

RETURNING TO MILL BASIN YESHIVA ACADEMY REOPENING PLAN 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR



August 11, 2020

Dear MBYA Community,

We have missed you all and are looking forward to a new school year. This year will look quite different as we implement stringent guidelines to make sure our students and staff are safe while receiving a stellar education.

Below, please find the re-opening plan for our school. We followed guidelines and reviewed many school plans to create the best model for our school. We will continue to monitor the most recent developments regarding COVID-19 in our community and surrounding area. Please understand that the situation remains fluid, and these procedures may change as the situation evolves. We will continually update you with any changes and applicable instructions.

As you study the opening protocols, please note the care and detailed attention we have been devoting to the long-term health of our community. As a community, we are mindful of our responsibility to protect and care for the lives and health of our families. We expect families who have been traveling to quarantine. Please read the information below.

We look forward to an amazing year together that will bring us closer together and make us stronger. We pray that we will enjoy a healthy, happy, and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Farhi, Head of School

Dr. Avidar, Principal

Rabbi Olshan, Judaic Studies Principal

Ms. Mandil, Early Childhood Director

Mrs. Diamond, Assistant Principal

Rabbi Heskiel, Assistant Principal

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DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS & FACILITIES

- **WHEN DOES SCHOOL START?**

School, for grades 1-8, will officially start on September 8 with a staggered schedule. In order to create an orderly, safe, and seamless transition back to school we will phase in our students by allowing students A-M to re-enter school on September 8 and allowing students with last names N-Z on September 9. On September 10, all students will be in attendance. The initial quantity of will be 50% of building capacity for 9/8 and 9/9. We will be at 100% building capacity by 9/10.

Early childhood will officially start on September 8th with a phase-in schedule for the different grades. A detailed schedule will be emailed to parents.

- **WILL ALL STUDENTS BE IN THE BUILDING EACH DAY?**

Yes! By September 10th all students will be in the building each day for the typical hours of instruction and learning. School will begin with davening at 8:30 am and end at 4:00 pm every day, Monday through Thursday. The Friday schedule will remain the same, with dismissal at 12:00 pm.

• HOW WILL CLASSROOMS FUNCTION?

- Taking into account the number of students in each grade, we reconfigured classrooms to ensure proper social distancing within each room. Each grade will be in their classrooms with their teacher during the school day. In the classroom, we will implement social distancing.
 - Early childhood education will reduce class sizes to 15 children per class for all grades. Each grade will be in their classrooms with their teachers during the school day. In the classroom, we will implement social distancing.
- Polycarbonate see-through barriers will be installed on each student desk as this meets State social distancing guidelines. There will be a cost to cover all related supplies and expenses that the school will provide. An email with further details will be sent out shortly.
- Teachers will wear masks and teach behind a standing desk with a polycarbonate, see through-barrier.
- Assigned seating will be required to facilitate contact tracing. In junior high school, students will remain in their homeroom classrooms and the teachers will rotate.
- Teachers and students will continue to use remote teaching and learning methods during this time. This means that for older students, homework will be posted on Google Classroom and some assignments will be completed online and emailed to the teacher. Keeping parts of the hybrid model will allow us for a smoother transition if we have to close the school again.

• HOW WILL STUDENTS GET TO SCHOOL?

- Yellow Bus Service will be in service.
 - Students will have assigned seats. Family members may sit together. Students will be required to wear a mask for the duration of the time on the bus and will be required to adhere to social distancing. Students who misbehave will automatically be removed from the bus and will not be allowed on the school bus. Students' temperatures will be checked before they get off the bus. The bus company will have guidelines they are required to follow, when we get the information we will update you.
- Carpools should be limited to individual family members or students in their class. It is strongly recommended that students wear masks in the cars. Students' temperatures will be checked in the car, before they enter the school.

• WHAT WILL BE THE DAILY ENTRANCE PROCEDURE?

- All parents will be required to check their children's temperature and well-being before they arrive at school.
- All students and staff will be required to wear masks when entering the building.
- All students and faculty will have their temperature checked before they get off the buses, cars, and upon entering the building. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be sent home. A parent or guardian must pick them up immediately.
- We are hiring a nurse dedicated to addressing COVID-19 issues. Jene Geller will be our parent liaison.
- At this time, parents and visitors will **NOT** be allowed in the building. Students arriving late will be escorted to class by a staff member.
- Parent meetings and orientation will be held via phone or Zoom wherever possible.

• WHAT WILL THERAPIES LOOK LIKE?

All therapies for children will either be pushed into the classroom or will take place with masks in a 1:1 or 2:1 setting.

• HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING THE MENTAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF OUR STUDENTS AT THIS TIME?

Our guidance team will continue their weekly health and wellness program in each classroom, providing students with a place to talk about their feelings and concerns. We are providing PD for teachers to be aware of signs of fears and concern regarding COVID-19.

• WHAT WILL RECESS, SPECIALTIES, ASSEMBLIES, DAVENING LOOK LIKE?

- School trips, assemblies, and group prayer will not take place; students will daven in their classrooms. The 7th and 8th grade boys will pray in the Beis Midrash following social distancing guidelines.
- We will assess any indoor and outdoor areas available to us to provide space for children to play during recess and gym. We will communicate with you regarding recess in the upcoming weeks.
- Fire drills will continue per social distancing guidelines.

• HOW WILL LUNCH WORK?

- At this time, students will bring a dairy/pareve lunch from home in a disposable brown paper bag. Students will eat lunch in their classrooms at their desks. Students will not be permitted to share food. No outside deliveries will be permitted.
- We will be offering a prepackaged lunch, at a cost, from Nursery - 8th grade, from Danny from Dagan.
- School will continue to provide lunch for UPK students from Danny from Dagan.

• WHAT WILL DISMISSAL LOOK LIKE?

- Teachers and assistant teachers will walk students to their buses.
- Parent pickup will take place at 64th Street. The front of the building will be closed.
- Early Childhood dismissal will begin at 3:30pm.
- The walkers will walk out of the Hatzalah exit.
- No one will be permitted to linger outside of school.
- If a child is being picked up early, parents/guardians must contact the school office. The parent will not be permitted in the building and a staff member will escort them to their parent/guardian.

• WHAT IF I HAVE A NEED FOR MY CHILD TO BE A REMOTE LEARNER?

- Parents must contact Souzi Ebadi and Jene Geller by August 18 to apply for remote learning.
- MBYA, at its discretion, will decide if and how we can accommodate every child.

IMPLEMENTATION OF HYGIENE AND SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOL

• How are we addressing the physical safety of all students and faculty?

MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING POLICY

- All students in Early Childhood and grades 1-8 will be required to have a mask with them at all times.
- **Masks must be worn when students are in motion.** This means masks are worn upon entering the building, walking through common areas, including hallways and bathrooms, and at any other time, as indicated by a faculty member.
- Students may remove their masks while seated at their desk, which will have a clear barrier.
- Parents will receive a “hygiene supply list” to ensure that their child has the appropriate supplies. Class moms will be in touch with the teacher to plan this.

• What other changes are being made in the building?

- There will be floor stickers for high traffic areas to show proper distance to be maintained between people.
- Hand sanitizing stations have been added throughout the school and in every classroom.
- Our cleaning crew will disinfect and clean high touch areas on a consistent basis. Door handles, stair-railings, and high traffic areas will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned at regular intervals throughout the day and have been outfitted with automated, touch free systems.
- Teachers will incorporate bathroom breaks and handwashing breaks.
- Water fountains will be disabled.

PREVENTIVE HEALTH PROTOCOLS

• What is health screening?

- All students must have up-to-date health forms, including emergency contacts and contact information for their pediatrician. (It is important to include health insurance information as well).
- It is highly encouraged that families get COVID testing.
- There will separate areas for the nurse's office—one for sick students (nurses office), and one for healthy students (for trauma/daily medication administration) in the main office. Nebulized medications will not be administered at school. If your child has asthma, please send an inhaler and spacer instead.
- All families of students and faculty coming to MBYA are expected to follow state and local mandates regarding social distancing and face coverings outside of school.
- **All students should get the flu shot prior to November 1, 2020, unless documented as medically contra-indicated.**

• DO I NEED TO QUARANTINE AFTER TRAVELING?

- Yes. MBYA will adhere strictly to government guidelines; no one may come to the school campus until at least 14 days have passed since travel from “hot spots.”
- Negative COVID test results are not a substitute for the 14 day quarantine after returning from a “hot spot”; one cannot “test out” of the quarantine.
- Quarantine at home is required after returning from a hot spot; it is not sufficient to quarantine while in the “hot spot” itself. If a member of the household has returned from a hot spot, s/he must be appropriately isolating from the rest of the family in order for the student/faculty member to come to campus.
- Our medical advisory committee recommends 14 day quarantine after ANY air travel as airports are very high risk for COVID exposure.
- Please do not host or mingle with family/ friends visiting from “hot spots” in the 14 days before starting school.

PROTOCOLS REGARDING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND EXPOSURES

• When should your child stay home?

- If you or someone in your household has been in close contact with anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID.
- If you or someone in your household has experienced—or taken any medication to reduce—any of the following symptoms in the past 72 hours, unless cleared by a health professional. The following symptoms require physician clearance in order to return to the school campus. In addition, these symptoms need to be reported to the school nurse whether they occur at school or at home:
 - o New cough or change in chronic cough (children with chronic cough require documentation from their physician.)
 - o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (not exercise or mask induced)
 - o A fever of 100.0°F or higher. Families must check the temperature of any member who feels unwell.
 - o Sore throat
 - o Chills
 - o Loss of taste or smell
 - o Muscle or body aches without obvious explanation
 - o Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea (2 or more episodes of loose stools in a 24-hour period)
 - o Severe or persistent abdominal pain
 - o Persistent chest pain
 - o Persistent body aches without known trauma/injury
 - o Congestion/URI (runny nose), not related to seasonal allergies (chronic rhinitis requires a physician's note to return to campus.)
 - o Unusual fatigue
 - o Headache (children with chronic headaches require documentation from their physician.)
- If the prevalence of COVID in the community increases, these symptoms may necessitate COVID testing prior to the student/faculty/staff member returning to school. Our medical advisory committee is working with local hospitals, urgent care, and doctors' offices to ensure expedited COVID testing for symptomatic students and staff. Information will be shared as it becomes available.

- **WHAT DO WE DO IF A STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT OR PARENT IS DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19?**

- If a student or staff member is diagnosed with the virus, they will be escorted to a secure waiting area until they are picked up. We will use the CDC decision guidelines and NYC Health Department to determine if the school needs to be closed for a thorough cleaning (approximately 2-5 days or longer) During closings, teachers and students will revert to using distance teaching methods.
 - If one person (staff or student) in a class is diagnosed positive for COVID-19, that class will be moved to remote learning for 14 days. Once cleared the class may return to in-person learning.
 - If two people (staff or student) in the school are diagnosed positive for COVID-19, the whole school will be moved to remote learning for 14 days. Once cleared the class may return to in-person learning.
 - In case a family member is diagnosed positive to COVID-19 all the students in that house will be moved to remote learning for the next 14 days and must be symptom free in order to return to in-person learning.

PROTOCOLS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER SYMPTOMS

- Individuals that have tested positive must recover and once they cannot transmit COVID-19 will be allowed to return to in person learning.
- In general, no one will be allowed to return to school with ongoing symptoms of COVID.
- A doctor's note indicating that the individual that tested positive for COVID is no longer contagious. This will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

CLOSURE AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

- **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE SCHOOL IS REQUIRED TO SHUT DOWN FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME?**

- We will revert to remote teaching and learning until guided by the health department and local officials.
- Remote learning will be similar to the model implemented March 2020-June 2020.