A GUIDE TO REOPENING
2021-2022

January 14, 2022
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INTRODUCTION

The Gateway School of New York is located on Manhattan’s Upper West Side and has a Lower School and Middle School program. The mission of the school is to develop bright children who learn differently into skilled, strategic learners and confident self-advocates.

For the 2021-2022 school year, this Reopening Plan was updated to meet the overall goals of keeping the school community healthy and safe while maximizing in-person teaching and learning. This report builds upon the best practices of the 2020-2021 school year, factoring in the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with the CDC’s Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, the American Academy of Pediatrics’ AAP’s COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools, the NYS Education Department’s Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year, and interim guidance from local and state departments of health. This plan also includes input from the school’s constituents in the medical community, the Board of Trustees, Parents Association, and employees. These partners provide ongoing support and guidance to the school’s leadership team. School leadership reviews these plans periodically and has developed this latest revision.

Based upon these guidelines and the CDC statements promoting vaccination as the leading way for schools to return to in-person learning, the school has mandated vaccinations for all employees and eligible students aged 12 and over. The school is strongly encouraging vaccinations for all eligible students aged 5 to 11 and boosters for all eligible individuals. Proof of vaccination will be required for all visitors to the building. There will be testing of a percentage of unvaccinated children each week.

In addition to the vaccination policies, this plan focuses on a layered approach to mitigation strategies in schools, based upon levels of transmission, such as universal masking indoors, COVID-19 daily health screening, testing of unvaccinated students, improved ventilation, good hygiene training, symptom identification, and cleaning. The plan aligns with the NY Hero Act requirements and also includes contingencies in case the school needs to transition to hybrid or remote learning due to changing conditions.

Gateway’s defined curriculum and small classes address the academic needs with the critical health and safety needs of our students, faculty, and staff. Gateway believes a close relationship between the school and parents is essential and will continue to utilize town halls, webinars, and surveys to gather feedback from the community. Our faculty receive consistent support and guidance. The school is committed to ensuring students, faculty, and staff’s well-being and will continue to follow local and state guidelines to ensure their safety. The Gateway School prioritizes consistent and transparent communication with our constituency. The school communicates through a dedicated COVID-19-page, weekly e-newsletters, webinars, and usage of both Instagram and Facebook to reach our families. The administration partners with the Parents Association and Class Representatives to collect feedback from parents for guidance in decision making and dissemination of information. The original reopening plan was communicated with all constituencies using the above platforms, as will all subsequent versions.

The school will update the plan as needed to reflect updated guidance and conditions.

SECTION I: THE PROGRAM

Gateway’s continuity of learning plan for the 2021-2022 school year is an in-person model designed to accommodate all students in school, in-person full-time. Supported by a flexible
schedule and robust educational technology, the program can easily accommodate a hybrid scenario (some in person and some participating via distance learning) and allows for a swift and simple move to a 100% distance learning model (everyone online) should that ever be necessary. A brief overview of each scenario is detailed below:

**In-Person**

In-person learning assumes all students and faculty are participating in schooling in person, unless absent. Gateway’s 5-day in-person schedule reflects the programmatic priorities of our Mission and provides for live, synchronous instruction for all classes. It very closely mirrors our pre-COVID-19 schedule with only slight changes related to the number of intermingling grades or classes and a few program enhancements. In all cases, the model is supported by a robust learning management system, cloud-based productivity software, and synchronous videoconferencing classes.

**Hybrid**

A hybrid model allows for some students or faculty to be remote as needed due to COVID-19 related quarantine or other issues. When the school building is open for in-person learning, students are approved for hybrid learning by the School Nurse. When this occurs, they will participate in their classes via Zoom and Google Classroom. Should a family determine a medical need for their child to begin the school year fully remotely or remain remote for an extended period of time, they must submit a request to the Head of School and School Nurse.

**Remote Learning**

If the Head of School or the Department of Health deems it necessary for the school to operate fully remote, the schedule provides flexibility and ease for transitioning to a fully remote learning model. All of the programmatic priorities reflected in the schedule are maintained in the Remote Learning model. Courses that would have been provided in-person in the building can be provided remotely via Zoom and Google Classroom. The same frequency of courses and service remain intact.

**Teaching and Learning**

Gateway’s continuity of learning plan for the 2021-2022 school year is supported by a robust web-based learning management system (Google Classroom), web and cloud-based productivity software (Google Suite for Education), web-based video conferencing (Zoom), remote access to the school server for all faculty and staff, remote email access for all faculty and staff (G-Mail), a 1:1 Chromebook program for students, WiFi hotspots available to any students or staff who need them, and guidance on educational supplies kits for all students and faculty to keep at home in the event the school, in whole or in part, needs to move to a remote setting. Given this carefully developed schedule, technology, and supplies plan, learning can continue no matter the status of the individual’s status as in-person or remote.

This model was developed with equity at the forefront. There are clear opportunities for all students to regularly receive synchronous, direct, explicit, multisensory instruction that reflects
our mission and is provided by a well-trained member of the Gateway faculty. There are also plans in place to support faculty and staff as well as students and their families.

- In preparation for this school year, all Faculty and Specialists received and will continue to receive training in Google for Education and related platforms. In addition, all teachers continue to receive professional development on Gateway’s mission, pedagogy, curriculum, and instruction as well as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- A Hybrid Program Model overview will be provided if conditions or governmental entities require a period of hybrid education. The school’s Information Technology team can reactivate and maintain a remotely accessible help desk if the school moves to a remote setting.
- All instruction is provided synchronously, whether in the building or online and reflects our core academic program and our school’s mission.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to continue to follow our regular communication plan which includes multiple planned opportunities for general contact and information about student progress (e.g., orientation, curriculum nights, class/grade newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, report cards, meeting with division and program leadership, and occasional emails and phone calls with the teacher). The Google Classroom Learning Management System also provides opportunities for students to engage with their assignments virtually. Parents/guardians are encouraged to sign up for the weekly guardian summary, which reports on the student’s assignments. Any other communication requests can be scheduled directly with the teacher via email.

**Special Education**

Whether The Gateway School is entirely in-person, hybrid, or fully remote, the following supports are in place for students.

- The literacy, learning, and language specialists continue to work with teachers and students. Teachers receive guidance from specialists, and specialists join classes throughout the week. Student classwork, homework, and assessments are modified to meet the varied learning needs of each child.
- The language therapists continue to provide speech and language services in small groups. In the Lower School, students meet with a language therapist two to three times per week. In Middle School, students receive language instruction one time per week.
- The school psychologists continue to meet with students in small groups each week to deliver a curriculum designed to support social and emotional learning needs. School psychologists are also available to meet with students and families individually, as needed.
- In the Lower School, the youngest students continue to receive occupational therapy in a small group each week to address sensory-processing and self-regulation skills. The occupational therapist is also available to consult with teachers and observe students in the classroom when physical distancing rules allow.
- The school continues to partner with outside therapy teams to ensure that the needs of the children are being met based on Gateway’s recommendations and input from external providers.
- The Advisory and Homeroom periods serve as a time for teachers to support students in the following areas: academics, social-emotional learning, and executive function development.
• Teachers continue to meet with students to provide additional direct, explicit skills modeling or support as needed. They continue to provide students with written and oral feedback on assignments and assessments.

**Social and Emotional Well-Being**

The school community experienced unprecedented challenges over the last two years. Recognizing this, the school created and continues to provide the mental, social, and emotional space for academic learning.

A comprehensive plan for supporting the mental, social, and emotional wellness of our students, their families, and the faculty and staff has been developed and includes:

- A dedicated Social Development team comprised of two certified mental health professionals (i.e., Psychologists and/or Social Workers).
- A weekly Social Development class for all students taught by one of the Social Development professionals, where students receive instruction informed by a skills-based curriculum designed to support the Social and Emotional Learning needs of students with language-based learning differences.
- A weekly in Middle School and twice-weekly in Lower School Grandstand class, facilitated by a dedicated teacher with expertise in Gateway’s pedagogy and program, providing community-building activities and extra practice and reinforcement of the skills being targeted in social development classes.
- Spirit days, games, and other community connection opportunities are provided periodically, often hosted by our Student Advisory Council or Parents Association.
- Individualized meetings with Social Development professionals are offered to address parent, student, and teacher emotional support concerns.
- Frequent check-in meetings with teachers foster a sense of connection while also allowing parents, teachers, and students to address any individual concerns that might arise.
- Professional development seminars for teachers and parents focused on how to teach and parent children during a prolonged crisis. This provides expectations of what “normal” child development and behavior looks like under these circumstances and how to identify signs of depression, anxiety, and trauma in children of different ages.

**SECTION II: PEOPLE**

**Communicating our Plan to Families and Community**

The Gateway School’s communication plan for the entire community includes the following requirements:

- Reopening plans and FAQs are posted on the school’s website, and the school updates them as the plan evolves. The posted information shows the groups of people involved and engaged throughout the planning process.
- The school provides resources and education on COVID-19 prevention and safety, including CDC, AAP, and DOH guidance.
The school ensures that students and faculty are trained on how to follow health and safety protocols correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face coverings, physical distancing, and respiratory hygiene. This is included in our faculty and staff training in August, in parent and student orientation, in videos, in classrooms during the first days of school, and periodically during the year.

The school uses verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings.

**Key Protocols**

**Masks**

In accordance with the NYS Health Commissioner’s determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.60, all students, personnel, teachers, administrators, contractors, and visitors must wear masks at all times indoors, regardless of vaccination status.

At The Gateway School, all staff, faculty, students, contractors and visitors are required to wear face masks in the school at all times except during meals and designated mask breaks. The school’s plan includes an option for mask-less play outdoors, based upon the latest guidance and local conditions. Please refer to the school’s FAQs for the latest mask recommendations.

Division Directors will develop alternative plans for any students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering on a case-by-case basis.

The school provides recorded trainings for all students, faculty, and staff on how to put on adequately, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE.

**Vaccinations**

The school has mandated vaccinations for all employees and eligible students aged 12 and over. The school strongly encourages vaccinations for all eligible students aged 5 to 11 and boosters for all eligible individuals. Employees were required to submit proof of full vaccination prior to returning to campus or provide weekly test results until fully vaccinated. Please refer to the section on page 15 below, “COVID-Specific Human Resources Considerations,” for more information.

As of September 23, 2021, the school mandated COVID-19 vaccinations for all students aged 12 and older. Key guidelines are outlined below:

- Students who will be turning 12 during the 2021-2022 academic year must receive the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine no later than two weeks after their 12th birthday.
- Students who were 12 and older as of September 23rd had to complete the full course of vaccination (post-2 weeks after completing the second dose of Pfizer) by Thanksgiving (Friday, November 26).
- Students who are 12 and older who have completed the full course of vaccination must have a copy of their vaccine card uploaded to their account in the Magnus Health Portal.

There will be weekly testing of twenty percent of unvaccinated children with completed parental consent forms. Based on conditions, the school may opt to test all eligible vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals throughout the year.
The school requires all visitors to show proof of vaccination for entry into the building.

**Physical Distancing**

The Gateway School ensures that appropriate physical distancing is maintained between students, faculty, staff, or any individual on school property. Classroom configuration, including desk arrangement, is designed to provide 4 feet of distance between teachers and students and 6 feet during mask breaks and meals. Hallways have been designated one-directional and schoolwide signage is used to guide adherence to 6 feet physical distance throughout common areas or during aerobic activity resulting in heavy breathing (e.g., gym).

**Space Configuration**

Elevator usage: Gateway’s passenger elevator is shared with another school in the building and a tenant - AMDA and Level 3 Communications, LLC - respectively. To minimize the number of people using the elevator, all students, staff, and visitors are directed to use the stairway unless they are unable to do so. To ensure proper physical distancing between individuals who do use the elevator, elevator capacity is limited to five persons or one class at any time. Every employee or visitor utilizing the elevator is required to wear an appropriate face covering.

Administrative hallways: Some hallways present physical distancing challenges. The school has mitigated this issue through the use of one-way directional pathways wherever possible. Gateway posted appropriate signage, and provides employees with maps designating the flow of traffic through the office.

Office space: Offices and workspaces are assigned with physical distancing in mind. Meetings are primarily conducted via tele- or video-conferencing, and in-person meetings and office visits are strongly discouraged.

Classrooms: Classrooms are configured with desks at a minimum of 4 feet distance from each other and the teacher. All unnecessary furniture has been removed. Teachers whose workspace is in a classroom are advised to only take meals or mask breaks when their class is not in session or they can maintain 6 feet of social distance from all other individuals in the room.

Students: Mandatory mask use allows for regular programming and putting students in their correct reading and math groups. Students are in classes of up to 12 students, and they move with their subgroups to their breakout rooms, go to designated lunch areas if they do not eat in their classrooms, and go to movement and gym classes.

Common areas: Most school common areas such as the Main Lobby lounge area are available for visitor and staff use, but the number of people in any one space is limited. Hallways are designated one directional and signage is provided. The school primarily uses Staircase A for transit between floors to limit interaction with the school sharing the building space. Locker and cubby usage is limited and distanced, and/or replaced by hooks, assigned cubbies, or bins in their classroom and other spaces. At least one bathroom has been designated for visitors.

Training: The Director of Safety and Facilities trains all faculty and staff on proper disinfection procedures, and all necessary cleaning materials are available in every room and/or in multiple places on each floor.
Cleaning and disinfection: The Director of Safety and Facilities maintains a log that includes the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfecting.

Visitors: Gateway requires all visitors into the building to show proof of vaccination. Upon entering the building, the visitor will be screened, and the person they are meeting will be responsible for escorting them through the building. Every approved visitor will be required to wear an appropriate face covering while onsite. Any visitor arriving without a face covering of their own will be provided a disposable face covering.

**School Schedule**

The school schedule mirrors the pre-COVID-19 program and accommodates a 30-minute arrival period in the morning and three different dismissal times (two for the Lower School and one for the Middle School) to provide staggering for physical distancing purposes. Lockers are only assigned to the oldest students and are physically distanced. Students have a limited number of items they are able to carry in a backpack to bring to class, and teachers will monitor the staggered and distanced use of cubbies and other storage spaces for personal belongings.

**Signage**

Signage has been designed to guide community members on the policy. These policies have also been included in the Parent and Student Handbook, are reinforced with students during the first weeks of school, are reviewed regularly, and have been a part of school-wide professional development for faculty and staff. Signage placed throughout the school address:

- Stay home if you feel sick
- Consistent and correct use of masks
- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE
- Adhere to physical distancing instructions
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19 and how to do so
- Follow proper hand washing and respiratory etiquette

**Gatherings**

**Meals**

The Gateway School reintroduced its lunch program with an opt-in, for-pay program for all students, faculty, and staff. Participation in the program is not required, and community members are still able to bring in their own lunches and snacks. Personnel managing the lunch program will be treated as visitors, and their access to the building will be limited to areas required for the lunch program, such as The Great Room. The school is a nut-aware environment with a well-established food policy addressing food allergies and prohibited food items. Teachers are provided with a list of all allergies and dietary restrictions of the students they supervise and utilize this to support food safety during snack and lunch. Student emergency medications are located in the Nurse’s Office.

For the coming year, the school made the following adjustments to meet the mandatory requirements for all applicable health and safety guidelines:

- Meals will be provided at 6 feet physical distance in classrooms or other spaces.
- Students wash hands or sanitize before and after meals.
- Clear sneeze guard screens (e.g., desk shield) will be used as needed.
• Food and beverage sharing is prohibited.
• Students are supervised by faculty or staff who remind them to practice appropriate hand hygiene.
• Faculty and staff eat meals at their workstations and model appropriate physical distancing and hygiene.
• Desks or tables are sanitized after meals by the students or the supervising faculty and/or staff.
• Faculty and staff wash their hands before and after meals and before resuming work.
• Each classroom and office is equipped with hand sanitizer, tissues, paper towels, and disinfecting wipes to ensure that students, faculty, and staff have adequate supplies for cleaning and disinfecting.
• Custodial staff discards food trash per the facilities log.

**Faculty and Staff Meetings**

• Video or teleconferencing is utilized for faculty and staff meetings and conferences to reduce the density of congregations.
• Gateway uses Zoom and other online platforms to conduct meetings to minimize face-to-face interactions.
• The Head of School may authorize some in-person meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces where any required physical distancing is possible. The Director of Safety and Facilities will provide capacity parameters for meetings.

**Ventilation and Filtration**

• In 2020, the school worked with an engineering firm to improve the ventilation and other environmental elements of the school. Ventilation with outdoor air is increased to the greatest extent possible by opening air dampers in the system and opening windows in classrooms where available. In areas with more limited air circulation, doors and windows are opened, and portable air purifiers are in all rooms, including those with no operable windows or where external conditions do not allow for windows to be opened.
• Based upon the guidance of the engineering firm, the school also increased ventilation in bathrooms, increased the MERV-rated filters in the HVAC system, and added an exhaust fan to the Plaza Level elevator vestibule to improve airflow in that space.
• The water systems (including two cooling towers on the school building roof) and power supply are regularly tested and maintained by qualified vendors contracted by the school. The school follows the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene cooling tower rules.
• The school has single-person bathrooms with multiple bathrooms designated for visitors, faculty/staff, and students. One separate bathroom has been designated for use by any occupants of the isolation room.

**Common Areas**

The school has put in place several measures discussed in various parts of this plan to manage the density and ensure physical distancing in common areas. These include:
- Limit elevator usage to those not physically able to take the stairs and staff transporting equipment or deliveries to other floors.
- Furniture in common areas such as the school lobby on the Plaza level, 6th floor waiting area, and library have been put back so that these areas can once again be used for visitor waiting areas. Alternative spaces off the lobby are used as needed if too many visitors are in the lobby waiting area.

**Operational Activity**

**Cohorts**

Cohorts are self-contained, pre-assigned groups of students that do not exceed 12 students and two teachers. Intermingling across cohorts is limited to the cohort’s pod (see below). Teachers may teach across multiple cohorts.

**Pods**

Cohorts are clustered into a “pod” to ensure exposure is limited, and contact tracing is reasonable. No more than six cohorts, with a maximum of 50 total students, are assigned to a pod. While students are fixed to a cohort and pod, faculty may instruct multiple cohorts or across pods. Faculty utilize physical distancing and face coverings and are required to be vaccinated to minimize risk.

**In-Person Instruction**

While the goal is to maintain in-person instruction for all students, due to the dynamic nature and risk of community transmission of COVID-19, the design of the class schedules can be modified to accommodate changes to physical distancing guidelines, including the expanded use of cohorts and pods as well as the flexibility for some or all of the school population to move remote at any given time.

**Movement and Commerce**

**Transportation**

Gateway does not provide transportation to students, so it is not required to provide assurances for buses. However, the school encourages students and their families to comply with health practices that the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) puts in place, including mask wearing.

Gateway’s Parent and Student Handbook advise families and students to comply with all NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) and Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) regulations. Per the NYCDOE website [NYC DOE Transportation Overview](https://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/nycdoe_transportation_oversview.shtml) school buses transporting students will follow guidelines outlined by the CDC and NYSED. School bus safety procedures are as follows:

- Where practicable and weather permitting, windows will remain open and with the air system on the bus in the non-recirculating mode during transit; please dress your child appropriately.
- Everyone in a school bus must wear masks at all times regardless of vaccination status, unless they have an approved medical exemption from the mask requirements.
- In accordance with CDC and NYSED guidance, physical distancing is not required on school buses and students will only socially distance when possible.
● Each night, all school buses will be cleaned and disinfected using CDC recommended cleaning and disinfection protocols.
● Family members are expected to screen their children’s health at home, including conducting temperature checks, to make certain they are well enough to board a bus and attend school. Bus personnel will not be administering screenings.
● Students will exit school buses one row at a time.
● All children riding school buses should follow health and safety protocols on buses. Bus companies will notify the school if a student repeatedly fails to comply with these protocols.

**Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Designated areas have been established for student drop-off and pick-up, limiting contact and entry of parents/legal guardians into the building. All students are dropped off at the entrance of the building, outside, during arrival. All Middle School students are designated “walkers” and dismissed directly from the building after the Lower School dismissal. Lower School students are dismissed to caregivers waiting outside the building in designated areas following a staggered schedule.

A screening platform, SchoolPass, is utilized for faculty, staff, students, and visitors to participate in mandatory COVID-19 prescreening via an app or web browser before entering the building.

**Deliveries**

Large deliveries are made curbside, with the facilities team responsible for bringing pallets and other large deliveries into the school building via the main entrance or freight elevator. For any food deliveries, delivery people will contact the Main Desk via the front doorbell, and the employee waiting for the delivery will pick up the food outside the school building, or food is left on a table in the vestibule.

**Faculty/Staff Entrances and Exits**

Arrivals are staggered so that faculty are expected to be in the school building prior to student arrival. The faculty and staff use the main school entrance and start arriving at 7:00 a.m. until 7:30 a.m. Student arrivals run from 7:40 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., and they go to their classroom or the 5th floor Commons once they check-in.

Dismissal will have three releases:

Lower School Dismissal: 3:05 - 3:25 p.m.
Classes 1 - 3 start descending stairs at 3:05 p.m. - dismissed first
Classes 4 - 6 start descending stairs at 3:10 p.m. - dismissed second

Middle School Dismissal: 3:15 - 3:25 p.m. - dismissed third
**Shared Objects**

To limit transmission of cold and flu or other infections, the school will still limit the sharing of objects, such as lockers, cubbies, laptops, notebooks, touchscreens, writing utensils, chalk and dry erase boards, and other educational materials, as well as the touching of shared surfaces, such as conference tables and desks. In the event that items or spaces are shared, students, faculty, and staff are required to practice hand hygiene before and after contact, and faculty and staff participate in disinfecting procedures.

- Faculty and staff are provided materials to disinfect printing stations and encouraged to practice hand hygiene between uses. In general, faculty have been encouraged to minimize hard copies and plan to utilize individual student notebooks or cloud-based materials instead of printing materials.
- To the extent possible, books are cloud-based or issued individually to students. If a class set of books is utilized by a group of students and then returned to school, those will be set apart and disinfected before being placed back into rotation.

**Staffing and Human Resources**

**COVID-Specific Human Resources Considerations**

The school updated its 2021-2022 Employee Handbook and Parent Student Handbook with COVID-19-specific supplements to address policy changes specific to the pandemic. These are available via the school’s document portals for families and employees.

For the 2021-2022 school year, Gateway required all faculty and staff to become vaccinated for COVID-19. Faculty or staff who cannot receive a COVID vaccination due to a disability or sincerely-held religious belief should contact the Director of Human Resources to engage in an interactive process to determine whether any reasonable accommodation is possible for their particular situation. (While Gateway is committed to engaging in a good-faith, cooperative dialogue about requested accommodations, the school cannot guarantee that any accommodation is possible.)

**Professional Evaluation and Development**

In addition to our regular professional development topics that support our mission and program, faculty, staff, and/or administrators participate in formal professional development training in Google for Education and Google Classroom, the Google and Chromebook apps and extensions purchased and/or approved for use by the school, as well as pedagogical best practices in online teaching and hybrid learning.

All faculty and staff also participate in ongoing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) training coordinated by Gateway’s DEIB Committee.

Teachers and specialists meet weekly with an instructional coach to plan lessons. Curriculum specialists oversee the development of curricular materials in each subject area. Coaches observe
instruction regularly and provide feedback to teachers on their practice. The Curriculum and Program Specialist team meets weekly with the members of the administrative team.

Supervisors conduct formal Year-End Evaluations across all departments in the School.

**SECTION III: PLACES**

*Utilization of Space*

Gateway will ensure school spaces conform to the best practices recommended by the CDC, AAP, NYSED, and local and state Departments of Health. The number of persons in the school, if all students, faculty, and staff attended in-person, would be an estimated 230 people. Gateway does not intend to make any alterations to the building that would be out of compliance with the fire code.

*Safety Drills*

The Gateway School maintains an internal guide for conducting required fire and lockdown drills per NYS Education Law Section 807 and Fire Code Section 404. Gateway intends to conduct all required safety drills modified to ensure physical distancing to the extent possible. All faculty, staff, and students will wear face coverings at all times, and extra time will be allotted for drills.

*Personal Protective Equipment*

- Students, faculty, staff, and visitors are advised and continually reminded that they are required to wear acceptable face coverings in the school.
- While face coverings are supplied for faculty and staff, students, faculty, and staff are permitted to use their own acceptable face coverings. This guidance is not meant to deter or prevent employees from wearing their personally owned protective covering, as long as they adhere to the minimum standards of protection for the specific activity.
- Faculty, staff, students, and their parents/guardians have received information from the school about acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 and their maintenance. Face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection or source control against COVID-19 and should not be used without masks. Face coverings should be cleaned or replaced after use and must not be shared. Students and parents/legal guardians are responsible for maintaining their face coverings.
- Faculty have access to alternate PPE in the form of face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth for instruction to visualize the movement of the lips and/or mouths.
- The school maintains an adequate supply of masks, gloves, and other required PPE, should faculty or staff need a replacement or a student be in need. Gateway will maintain an inventory of disposable face coverings for use by the nurse's office and for any employee or guest who arrives without a face covering of their own. The school maintains an inventory of acceptable masks, including KN95s and KF94s. Supplies will be monitored and replenished as needed.
- Gateway has designated a single trash receptacle in a central location for discarding used PPE. The receptacle is red and designated as PPE Disposal. Gateway's employees are required to participate in PPE training prior to the beginning of the school year. This includes instructions on how to wear the recommended face coverings per CDC guidance. The school posted signage around the building reminding employees of these best practices.
Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Hygiene

- Adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements is overseen by the Director of Safety and Facilities and supported by all members of the senior leadership team. The Director of Safety and Facilities identifies cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility type, has assigned responsibility, and the maintenance of logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. The Director of Safety and Facilities and the School Nurse train all students, faculty, and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene and coordinate with Division Directors on providing information to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.
  - The Director of Safety and Facilities maintains hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:
    - Hand sanitizer is made available throughout common areas, in convenient locations, such as at building, classroom, and elevator entrances and exits. Touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers are installed where possible.
    - Signage is placed near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
    - Faculty and staff have been reminded that alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be flammable and may not be suitable for certain areas in school facilities and on school grounds.
    - Receptacles are placed around the school for disposal of soiled items, including paper towels and PPE.
    - A hand washing best practices sign is placed in each bathroom. Employees also receive regular reminders on best practices from the School Nurse, Human Resources, and the Director of Safety and Facilities.

Cleaning and Disinfection

The Director of Safety and Facilities ensures that cleaning and disinfection are the primary responsibility of the school’s custodial staff and that they follow CDC guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Your School Building. However, appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies are also provided to faculty and staff for shared and frequently touched surfaces.

A cleaning log has been created, is maintained, and is stored in the Director of Safety and Facilities’ office. Cleaning products are based upon approved EPA products.

Disposable wipes are provided to faculty and staff so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before and/or after use, followed by hand hygiene.

Hand sanitizer is available near high-touch surfaces (e.g., trash receptacles, paper towel dispensers).

The Director of Safety and Facilities ensures regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms are cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.
The Director of Safety and Facilities ensures that materials and tools used by employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using disinfectants from the [EPA COVID-19 Approved Disinfectants List](https://www.epa.gov/covid-19/disinfectants).

If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, the Director of Safety and Facilities will put in place hand hygiene stations between use and/or supply disposable gloves and/or limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.

**Cleaning and Disinfection Following Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Case**

Following suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, affected areas will be cleaned and disinfected following [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html). Additionally:

- Areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be closed off.
- The School will not necessarily close in-the-building operations if the affected areas (e.g., classroom, restroom, hallway) can be closed off, but the school will make a broader building determination by consulting DOH guidelines or through conversations with the School's local DOH contact.
- Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area.
- A waiting period of 24 hours will be observed before cleaning and disinfecting, if feasible; if not, cleaning and disinfecting will be delayed as long as possible.
- All areas used by or suspected to have been used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas, will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it will be reopened for use.
- Individuals without close contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be allowed to return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- Close contact will be defined following the local DOH’s guidance. Please refer to the school’s FAQs for more information.

**COVID-19 Safety Coordinator**

The Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO) is designated as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator; responsibilities include compliance with all aspects of the school’s reopening plan and staying current with the latest guidance. In addition, the CFOO works with the school health office, NYC and NYS health departments, and other schools to monitor public health conditions and jointly develop monitoring strategies.

**Communications Plan**

During the fall of 2020, the Head of School assembled a Medical Task Force, consisting of parents/legal guardians of students who work in the medical field and administrators and faculty. Experts in the medical field consult on the latest research and trends, providing guidance and support for the school team to review the reopening plans. A communications plan
for students, parents or legal guardians of students, staff, and visitors includes regular communication about the planning process, opportunities to provide feedback via surveys, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information through the School’s website, social media, email communication, Vlogs, information portals, and handbooks (e.g., The Parent and Student Handbook, The Employee Handbook, and addendums to these documents). This information includes applicable instructions, training, and signage. A plan was developed and implemented to train students on how to follow COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, physical distancing, and respiratory hygiene.

SECTION IV: PROCESSES

Screening and Testing

Pre-Screening Protocols

Parents/guardians (on behalf of their child), faculty, and staff will submit via SchoolPass a COVID-19 questionnaire prior to arrival at the school building each day. The questionnaire includes the following questions for all students, faculty, staff and visitors:

- Have you been in close contact in the last 14 days with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, and have not been cleared to return to campus by the school;
- Have you or any household member tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days, and have not been cleared to return to campus by the school;
- Do you or any household members have a currently pending test for COVID-19 that was ordered due to exposure or symptoms of COVID-19, and have not been cleared to return to campus by the school;
- Was your temperature 100.0 ° F or above this morning (measure in Fahrenheit between 12 a.m. and 7:30 a.m.);
- Have you or a household member experienced any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days without an alternative diagnosis or a negative PCR test:
  - cough or shortness of breath,
  - sore throat,
  - nasal congestion,
  - GI upset,
  - loss of taste/smell,
  - fever of 100.0°F or higher

The app-based questionnaires are reviewed periodically to ensure they capture any CDC and/or state and local DOH updates for COVID-19 presentations/symptoms. If deemed necessary, the screening app allows for different questions to be asked depending on the individual. For students, the questionnaire may include child-specific symptoms.

Results are monitored by the nurse and on-campus arrivals team as well as through the application itself.

COVID-19 Screening

Gateway has a plan for screening students, faculty and staff. This screening program is administered according to applicable rules permitting employers to screen employees for
COVID-19 (including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the New York State Department of Health guidance regarding the reopening of schools, among others). The following guidelines and practices are currently in place:

- The Gateway School has contracted with Mirimus Labs to conduct pool testing on a percentage of unvaccinated students each week and as needed for the larger school community - for example, employees and students participated in pool testing the week after returning from summer break to account for the impact of the Delta variant and from winter break to account for the impact of the Omicron variant.
- The Gateway School requires all students, faculty, and staff to be tested for COVID-19 before the start of the school year, as well as after Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring breaks.
- The Gateway School has an inventory of At Home antigen tests supplied by NYC and NYS that it may distribute to individuals who have a possible exposure or are exhibiting COVID-like symptoms.
- For employee test results outside of the pool testing, faculty and staff submit their results via a dedicated email, covidresults@gatewayschool.org. Only two administrators (the Director of Human Resources and Assistant to the Head of School) will have access to the email address where test results are sent. In the event of a positive test result, the administrators may notify the Head of School, COVID-19 Safety Coordinator, School Nurse, and/or Director of Safety and Facilities of the minimum necessary information they need to carry out the School’s response.
- For student test results outside of the pool testing or return to school testing, parents/guardians submit their student’s test results to the School Nurse via email Studentcovidresults@gatewayschool.org or through our health portal, Magnus Health.
- Submission results are confidential.
- Families and employees submitted signed consent forms in order to participate in the pool testing program.
- Guidance on access to free testing is provided and updated as needed.
- All tests, either routine or as ordered by a healthcare provider, must be for an active infection (not antibodies) and approved by the FDA either under Full or Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).

**COVID-19 In-Person Screening**

**Workflow:**

- At least one person standing outside will check for completion of the student’s questionnaire in SchoolPass. For faculty and staff, they proceed to the lobby to sign onto campus via SchoolPass’ Visitor Management module. Students and staff will be flagged if they have not completed the Wellness Questionnaire. If the questionnaire is passed, the individual’s attendance is recorded.
  - If any adult fails the pre-screening app and is not cleared by the School Nurse or senior Administrator, they will be dismissed from the building.
  - If any student fails the pre-screening app and is not cleared by the School Nurse, they will be sent home if attended by a caregiver or will be taken directly to the School Nurse for isolation, further screening, and/or to await pick-up by a caregiver.
  - The isolation room includes a cot, chair, trash can for PPE disposal, and small games or toys that can be disinfected.
Anyone who does not complete the app pre-screening will be required to do so upon arrival.

If someone is showing any of the emergency warning signs for COVID-19, the arrivals team or nurse will seek emergency medical care:
- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

There will be a review each morning of the data collected at arrivals and an evaluation of absences and pass/fail numbers. The report will be provided to the school nurse and administrators, and any follow-up will be according to DOH guidelines.

Additional Detail:
- All staff and students must stay home if sick.
- Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.
- Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar and it may be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. The CDC advises that testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis.

Visitor Screening

All visitors to the building must show proof of the COVID-19 vaccination. All visitors are required to sign in and are issued a vendor/contractor ID to clearly identify them as a visitor to the school. All visitors are escorted by the person they have come to see. This includes all vendors onsite for servicing, e.g., HVAC technicians, elevator mechanics, copy machine repair persons, etc.

Positive Screen Protocols

Any employee who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure at school will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

Any students being sent home due to a positive screening will be immediately separated from others and supervised in an isolation room while they wait for an approved caregiver to pick them up from school. If an employee or student tests positive for COVID-19, the school will notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.

If an individual experiences COVID-19 related symptoms while in school, they must report to the nurse’s office immediately for evaluation. Faculty receive training from the nurse in order to identify pediatric symptoms of COVID-19. Any student exhibiting those symptoms will be taken immediately to the nurse.

The work area of the employee testing positive is sealed for as long as possible - 24 hours before disinfecting is ideal but it may occur after 18 hours. After leaving the space sealed for as long as possible, the work area will be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and sealed for an additional 24 hours. The facilities team will clean and disinfect using the Clorox Total 360 electrostatic
sprayer. All common areas (restrooms, elevators, pantry, etc.) in addition to the contaminated area will be cleaned in the same manner to mitigate the risk of others becoming infected.

Gateway will follow the CDC and local DOH requirements to determine when a student or employee who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can physically return to the school building.

A school nurse or CFOO will notify the local health department if a worker tests positive for COVID-19.

The school has a Contact Tracing team that will identify contacts with the assistance of class and work schedules and provide those as necessary to contact tracing investigators and report them on the daily New York State COVID-19 Report Card. They will maintain confidentiality as required by federal and state regulations and will cooperate with state and local health department isolation and quarantine efforts.

**School Health Office**

The nurse’s office is located on the Plaza Level of the school. The nurse’s office has been equipped with both standard and transmission-based PPE so that they can properly carry out enhanced screenings. The office has KN95 and KF94 masks, surgical face masks, face shields, Level 2 gowns, and gloves. The supplies are monitored regularly so that proper inventories are maintained. The nurse’s office has developed protocols to care for students with asthma by setting expectations with parents that the nurse will not perform aerosolizing procedures and the student will use their nebulizer. If that does not resolve the issue, then the nurse will call 911.

A protocol is in place for caring for a student, faculty, or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. These protocols must include:

- A dedicated area to separate students, faculty, or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on the severity of illness;
- Plans to ensure that symptomatic student(s) who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is socially distanced;
- PPE requirements for school health office staff caring for sick individuals, which must include both standard and transmission-based precautions. In areas with moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield) should be added. When caring for a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, gloves, a gown, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator should be used, if available (or surgical face mask and face shield, if not available), as well as eye protection. Please consult CDC guidance for additional information; and
- Required guidelines for cleaning and disinfection.

The protocols for asthma-related acute respiratory treatment care are as follows:

- The nurse’s office will develop protocols to care for students with asthma by setting expectations with parents that the nurse will not perform aerosolizing procedures and the student will use their nebulizer. If that does not resolve the issue, then the nurse will call 911.
- Consult with students’ healthcare providers for alternate asthma medication delivery systems; and
- Consult with the school maintenance and facilities department for environmental controls.

**NYS Data Reporting**

The school will comply with any legal requirements to provide the City or State Departments of Health with COVID-19-related data.

**Tracing, Tracking, and Closures**

**Metrics**

During the 2021-2022 school year, there may be times when Gateway is ordered to close the school by the State. The school will follow those orders.

There could be COVID-19 situations that are more specific to the school community or local area that need to be addressed. Per the guidance of the NYSED, schools should monitor levels of community transmission by contacting their local health department or by using the CDC COVID Data Tracker. The school has implemented the following policies to identify trends that may be warning signs that the level of COVID-19 transmissions may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

**Metrics for Quarantining**

- The focus is maintaining in-school learning and minimizing the numbers of students or faculty and staff who may need to quarantine due to exposure(s).
- We monitor daily and weekly the number and percentage of students and faculty who are absent and determine if there is a need to self-quarantine based upon the reasons for absence and any medical diagnoses provided. Quarantine decisions will be made in consultation with the Department of Health, and the standard return guidelines from the Department of Health will be followed.
- Students or staff who are sent home because they show symptoms of COVID-19, or they develop symptoms of COVID-19 during a period of self-quarantine, need to follow the procedures for returning to school. In a COVID-19 positive case, the student or staff member must be released from isolation by the DOH or cleared by the school to return.
- Classes are expected to continue remotely for quarantines involving a class or larger groups. If the teachers within the quarantined class or group fall sick, the school will secure a substitute teacher, assign an administrator, specialist, or another teacher to provide coverage. If enough faculty members fall ill such that appropriate coverage is not available and online instruction cannot be maintained, some or all online classes may not occur. Efforts will be made to provide resources and materials to students who are well.

**Notification**

School leadership will notify the state and local health department upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors.
**Tracing Support**

Gateway and its Contact Tracing Team will support state and local Departments of Health in tracing all contacts of an individual who tests positive. The school will follow the protocols provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

**Quarantine, Isolation, and Return to School**

State and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of COVID-19 infected or exposed persons, including isolation or quarantine.

School leadership have reporting plans in place for individuals who are alerted that they have come into close contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted to such exposure via tracing, tracking, or other mechanism.

Based upon updated guidance from the CDC and NYS DOH, Gateway has updated its quarantine and isolation policies. Please refer to the school’s FAQs for the latest guidance.

**Returns to School**

Returns to school will be based upon the guidance in the school’s FAQs or local DOH guidelines.

**Fiscal and Data Collection Compliance**

**Attendance**

The school collects attendance utilizing a web-based platform, My BackPack, and in accordance with our attendance policy. This is coordinated by the Main Desk staff and recorded in our secure database. Teachers are responsible for tracking daily teacher/student engagement. A spreadsheet template has been provided as a model. In addition, teachers meet with instructional coaches weekly or bi-weekly to discuss their class and progress. Instructional coaches support teachers in developing and maintaining these plans.

Employee daily attendance is recorded when each arriving employee types in their employee-specific pin into the SchoolPass Visitor Management module. They are then marked as “On Campus” until they sign out of the same module. Their attendance is also recorded through a web-based Human Resources Time and Labor Management platform, BeyondPay, as well as through our Outlook email and calendar utility. Teacher absences are reported to the Main Desk and Division Leadership, including the Program Specialist, who arranges coverage.

**Chronic Absenteeism**

Following the attendance policy, the Main Desk calls the parents/guardians of each student who is absent every day and records any relevant absences notes in the attendance platform. The school does not call home when parents/guardians have notified the school in advance of an absence.
Students at risk of becoming chronically absent are those students who have been absent for more than three consecutive days or who have been present but have not submitted assignments for more than three days. Through the Learning Management System, Google Classroom, parents and guardians are encouraged to opt into a daily or weekly summary of their child’s coursework, which will notify them of any missed or late assignments. In addition, each teacher will communicate directly with the Division Director when they have concerns related to a lack of student engagement and/or attendance. At this point, the Division Director or one of their designees will coordinate a meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the student’s participation. This is intended as a safety net to flag any potential issues before they evolve and is not meant to be punitive. Together, the team will make a plan to support student engagement.

When students are absent from class due to illness or family circumstances, all classwork and materials will remain available to them via the Learning Management System, Google Classroom. Students are encouraged to continue to participate to the extent possible, either synchronously or asynchronously, as the circumstances allow.

**Technology and Connectivity**

At the start of the school year each student will be provided a Chromebook, carrying case, charger, and stylus at no cost to families. This device is to be brought back and forth to school. Employees are provided laptops and chargers for the same purposes. WiFi Hotspots are available by request to support@gatewayschool.org, to any student or employee who does not have reliable Internet access. The school also provides recommendations to the parents/guardians for headsets and other accessories required for ensuring program access. This one-to-one program was deemed to be the best solution for the program to ensure consistency and for the families to ensure equity.

**CONCLUSION**

This revision of the reopening report was created following CDC, AAP, and available State and Local Guidelines. We believe this plan continues to provide for the integrity of our program and mission while addressing the very real present health and safety concerns through a flexible model that can be adapted to in-person, hybrid, or remote learning. The Gateway School prioritizes consistent and transparent communication with our constituency and will continue to monitor the current crisis, guidelines, and feedback from all constituencies to reassess and modify the plan as needed.