Whenever possible, parent meetings, including orientations, conferences, back to school nights, and other special events will be hosted online.

Those families and faculty and staff who have someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in their household, as well as those families who have come in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual are required to report this contact to the school through the Magnus screening app or directly to covidreporting@theidealschool.org. The Magnus screening app and/or school will alert families to not send their child to school in instances where a member of the household tests positive for or who has had close contact, as defined by the CDC, with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. The school will then generate a required online contact tracing form for completion. Timely completion and submission of both the daily symptom check and, when necessary, the contact tracing form, are critical to the school's ability to monitor the community's well-being and the possible need for change.

Travel

In order to welcome students, faculty, and staff back to school safely:

- All community members traveling to or from hot spots are strongly urged to consider the 14-day quarantine requirement (as required by the CDC and New York State guidelines) when making travel plans, to ensure a timely return to school
- A list of states that require a 14-day period of quarantine when entering New York State can be found here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

Testing Protocols and Responsibility

Students and Families

IDEAL has two school nurses, as well as a consulting nurse practitioner and consulting epidemiologist. IDEAL's nurses will be responsible, in consultation with local health department officials and, as needed, with our consulting nurse practitioner and epidemiologist, for overseeing the compliance with the school's testing process for symptomatic students or for those students determined through our contact tracing process to have had close contact with a presumed or confirmed COVID 19 diagnosis. They will also oversee the testing process before the return to school of students in the community who have traveled internationally or traveled to a state with widespread transmission of COVID 19, as designated through the New York State Travel Advisory, before allowing such individuals to return to the school.

Faculty and Staff

The Human Resources Director will provide referrals, with support from our nursing staff, for testing and will oversee the testing process as described above for symptomatic individuals, presumed positive individuals, or individuals who have traveled internationally or to a state with widespread transmission of COVID-19.

Monitoring Community Health

The school will coordinate closely with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the New York State Department of Health to determine early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level. Metrics will include:

1. State and city viral infection rates: if rates are rising, specifically in the neighborhood of the school, but also in the areas where students, staff, and faculty reside, the school will abide by the state's recommendation that schools can open if the regional infection rate is less than 5% and can remain open if it remains less than 9%; the school will monitor updates to this guidance from the state and adjust the metric accordingly
2. Number and percentage of students and faculty/staff failing morning screening: single day trends and on a 5-day average
3. Number and percentage of students and faculty/staff absent due to symptoms: single day trends and on a 5-day average
4. Number and percentage of students and faculty/staff sent home each day due to symptoms: single day trends and on a 5-day average
5. Number of positive cases within the community: if 3 or more cases are reached, the school will implement widespread testing
6. Ability to maintain staffing ratios and program safety: if key members of the school community are absent and the school can't maintain the program as designed, the school will transition to remote learning

The metrics related to the school community's numbers and percentages as outlined in 2-5 above will be monitored daily by the school nurses and reported to the COVID Liaison and Head of School for evaluation, consultation with the school's Board, and decision making; the school will consider all individuals counted in metrics 2-5 as presumed positive for COVID-19 until proven otherwise and the total number of those individuals must be less than 9% of our community (students and employees) in order to continue on-site learning.

State and city viral infection rates, as well as the ability to maintain staffing ratios and program safety, as outlined above in metrics 1 and 6, will be monitored by the COVID Liaison and Human Resources Director and reported to the Head of School for evaluation, consultation with the school's Board, and decision making. The above metrics are subject to change.

Containment

Self-Reporting

Self-reports of COVID symptoms, exposure, or diagnoses will be made via email to covidreporting@theidealschool.org, which will be received by the Director of Finance, HR Director, and Head of School.

School Health Offices, Isolation, and Collection

Daily COVID screening via Magnus Health will be reviewed by the school nurses to ensure completion prior to the start of the school day and to ensure the screening staff knows who should not attend school.

If a student exhibits signs or symptoms of COVID during the school day, they will be placed into an isolation room separate from that of the nursing office and will be closely and respectfully monitored until pick up. The school nurses will don adequate PPE including but not limited to gowns, gloves, masks, and face shields when assessing students and/or faculty members with symptoms. If the symptom assessment warrants further testing, the nurses will provide a list of available testing sites in conjunction with referral to individual primary care physicians and the DOH.

The school nurses will train all students, faculty, and staff on how to properly put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to appropriate face coverings. The school nurses also will train all students, faculty, and staff on how to properly hand wash using both soap and water as well as hand sanitizer.

Exposed Individuals

In the event that an individual presents COVID-19 symptoms, they will be isolated and sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing; students will be supervised until they are picked up. The school will require symptomatic individuals to immediately disclose if and when their symptoms began, whether during or outside of school hours. Individuals who have had close contact with a symptomatic, presumed positive, or confirmed positive individual will be informed and asked to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing and will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. The school will implement reporting plans for individuals who are alerted they have come into close contact with a person with a presumed or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. The school will notify the state and city health departments immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by any student, faculty, staff, or visitor who has been on school grounds.

Any areas of the school used by an individual presumed to have COVID-19 will be closed off and the school will ensure cleaning and disinfection of those areas; this includes offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas.

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 among members of the school community who have been on school grounds may require a temporary building closure, reverting to distance learning, for thorough cleaning and disinfection.

Sick Policy

The school requires that families, faculty, and staff strictly adhere to the sick policy and stay home when sick. If a student, staff, or faculty member arrives at school presenting COVID symptoms, they will immediately be isolated and attended to by the school nurse and will ultimately be sent home. Each building will have a designated space for the care and isolation of individuals who show symptoms during the course of the school day.

Each family will provide three emergency contacts for their student in case the student must be isolated and picked up from school; pickup will be required within two hours. These policies apply to all students and the school cannot self-dismiss sick students. Faculty and staff are also required to complete emergency contact forms for situations in which a staff member requests or requires assistance going home.

Contact Tracing and Communication

Margaret Conklin, Director of Finance, will oversee the implementation of all COVID-19 protocols as COVID Liaison. Ms. Conklin will be responsible for student health reporting. Amanda Menzie, Human Resources Director, will be responsible for faculty and staff reporting.

The COVID Liaison will trigger the contact tracing protocols in the event of an infection or trigger a review in the event a concern becomes evident or is raised. The school will maintain class schedules and logs for faculty, staff, and visitors to document the location of all individuals within the building as a part of its contact tracing policy and to support the New York State Contact Tracing Program and the Department of Health.

The COVID Liaison will report positive COVID-19 test results to health authorities

- New York State Department of Health
- NYC Test & Trace Corps
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

In the event of student illness during the day, a division head or other administrator or the school nurse will notify families. If a faculty or staff member becomes ill and requires the notification of an emergency contact, the school nurse, Human Resources Director or their direct supervisor will notify the emergency contact or individual requested by the faculty or staff member.

Recognizing the importance of quick and appropriate communication, the school has appointed the Director of Communications to oversee and implement community reporting procedures related to COVID-19. The Director of Communications will notify staff, families, and other constituencies of school closures or any restrictions in place due to community COVID-19 exposure. Communications will be broadcast via e-mail, phone blast, text messaging, social media, and the school website.

Return to School

The nurses or Human Resources Director must provide confirmation of testing and readiness to return to school or work to the COVID Liaison and/or Head of School before any individual returns to the community after testing or travel as described above. For all individuals who need a referral for testing, the school nurses will provide a frequently updated document with information about available testing centers. In the event that widespread testing is required, the nurses will work closely with the Department of Health to provide options to families.

Following a positive diagnosis of COVID-19, individuals will be allowed to return to school/work only after the relevant actions have been completed and only with required documentation from a healthcare provider following evaluation and testing confirming all relevant actions listed below have been carried out and that all criteria for returning have been met. Students and families will provide their required documents to the school nurses and faculty and staff will provide their required documentation to the Human Resources Director.

Symptomatic COVID, subsequent to isolation:

- Symptom-Based Return
 - 24 hours free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
 - 24 hours of clinical improvement in symptoms (cough, shortness of breath)
 - At least 10 days from date of the original onset of symptoms

COVID positive with no symptoms

- 10 days after the date of the first positive test, if the individual does not develop symptoms; if one develops symptoms, use symptom-based return

If an individual has had close contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis and is not experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the individual may return upon completing 14 days of self-quarantine with a doctor's note in lieu of a COVID-19 test.

PPE and Face Coverings

The school is requiring masks for all faculty and for all students, except in the case of verified medical exemption which can be approved only by the school's supervising nurse practitioner in consultation with the school nurses. Students who cannot tolerate masks will thus be encouraged to choose the remote option. Individuals will be prohibited from entering the school facilities and grounds without face coverings unless they have a verified medical exemption. The school is investing in PPE for faculty including but not limited to masks to be made available for all faculty and staff; gloves for all faculty and staff who would like; visors, N95 or K95 masks, and gloves for all therapists and associate teachers, as well as

other staff members who request; and portable dividers in various sizes and shapes for classrooms and therapy suites.

For faculty and staff, the school will be developing a request form for ease in requesting additional PPE.

The school will provide routine mask breaks throughout the day when students and faculty are socially distanced. Social distancing will be required during meals and snacks; everyone will be allowed to remove face coverings while eating. Families should plan to send children to school with two masks. All masks should be made of cloth, can be reusable or disposable, and mask designs should be school appropriate. Masks should not have an air release valve, and face shields are not interchangeable with and may not be used in place of face masks. The school will provide disposable masks that will be available to all students when needed at any point in the day.

The school will provide masks for faculty and staff, or faculty and staff may choose to wear their own cloth mask, and those designs should also be school appropriate. The school will also make face masks with transparent inserts available to faculty and staff who would like this option.

The school will also provide additional PPE for instances when it is not possible to maintain six feet of social distancing, including polycarbonate shields and dividers, transparent and reusable face shields (to be used in conjunction with cloth masks), and disposable gloves. School nurses will also be provided with protective gowns, gloves, and face shields, as well as N95 masks.

The school will train all students, faculty, and staff on how to properly wear and take off face coverings and other PPE in accordance with CDC recommendations and guidelines. The school will also communicate about the importance of masks.

Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Daily Facility Cleaning Protocols

- The school will have an ample supply of PPE, antibacterial cleaning products, and state-of-the-art machinery to sanitize all areas
- Thorough cleanings will be conducted throughout each school day
- The school will continue to use an outside contractor for overnight cleaning and disinfection
- The school will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection for each facility and area type

Review of Air and HVAC Systems

- Before the start of school, IDEAL will work with its HVAC vendor at Lower School and B'nai Jeshurun's facilities management to review and ensure adequate airflow, ventilation, and filtration in all areas of the Lower and Upper Schools to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 transmission
- Windows, when possible, will be left open to increase fresh air circulation in classrooms; window guards will be installed where necessary for the protection of all staff, faculty, and students
- IDEAL conducting a review of the windows at 91st Street and B'nai Jeshurun is conducting a review of the windows at 89th Street
- Individual air purifiers will be implemented as needed
- The school will consult with a facilities expert to oversee the ventilation in both buildings

Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case:

- The school will provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces
- The school will follow CDC guidelines on "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility" if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19
- The school will close off areas used by the person who is presumed or confirmed to have COVID-19 and will make a determination on whether the school building must be closed
- The school will wait 24 hours before the affected areas are cleaned and disinfected, per CDC guidelines
- Cleaning and disinfection of all areas used by the person presumed or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be undertaken; this includes offices, classrooms, bathrooms, locker surfaces, and common areas
- Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use
- Individuals without close contact with the person presumed or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection

Closure

Triggers

When a student or staff member attended school in the 14 days prior to being confirmed as a COVID-19 case, New York State Department of Health requires an initial 24-hour closure, in order to begin an investigation to determine the contacts that the individual may have had within the school environment. During that initial 24-hour closure, the school will immediately take steps to clean and disinfect the school building(s) where the student or staff had contact prior to testing positive for COVID-19. That disinfection will be in

accordance with NYS DOH guidelines and will be complete before accepting returning students.

Operational Activity

If the school building(s) is/are closed for cleaning, the next day becomes a distance learning day for students, staff, and faculty in the building(s).

Communication

The school will communicate via text, email, social media, and website of any closure or reduction of in-person instruction.

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