

# RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN 2020-2021

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## CAPACITY

NYC Autism Charter School Bronx (NYCACS) intends to bring all students back to live instruction once schools re-open in the Fall. The unique footprint of our classrooms – typically 4-5 students per classroom – will allow us to do so even with the square footage restrictions issued by the NYC DOE and DOH. The one adjustment to our typical schedule will be that the 30 minutes per day allotted to physical education will be delivered at home via asynchronous individualized remote instruction plans. Parents will be allowed to continue with full time remote instruction if they so choose, with at least a 3-month commitment before re-assessing.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Within NYCACS as well as the wider school buildings, staff should attempt to maintain a distance of at least six feet from other adults at all times.
- Consistent classroom groupings or cohorts will be created and contact with those outside of a staff member’s cohort will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. We will continue to rely on video conferencing technology for any meetings or cross-cohort communication. Some supervision will remain remote as well, as will clinic meetings with family members.
- Signs will be posted throughout the building directing the flow of movement, indicating appropriate spacing, and providing specific directions (e.g., steps of handwashing). Signage and markers must be adhered to by everyone within the building.
- Staff and students must use designated building entry/exit points and stairwells.
- Staff will maintain a distance from students that allows for instruction. Unnecessary closeness and physical contact between staff and students should be avoided whenever possible.
- Students should remain or be guided to remain six feet from one another at all times.

- Staff and students must remain within NYCACS spaces during all times of the day. Shared building spaces should only be accessed when approved by a Clinical Supervisor, Director, or Head of School.
- Movement between spaces in the school should be avoided to the greatest extent possible.
  - Staff and students must remain in their classrooms with the exception of designated times during the day.
  - Shared spaces will be accessible on a strict schedule that allows for cleaning between use.
  - Classroom schedules should only be modified when approved by a Clinical Supervisor, Director, or Head of School.
- Staff must remain in their designated classrooms or an approved alternative designated space during prep periods and non-instructional hours.
- All meetings that cannot allow for proper social distancing will be held remotely.

### **PPE, FACE COVERINGS, AND PERSONAL HYGIENE**

- All staff will be required to view a designated set of videos on the proper use of PPE. (See Training Materials for hand Washing and Proper PPE Use below)
- Face masks or cloth facial coverings must be worn by staff while in the building and if social distancing is not possible. Facial coverings may be removed in the following situations:
  - If a staff member is in a room alone.
  - If a staff member is in a room with members of their cohort and are at least six feet away from every other person in the room.

As-needed breaks will be given in order to briefly and safely remove face coverings. These should take place in a designated spot within the classroom.

- Staff are expected to have clean hands at all times and/or be wearing gloves. Disposable gloves will be available and should be worn whenever contacting students or shared surfaces directly. If contact is made with a student or shared surface without gloves or some type of covering (e.g., a tissue used when opening a door handle), staff should wash or sanitize their hands immediately.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at all student work stations and at designated hallway kiosks.
- Additional protective equipment (e.g., gowns, face shield, goggles) may be required, and should be worn as directed.
- All rooms within NYCACS must contain a predetermined set of cleaning and hygiene supplies. Restocking of these supplies will be done by a designated person at specific times during the week.
- All surfaces (e.g., tables, chairs, counters) must be wiped down after contact.

## **Training Materials for Proper Handwashing and PPE Use**

All NYCACS staff members will be required to review the training materials and resources outlined below prior to the reopening of schools.

### **How to Properly Wash Hands**

1. Wet hands under running water.
2. Put soap on hands.
3. Scrub hands together for 20 seconds making sure to target:
  - In between fingers
  - Backs of hands
  - Wrists
  - Under fingernails
2. Rinse hands under running water.
3. Dry hands with a paper towel.

### **Staff and students will be required to wash hands including but not limited to**

- After using the bathroom
- Before and after handling food
- After any contact with their own or another person's bodily fluid (e.g., fingers in mouth or nose)

### **How to Properly Use Hand Sanitizer**

**(Note: Use of hand sanitizer does not replace washing hands with soap and water, but may help in times that soap and water are not available)**

1. Use enough to wet hands completely (about dime or quarter size).
2. Rub over both hands until dry, which takes approximately 20 seconds.

### **How to Properly Put On and Take Off a Mask**

1. Use hand sanitizer or wash hands before applying a mask.
2. Remove the mask from the box and make sure there aren't any tears.
3. Locate the top edge of the mask (stiff bendable edge that can be molded to fit over nose).
4. Face the colored side of the mask outwards.
5. Place the mask on face so it is covering nose and mouth.
6. Place the loops on the side of the mask around ears or tie the ties behind head and nape of neck to affix the mask to face.
7. Mold the top of the mask to fit nose and pull the bottom of the mask to fit chin.
8. When removing the mask, wash or sanitize hands.

9. Remove the mask by the loops or bands - avoid touching the front of the mask.
10. Discard disposable masks.

#### **How to Properly Put on Gloves**

1. Wash or sanitize hands.
2. Pick up the glove on the side and slide hand into the glove; pull it down over wrist.
3. Pick up the other glove on the side and slide other hand into the glove; pull it down over wrist.

#### **How to Properly Take Off Gloves**

1. Slide finger inside of the glove at the wrist and pull the glove off so it turns inside out.
2. Use the inside of the first glove to pinch the bottom edge of the other glove by the wrist and pull the glove off so it turns inside out.
3. Discard both gloves.

#### **How to Properly Put on a Gown**

1. Unfold the gown.
2. Place arms in the arm holes so that the opening of the gown is at the back.
3. Tie the strings at the top of the gown and flip the gown over head.
4. Place the strings around the waist and tie in front of body.

#### **How to Properly Take Off a Gown**

1. Untie the ties at the neck and around the waist.
2. Pull the gown so that it can be rolled up inside-out.
3. Discard in the trash.

#### **Video tutorials that must be viewed by all staff members:**

1. [How to Wear a Mask](#)
2. [How to Wash Hands](#)
3. [How to Put on and Take Off Gloves](#)
4. [Proper Use of PPE](#)

#### **Additional Resources:**

1. [CDC – wearing face coverings](#)
2. [CDC – clothing face coverings](#)
3. [CDC – Handwashing: How and When](#)

If a student is unable to tolerate a face covering for either medical or behavioral reasons, classroom staff will be provided with additional PPE (e.g., gowns, face shields) to prevent the transfer of germs from staff to student. All individual work spaces will be separated by a minimum of six feet. Programming will continue to be in place to teach mask toleration for those students who lack of mask wearing results from a skill deficit. Staff who have difficulty tolerating a mask will be given alternate protective options (e.g., face shield). Clear masks will be provided to staff for certain types of instruction (e.g., vocal imitation) or in situations in which a member of the classroom (staff or student) has a hearing impairment. NYCACS has already provided all student with two cloth masks. In the event that a student arrived at school without their mask, or if their mask becomes ineffective (e.g. strap broken, becomes soiled), a disposable mask will be provided until another cloth mask has been acquired by the family and/or can be provided by the schools.

## **OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY**

As stated above, NYCACS intends to bring all students back to live instruction once schools re-open, with 30 minutes per day of physical education being delivered remotely in an asynchronous manner. Parents will be allowed to continue with full time remote instruction if they so choose.

Certain curriculum adjustments will be made, with aspects of programming put on hold (e.g., community-based instruction) and replaced, when possible, with comparable but less high-risk instruction (e.g., replicated shopping experiences in school). Additionally, some teaching procedures will be adjusted to minimize risk, limiting higher contact teaching procedures in favor of others that involve low contact. Such adjustments may impact the efficacy and/or efficiency of instruction. Similarly, limiting physical re-direction of stereotypy will, in some cases, mean longer student latency to respond and the potential for responses to have some degree of stereotypy embedded within.

Additionally, there may be times throughout the year when the school building may be closed and/or individual students may not be able to attend school as a result of the current public health crisis (e.g., self-quarantine, illness) or due to family choice. In these cases, students will continue their education through Remote Instruction.

## **REMOTE INSTRUCTION GUIDELINES**

### **Remote Instruction Preparation**

- Classroom Preparation for Remote Learning:
  - Staff will take their designated iPads and laptops to and from school on a daily basis.
  - Materials that have been used by staff for remote instruction should remain at staff homes.

- Student Remote Instruction Plans have already been developed for all students. The Head Teacher is responsible for working with the classroom team and Clinical Supervisor/Director to keep these plans updated.
- A Classroom Remote Instruction Schedule will be established and updated on a regular basis. The Head Teacher is responsible for working with the classroom team and Clinical Supervisor/Director to keep the schedule updated.
- Student Preparation for Remote Learning:
  - Remote learning technology (e.g., laptops, iPads) that has been loaned to students by the school, will remain at students' homes. Families may be asked to send technology to school with their child on a daily basis when this is possible without undue risks.
  - Materials that have previously been provided to families by the school will remain at students' homes.
  - Materials that are developed during the course of in-school instruction and would benefit remote learning, will be duplicated and sent home with students.

### **Conditions Under which Remote Instruction is Implemented**

- Remote Instruction Implementation during School-Wide Closure: The city, state, or school leadership may make the decision to close schools for a period of time.
  - Families will be notified of the closure date and the timeline for remote instruction to begin.
  - Head Teachers will contact families to discuss the remote instruction schedule.
  - Head Teachers will work with supervisors to determine if any changes are necessary to the Classroom Remote Instruction Schedule.
  - If possible, staff will return to the school building to gather any additional materials needed for remote instruction. These materials should be clearly listed on each students' Remote Instruction Plan.
  - If necessary, and when possible, remote instruction materials will be delivered to student homes.
  - The goal is for remote instruction to begin within two days of a school closure.
- Remote Instruction Implementation for Individual Students who have been attending school in-person: To be used when a student is required to stay home or a family opts to keep a student home who had previously been attending school in-person (e.g., self-quarantine, illness).
  - The school should be contacted immediately if remote instruction is being requested. The goal is for remote instruction to be implemented within two days of the request.

- Head Teachers will contact the family to discuss the remote instruction schedule.
  - If necessary and when possible, remote instruction materials will be delivered to student homes.
  - The student may return to in-person instruction once the school, family, and/or medical professional determine it safe. See Student Diagnosis and Sickness Protocol for more details.
- Election of Remote Instruction: To be used when a family elects to keep their child in remote instruction when in-person instruction is available for any number of personal reasons (e.g., health conditions of household members, safety concerns).
    - The election of remote instruction is a quarterly commitment. Remote instruction quarters are as follows:
      1. First day of school - December 31st
      2. January 1st - March 31st
      3. April 1st - June 30th
      4. July 1st - August 31st
    - A family who has previously elected remote instruction but would like to begin in-person instruction during the next quarter must inform the school at least two weeks prior to the start of the new quarter. This request should be made in writing to the Head of School.
    - When remote instruction is elected, the student's Remote Instruction Plan will be implemented, and scheduling discussed with parents.

By electing remote instruction, the parent/guardian understands that instruction will consist of synchronous as well as asynchronous activities. For multiple students in the same household, the classroom team(s) will work with the parent to provide maximum instruction to both students, as the parent/caregiver's schedule can accommodate.

### Space Utilization and Other Considerations

NYCACS will collaborate with its co-located partners via building council, shared space, and safety committee meetings in order to ensure compliance with all health and safety protocols as prescribed by the NYC DOE and NYC DOH while maximizing space for instructional purposes.

- Election of Remote Instruction: To be used when a family elects to keep their child in remote instruction when in-person instruction is available for any number of personal reasons (e.g., health conditions of household members, safety concerns).
  - The election of remote instruction is a quarterly commitment. Remote instruction quarters are as follows:

### **Shared Space**

- NYCACS does not anticipate the need to use inside shared spaces (i.e., cafeteria, library, gymnasium).
- Use of playground/outdoor space will be scheduled in collaboration with the other building leaders to ensure outside time is available for all NYCACS students.

### **Field Trips and School Events**

- Live field trips and school events will be suspended until further notice.
- Virtual field trips may be arranged on a class by class basis.

### **Parent Clinics and Observations**

- In-person parent clinics/observations will be suspended until further notice.
- All clinics/parent observations will be held virtually.
- A parent/guardian may schedule additional virtual observations by contacting their child's Head Teacher.

### **Open Houses and Accepted Students**

- Open houses will be available via video on our website.
- Should a family be offered placement during the year, a virtual tour will be scheduled, with parent enrollment tasks (e.g., review of parent manual, distribution of forms) conducted remotely.

### **Internship Program, Student Observations, and Professional Visitors**

- The NYCACS Internship Program and student observations will be suspended until further notice. Virtual observations will be considered starting in January 2021.

### **Other Visitors**

- Only essential visitors will be allowed in the building (e.g., equipment repairs) and will be scheduled, to the greatest extent possible, after school hours.
- All visitors will be required to adhere to NYCACS safety protocols around facial covering, social distancing, and personal hygiene.

## **RESTART OPERATIONS**

NYCACS is in co-located space. As such, NYCACS will rely on NYC DOE custodial engineers and follow directives from NYC Division of School Facilities (DSF) to ensure the safe restart of building systems as well as cleaning and disinfection of the facility. Additionally, NYCACS will be scheduling independent vendors to oversee the following:

1. Maintenance and, in some cases, removal and flushing of air conditioning units
2. Deep cleaning of all classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and kitchens – beyond that conducted by building custodial personnel
3. IT upkeep to ensure readiness for instruction

Additionally, once longer duration building access is allowed, key staff will begin arranging the environment to support social distancing requirements and posting signage, distancing markers, and directional movement guides.

## **HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND DISINFECTION**

Cleaning and disinfection guidelines issued by New York State Department of Health can be found [HERE](#). NYCACS will rely on NYC DOE custodial engineers and follow directives from NYC DSF to ensure that ongoing cleaning and disinfection of all classrooms, shared spaces, and outdoor facilities meets standards as prescribed by NYC DOH and the CDC.

### **Guidelines for Personal and Material Hygiene**

- Students should wash/sanitize their hands (rubbing hands together for 20-30 seconds with lots of lather) at the following times during the day (minimally):
  - After arrival/unpacking
  - After using the bathroom every time
  - Before and after eating
  - Upon contacting their own or anyone else’s bodily fluids (e.g., hands in mouth, blowing nose, coughing on hands)
- Staff should wash/sanitize their hands at the following times during the day (minimally):
  - After arrival/unpacking
  - After using the bathroom every time
  - Before and after eating
  - Upon re-entering the school at any point (e.g., getting lunch)

- Upon contacting any bodily fluids or assisting a student with an activity that involves bodily fluids (e.g., wiping, eating, nose blowing)
  - Gloves should be worn while assisting students with any self-care skills in which contact with bodily fluids may occur.
- After having physical contact with a student (e.g., assisting with challenging behavior, providing necessary manual guidance)
- Cleaning Bins will be created for all rooms with sanitizing wipes, disinfectant spray, paper towels, and gloves. These bins should be kept stocked in a clear, safe, central location. Hand sanitizer and tissues will be kept at each student's work station, classroom tables, and any other space that might be helpful (e.g., teacher desk).
- Hygiene kiosks containing hand sanitizer and wipes will be located in each hallway to be used in those spaces.
- Any surface or item that is used by more than one person must be disinfected after each use, including computers.

#### **How to Clean a Computer:**

- Unplug and turn off the device before cleaning.
- Using an alcohol wipe or Clorox Disinfectant Wipe, gently wipe the hard, nonporous surfaces of the Computer.
- To clean the display, place the laptop so that the display lays on the table.
- Allow to sit for at least two minutes until the active ingredients dry.
- Do not get moisture into any openings.
- Do not submerge computer in cleaning agents.
- Video Tutorial: [How to Clean a Computer](#)
- Once students are dismissed, classroom staff are responsible for cleaning the following items in their classrooms:
  - Tables and desks
  - Chairs
  - Door handles
  - Window handles
  - Technology (e.g., computers, iPads, timers)

## **EXTRA CURRICULARS**

NYCACS does not offer extra curriculums.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER CARE**

NYCACS does not offer before and after care.

## **VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

All NYCACS students are considered “vulnerable” given their diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. NYCACS will offer parents the option of continuing remote instruction if they have greater health risks and/or if parents do not feel comfortable sending their child(ren) to school. If parents opt to continue remote instruction for their child(ren), they will be asked to commit to that decision for approximately three-month increments. NYCACS staff whose jobs allow them to work remotely will be asked to do so. For those in student-facing positions, staff who have requested accommodations may be given remote instruction responsibilities that can be delivered from home, assigned to students who are more able to comply with masking, hygiene, and social distancing requirements, and/or provided with enhanced PPE. For those who have concerns based on others in their household, some of the above accommodations may be offered (triaged according to severity of health issue and living situation). Individual requests from and meetings with staff seeking accommodations, along with a final tally of students whose parents opt to keep them learning remotely, will allow NYCACS to determine the extent of these accommodations. Additionally, staff who are eligible for paid leave options for child care will be encouraged to explore those options as appropriate.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Door-to-door transportation is typically provided to all NYCACS students as per their IEPs, assuming it has been requested by parents. This service is provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation in conjunction with the NYC DOE. NYCACS will rely on NYC DOE and OPT to ensure that school bus companies and personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for cleanliness, and will help support all protocols around masking, distancing, and hygiene put in place by those entities. Those families who may rely on NYC public transportation will be provided with NYC DOH guidance on how to safely use public buses, subways, and ride services.

NYCACS has a system for arrival that has always involved outdoor drop off, whether by busses or by parents who either walk or drive their child(ren) to school. Parents will be advised to take their child’s temperature before leaving for school in the morning, but temperatures will also be taken upon arrival outside of the building.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

For those students who access the school food program provided by the NYC DOE Office of School Food, NYCACS will comply with all protocols around access and delivery put in place by those entities. NYCACS will rely on NYC DOE to ensure that service personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for safety as recommended by NYC DOH. NYCACS will train staff as needed to reinforce the protocols adopted by food service and custodial personnel to ensure healthy, safe meals and to minimize disruption to the instructional day. The following guidelines are meant to ensure proper hygiene, minimize movement throughout the school, and reduce the amount of contact staff have with student food. For families with specific concerns or needs in this area, an individualized plan will be developed in conjunction with each family's Clinical Supervisor/Director.

### **Parent Guidelines for Food Sent from Home**

- All foods should be prepared at home to the greatest extent possible (e.g., cut into bite size pieces, sauce or dressing already on food).
- Ideally, food should not require heating or refrigeration at school. Food should be warmed at home and sent in a thermos or sent with ice packs.
- Any food that requires heating at school should arrive in a microwave safe container.
- Food will not be transferred to a separate plate/bowl for eating.
- Food should be sent in daily. No food will be stored overnight at school unless it is approved as part of instruction and does not require preparation by staff in order to be consumed.
- Families are strongly encouraged to send in snacks that might be needed throughout the day.

### **Snacks During the School Day**

- Staff must wash or sanitize their hands prior to handling student food.
- Staff must wear a face covering when obtaining plates, bowls, and utensils and throughout the period of time when a student is eating.
- Students must wash or sanitize hands prior to eating.
- Snacks will be dispensed from sealed packages that are designated for each individual student and not shared between students.
- Snack bags/containers should be stored at each student's individual workstation.
- Staff and students must wash or sanitize hands once a student is finished eating.

**School Meal Pickup and Distribution**

- A designated adult will be responsible for picking up and distributing school-provided breakfast and lunch to each classroom. Gloves and facial covering must be worn throughout this process.
- Any materials used during this process (e.g., lunch bag, transportation cart) must be disinfected prior to and after use.
- Food should remain covered at all times prior to consumption.
- Food will be distributed to each classroom by a designated adult. Classroom staff will collect meals at the classroom doorway so as to avoid the distributor having to enter the classroom.
- Any opened leftover food should be thrown away immediately at the end of each meal.

**Student Meal Periods**

- Students must eat all meals in their designated classrooms or in an alternative approved location (e.g., Life Skills Room).
- Staff must wear gloves and facial coverings during student mealtimes.
- Students must wash or sanitize hands prior to and after meals.
- Plates, bowls, napkins, and utensils will be stored in closed containers in the classroom and accessed only by staff when wearing gloves.
- Students will remain at least six feet from one another during mealtimes.
- Staff will remain at least six feet from students during mealtimes unless the student requires assistance and/or specific mealtime skills are being taught. Staff may be required to wear additional protective equipment (e.g., facial shield, gown, goggles) while assisting students during mealtimes.
- At the end of the meal period, students may assist in cleaning up while maintaining a six-foot distance from all other students.
- At the end of the meal period, students and staff must wash or sanitize their hands.
- All surfaces used during the meal period should be disinfected when the meal period is over.

**MENTAL HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL, AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

NYCACS has created a catalogue of resources and services available to students and their families (and staff) to help with issues that may arise due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Topic areas include Health, Food and Nutrition Access, Housing, Employment, Benefits Access, Mental Health, Safety and Technology. Family wellness calls have been made by the Director of Transition and Community Outreach (a licensed social worker) and will continue throughout remote instruction and after

re-opening to assess and monitor each family’s situation and to provide referrals and/or supports as needed. Instructional staff will continue to alert their Clinical Supervisor, Director, or Head of School regarding any issues that are adversely affecting a family’s ability to cope during the pandemic. The Director of Transition and Community Outreach or her designee will reach out to the family in a timely manner. Individualized programming and supports will be implemented to ensure each student’s transition back to school is as smooth as possible (e.g., social stories, visual supports and schedules, lessons on expected changes). The high student to teacher ratio allows for careful monitoring of student well-being.

## **COMMUNICATION**

NYCACS has and will continue to communicate with families in preparation for and throughout the upcoming school year via email groups, text groups (REMIND application), and live virtual meetings. Individualized preparation for students has already begun and will continue (e.g., rehearsal of mask toleration and thorough handwashing; social stories and 1:1 or group meetings related to new school expectations and protocols). As always, all communication will be offered in each family’s preferred language. Outside visitors, including parents, will not be allowed in the school building (barring special circumstances such as equipment repair or student emergencies). Regular clinic meetings with parents as outlined in the NYCACS charter will continue remotely. Staff meetings with individuals and groups outside of classroom cohorts will also be conducted remotely, even if those attending the meeting are in the building together.

## **MONITORING**

### **SCREENING AND SICKNESS PROTOCOLS**

#### **Resources and General Information:**

- Information on Covid-19 prevention and symptoms can be found [HERE](#)
- Information on Covid-19 testing can be found [HERE](#). Scroll down to search for testing sites by zip code.
- All Covid-19 cases are reported to the [New York State Contact Tracing Program](#). If you receive a call from the contract tracing program (518-387-9993), please pick up/call back as soon as possible.
- Travel advisories and a list of restricted states can be found [HERE](#)

### NYCACS Students

- Parents will be required to check their child(ren)'s temperature and submit answers to a series of questions every morning before school.
- A student **MUST** remain home if they have shown symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or fever above 100.0 degrees. The student may return to school after a **minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.**
  - If a child develops concerning symptoms during the school day parents will be asked to pick them up. They must then remain home for a minimum of 10 days.
  - The only exception to this rule is if a COVID-19 test is administered and comes back negative prior to the 10-day requirement. In that case, the student may return to school upon receiving the negative test result plus 24 hours symptom free.
- It is strongly suggested that a student remain home if they are experiencing any other symptoms associated with COVID-19 (e.g., excessive coughing, chest pressure, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell). In this case, the parent should seek medical attention for their child and the student should not return to school for a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.
- It is **strongly** advised that students remain home if they are experiencing an excessively runny nose, frequent coughing (in the absence of other more concerning symptoms listed above), frequent sneezing or any other symptoms that result in the frequent expulsion of body fluids.
  - Should a student exhibit these symptoms while at school, the parent/caregiver will be notified and pick up will be strongly advised. If pick up is not possible, teaching opportunities and activities may be limited for the remainder of the day. The student may also be removed from the classroom and monitored in a separate room.

### Student Arrives with a Temperature

- All students will have their temperature checked prior to entering the school building each day using a contactless thermometer.
- If a student shows a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, parents/caregivers will be contacted immediately and required to pick up their child as soon as possible. The student will remain outside the school building until all other students have been escorted to their classrooms. The student will then be escorted to a designated isolation room that is separated from other students and staff to await pick up.
- Parents should seek medical attention for their child and the student should not return to school for a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.

- a. The only exception to this rule is if a COVID-19 test is administered and comes back negative prior to the 10-day requirement. In that case, the student may return to school upon receiving the negative test result plus 24 hours symptom free.

### **Student Becomes Sick During the School Day**

- If at any point during the school day a student develops a fever above 100.0 degrees, diarrhea, vomiting, excessive coughing, and/or shortness of breath, the parent/caregiver will be notified immediately and must pick up their child as soon as possible.
- The student, along with all their belongings, will be brought to a designated isolation room that is separated from other students and staff to await pick up.
- A student will not be sent home on the bus after displaying the symptoms listed above.
- Parents should seek medical attention for their child and the student should not return to school for a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.
  - a. The only exception to this rule is if a COVID-19 test is administered and comes back negative prior to the 10-day requirement. In that case, the student may return to school upon receiving the negative test result plus 24 hours symptom free.

When a student is picked up during the school day for any reason, the parent/caregiver must contact the school when they have arrived at the building. The student will be escorted by a staff member out of the building to meet the parent/caregiver. Parents/caregivers must remain outside of the building at all times.

Anytime a student must remain home (e.g., self-quarantine, sickness) remote instruction can be provided, if so desired, by the parent. See the Remote Instruction Implementation Protocol (above) for more details.

### **NYCACS Employees**

- All staff will be asked to submit information daily, prior to leaving for work, that includes concerning symptoms as well as their temperature. This information will be collected via a secure website designed for this purpose. Staff **MUST** remain home if they experience symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or fever above 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit. Staff should seek medical attention and not return to school for a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.
  - If a COVID-19 test is administered and the staff member receives a negative test result, that staff member may return to school prior to the 10-day requirement as long as they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

- It is also strongly suggested that a staff member remain home if they are experiencing any other symptoms associated with COVID-19 (e.g., excessive coughing, chest pressure, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell). In this case, the staff member should seek medical attention and should not return to work for a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.
  - If a COVID-19 test is administered and the staff member receives a negative test result, that staff member may return to school prior to the 10-day requirement as long as they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

**Staff becomes sick during the school day:**

- Staff should alert their supervisor if they begin to experience any of the symptoms listed above during the school day and will be directed to return home immediately.
- The staff member should be tested and may only return to school after a minimum of 10 days plus 24 hours symptom free.
  - a. If a COVID-19 test is administered and the staff member receives a negative test result, that staff member may return to school prior to the 10-day requirement as long as they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

If a staff member is remaining home or quarantining out of precaution rather than active illness, he/she will be expected to work in some capacity (e.g., providing remote instruction, material preparation).

**COVID-19 Symptoms, Exposure, and Diagnosis - [Department of Health Guidelines](#)**

- The school should be notified immediately if a student or employee received a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.
- If a student or employee test positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether they are symptomatic or asymptomatic, they may return to school only after completion of at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms or 10 days of isolation after the first positive test if they remain asymptomatic.
- If a student or employee has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 AND is experiencing related symptoms, they may return to school only after completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of the symptoms.
- If a student or employee has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 AND IS NOT experiencing related symptoms, they may return to school only after completing 14 days of self-quarantine.
  - Close contact is considered being within six feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset.

- Prior to returning to school following any COVID-19 related absence (diagnosis, exposure, symptoms), a student’s family or employee must provide a doctor’s note indicating that it is safe for the individual to return to school.
- Upon receiving information about a confirmed diagnosis, the school will contact the DOH and engage in contact tracing protocols as directed by that office. That includes providing DOH personnel with a list of individuals at our site who have been in close contact (more than 10 minutes within the stipulated time frame) with the diagnosed individual.
- Adherence to all DOE and DOH Guidelines will be followed – this may include classroom or school closure.

### **TESTING PROTOCOLS**

Upon self-report of symptoms, screening results indicating symptoms of concern, report of direct exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19, or report of international travel or travel within a state with widespread transmission of COVID-19 as designated through the New York State Travel Advisory (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>), staff and parents will be directed to seek testing at one of the local testing sites listed by geographic region on the NYC COVID-19 Citywide Information Portal (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page>) or at their own doctor or clinic/hospital of their choice. They will then be required to submit proof of such testing with either clearance to return to work/school or a directive around treatment and quarantine. NYCACS may consult with their assigned NYCDOH or Community Based Organization nurse to determine which staff and students presenting symptoms should be referred for COVID-19 tests.

### **TESTING RESPONSIBILITY**

NYCACS may consult with their assigned NYCDOH or Community Based Organization nurse to determine which staff and students should be referred for COVID-19 tests. Staff members and families will be given support around how to access testing as needed via the NYC COVID-19 Citywide Information Portal linked above. If a case is confirmed within the school community, the Department of Health will be contacted immediately by the COVID-19 Safety Officer (Julie Fisher, Executive Director, or her designee) and NYCACS will adhere to any and all directives issued. If NYCACS students and staff need access to large-scale testing, the school will follow directions from NYC DOH on how and where testing should take place and on communication to the school community.

### **EARLY WARNING SIGNS**

NYCACS will use metrics provided by state and local departments of health in conjunction with its own internal metrics based upon screening and testing data of both students and staff. It is hoped that, given

the schools' established student/staff cohorts and distancing measures, NYCACS will be able to engage in a partial shut-down for mandatory isolation of potentially exposed individuals within a cohort without necessarily having to shut down in-person instruction for all students. However, NYCACS is committed to following any and all response directives from the Department of Health.

## **CONTAINMENT**

If, at any point during the school day, a student develops a fever above 100.0 degrees, diarrhea, vomiting, excessive coughing, and/or shortness of breath, the parent/caregiver will be notified immediately and must pick up their child as soon as possible.

- The student, along with all their belongings, will be brought to a designated room that is separated from other students and staff to await pick up.
- A student will not be sent home on the bus after displaying the symptoms listed above.

When a student is pickup during the school day for any reason, the parent/caregiver must contact the school when they have arrived at the building. The student will be escorted by a staff member out of the building and to the parent/caregiver. Parents/caregivers must remain outside of the building at all times.

If a student develops symptoms during the school day and parents are directed to pick them up, parents should seek medical attention for their child and the student should not return to school until they are symptom free for a minimum of 10 days.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICES**

DOH will provide all the PPE and supplies necessary for outfitting the school health office, including but not limited to eye protection, gloves, gown, and masks. NYCACS will provide PPE for staff charged with monitoring students in the school's isolation room.

## **INFECTED INDIVIDUALS**

Any individuals within the school community who have tested positive will be required to isolate for the required number of days as stipulated by the Department of Health. Discharge from isolation and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the Department of Health. Additionally, NYCACS will require documentation from a doctor before allowing a student or staff member to return after a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

## EXPOSED INDIVIDUALS

Any individuals from the NYCACS community who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus must have completed Department of Health requirements around isolation and must have ceased exhibiting symptoms before returning to in-person learning and teaching. Discharge from isolation and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the Department of Health.

## HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND DISINFECTION

If an NYCACS staff member does not pass the daily screening, they will be required to stay home. If a staff member develops concerning symptoms during the school day, they will be asked to leave the building and go directly home or to a testing facility. If an NYCACS student does not pass the daily screening (exhibits fever above 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit) or develops concerning symptoms during the school day, they will be brought to the school's isolation room and parents will be contacted immediately. A staff member will be assigned to monitor that student in the isolation room until the student's parent arrives for pick-up. That staff member will have access to enhanced PPE for safety. Any areas that the student or staff member who developed symptoms came in contact with will be cleaned immediately, with access blocked to other students and staff to the greatest extent possible. Additional deep cleaning efforts will be conducted after school hours.

## CONTACT TRACING

In the event of a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 within the NYCACS community, the school will cooperate with NYC's Test and Trace program and any other mandates as required by the NYC DOH.

## COMMUNICATION

All NYCACS policies and procedures have been communicated in writing to parents and staff through emails, virtual meetings, and a re-opening protocol manual. Much of this information has also been shared with leaders of the other co-located schools and organizations within the larger educational campus. When an individual within the NYCACS school community receives a diagnosis of COVID-19, all members of the school community will be alerted without revealing that individual's identity. Additionally, members of that individual's school cohort will be directed to self-isolate as per Department of Health guidelines.

## CLOSURE

## **CLOSURE TRIGGERS**

As soon as a diagnosis within the school community is confirmed, the Department of Health will be contacted. NYCACS will work with the NYC DOH to determine what conditions (i.e., number of positive COVID-19 cases within the building) would trigger any type of closure. It is hoped that, given the schools' established student/staff cohorts and distancing measures, NYCACS will be able to engage in a partial shut-down for mandatory isolation of potentially exposed individuals within a cohort without necessarily having to shut down in-person instruction for all students. However, NYCACS is committed to following any and all response directives from the Department of Health.

## **OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY**

In the event of a partial or full school closure, remote instruction will commence for all affected parties as soon as possible, ideally within the next two days. Students will still keep the technology and materials deployed after the March closure for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year or as long as closure is a possibility. Staff will be required to carry their assigned technology to and from school as needed in order to be prepared for such a shut down as well. Individualized remote instruction plans for each student will be at the ready, with teacher assignments and work protocols picking up where they left off prior to the return to in-person instruction.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The entire NYCACS community – families and staff – will receive immediate notification of any school closure plans via email and the REMIND text application. Regular communication via these mediums will be provided as re-opening decisions are made.