



July 27, 2020

Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Montessori School of Englewood

Location: City Winery at the Chicago Riverwalk

Present:

Board Members: Karen Anderson, Joe Motto, Thom Hale, Mike Sculnick

Administration: Rita Nolan

Minutes taken by: Joe Motto

I. Call to Order

Hale called the meeting to order.

II. Finance

Sculnick led discussion on finances.

We are in receipt from our accountants of a draft financial statement for the 2019-2020 school year, which shows an approximately \$250,000 deficit. There are still some open items and ongoing work that we think are likely to result in a deficit in the range of \$150,000-\$200,000.

The committee reviewed the draft budget for the 2020-2021 year. See Ex. A. Discussion ensued and revenue and expense drivers and notable variations from the prior year. Among other items, the Paycheck Protection Plan loan was discussed. The budget does not anticipate it will be forgiven, though that remains unclear.

Sculnick motion to approve the budget. Hale seconded. All present voted in favor, none opposed. Budget approved and adopted.

III. Head Start

In advance of the meeting, the committee reviewed and approved via email the draft cost of living adjustment budget for Head Start. Additional discussion was had, after which Anderson moved for committee adoption of the budget. Hale seconded, all voted in favor, none opposed. Head Start COLA budget approved and adopted.



Nolan additionally described potential developments and future changes with respect to our Head Start application process and the City of Chicago's role (or potential lack thereof, starting soon) in that process. In the future, we may no longer be applying through the City, which could negatively impact our ability to secure Head Start funding. This does not threaten an immediate budget impact but poses a longer-term risk.

IV. Draft 2020-2021 School Plan

Nolan circulated and led discussion around the attached draft plan and potential scenarios for return to school in the Fall in the midst of the ongoing pandemic. See Ex. B.

The plan incorporates guidance from relevant government sources, Montessori leadership, nationwide best practices, community input, and scientific data, tailored to our community, students, and methods. It remains a multi-faceted, fluid work in progress, with different potential approaches and points of emphasis for different age groups (e.g., prioritizing in-school attendance for the youngest students); consideration for the different operational and programmatic needs and functions of the school; and focus on health and safety for the students and community above all (i.e., COVID-19 best practices for screening, identification, distancing, class room capacity, facility cleaning).

The committee expressed thanks, support, and approval for the draft and continued pursuit of the project and development of associating budgeting.

V. 2020-2021 Board Meeting Schedule

Motto moved for the committee to adopt the following board meeting schedule for the 2020-2021 year:

- Q1 Meeting: Monday, September 14, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.
- Q2 and Annual Meetings: Saturday, November 7, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.
- Q3 Meeting: Monday, February 1, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.
- Q4 Meeting: Saturday, April 3, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.
- Post-Year End Meeting: Monday, June 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.



Hale seconded the motion. All voted in favor, none opposed. Meeting schedule adopted. At present it is anticipated that meetings will be conducted primarily telephonically, pursuant to Executive Order Nos. 2020-07, 2020-33, and 2020-44, at the following dial information:

- Dial: 866-384-6555
- Passcode: 1-312-558-3728

VI. Next Executive Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be at 10:00 a.m. on August 31, 2020, location to be determined.

VII. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Exhibit A

Montessori School of Englewood
 FY2021 Operating Budget (Consolidated)

	FY 21 Budget											FY20 Actual		
	ADM	FND	HS	PFA - Not refunded	Title 1	Title 2	Title 3	Title 4	State Bilingual	SPED	Charter	Total FY21	(at 5/31/20)	Variance
REVENUE														
CPS Funding														
CPS SBB & Non-SBB	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,584,510	\$2,584,510	\$2,085,076	\$499,434
CPS Special Education (SPED)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$714,254	\$0	\$714,254	\$660,125	\$54,129
Supplemental Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$251,665	\$251,665	\$250,000	\$1,665	
Other CPS Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,162	(\$25,162)
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CPS Funding	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$714,254	\$2,836,175	\$3,550,429	\$3,020,363	\$530,066
Government Funding														
Title I	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$148,184	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$148,184	\$148,204	(\$20)
Title II	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,607	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,607	\$2,259	\$5,348
Title III	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,456	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,456	\$0	\$1,456
Title IV	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,265	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,265	\$1,059	\$1,206
Head Start	\$0	\$0	\$845,246	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$845,246	\$570,895	\$274,350
State Bilingual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,300	\$0	\$0	\$6,300	\$0	\$6,300
PFA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$227,611	(\$227,611)
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Government Funding	\$0	\$0	\$845,246	\$0	\$148,184	\$7,607	\$1,456	\$2,265	\$6,300	\$0	\$0	\$1,011,058	\$950,029	\$61,029
Donations														
Individuals Donations	\$0	\$410,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$410,000	\$297,885	\$112,115
Corporate & Foundation Donations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Events	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Release from Restriction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Donations	\$0	\$410,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$410,000	\$297,885	\$112,115
Other Revenue														
Student Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,364	(\$1,364)
Other Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$32,349	(\$32,349)
In-Kind	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$33,713	(\$33,713)
REVENUE-TOTAL	\$0	\$410,000	\$845,246	\$0	\$148,184	\$7,607	\$1,456	\$2,265	\$6,300	\$714,254	\$2,836,175	\$4,971,486	\$4,301,990	\$669,497
EXPENSES														
Personnel - Salary	\$45,500	\$0	\$565,976	\$0	\$137,000	\$0	\$7,725	\$0	\$7,648	\$345,150	\$2,295,823	\$3,404,822	\$2,868,953	\$535,869
Personnel - Benefits	\$9,100	\$0	\$113,192	\$0	\$27,399	\$0	\$1,545	\$0	\$1,530	\$69,028	\$459,153	\$680,947	\$626,930	\$54,018
Direct Student Costs														
Classroom Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$3,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,250	\$15,000	\$21,949	(\$6,949)
Educational Materials	\$0	\$0	\$3,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,250	\$15,000	\$69,691	(\$54,691)
Instructional Equip & Technology	\$0	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$24,000	\$33,686	(\$9,686)
Transportation/field trips/student event	\$0	\$0	\$1,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,750	\$5,000	\$21,280	(\$16,280)
Consultants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$172,353	(\$172,353)
Parent Activities	\$0	\$0	\$3,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,500	\$143	\$3,357
Related Service Provides	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$119,000	\$119,000	\$103,000	\$16,000
Other Direct Student Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,940	(\$14,940)
Direct Student Costs	\$0	\$0	\$18,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$163,250	\$181,500	\$437,043	(\$255,543)
Office & Administration														
Office Supplies	\$1,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,000	\$10,000	\$14,623	(\$4,623)
Accounting & Audit	\$20,000	\$0	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$140,000	\$200,000	\$150,900	\$49,100
Legal	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$366	(\$366)
Payroll Fees	\$1,200	\$0	\$2,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,400	\$12,000	\$11,631	\$369
Phone & Internet	\$1,200	\$0	\$2,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,400	\$12,000	\$11,025	\$975
Printing & Copying	\$1,900	\$0	\$3,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,300	\$19,000	\$25,883	(\$6,883)
Consultants (Admin)	\$8,000	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$28,000	\$70,685	(\$42,685)
CPS Admin Fee	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$107,000	\$107,000	\$82,859	\$24,141
Office & Administration	\$33,300	\$0	\$70,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$284,100	\$388,000	\$367,973	\$20,027
Occupancy														
Rent	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Utilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Repairs & Maintenance	\$15,100	\$0	\$30,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$105,700	\$151,000	\$56,549	\$94,451
Building Insurance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Building Supplies	\$2,500	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,500	\$25,000	\$14,110	\$10,890
CPS Facility Fee	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Consultants (Security, Custodial)	\$1,900	\$0	\$3,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,300	\$19,000	\$18,375	\$625
Occupancy Other	\$1,600	\$0	\$3,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,200	\$16,000	\$18,838	(\$2,838)
Occupancy	\$21,100	\$0	\$42,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$147,700	\$211,000	\$107,871	\$103,129
Other Costs														
Professional Development	\$0	\$0	\$7,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$22,500	\$30,000	\$42,449	(\$12,449)
Staff Recruitment	\$0	\$0	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,800	\$2,400	\$3,073	(\$673)
Corporate Insurance	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$22,207	\$7,793
Student Recruitment	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,556	(\$4,556)
Interest Expense	\$4,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,400	\$6,006	(\$1,606)
Membership Dues & Subscriptions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Events	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,273	(\$10,273)
Depreciation	\$21,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$21,000	\$16,122	\$4,878
Capital Lease	\$800	\$0	\$1,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,600	\$8,000	\$4,222	\$3,778
Dues, Memberships, Subscription	\$0	\$0	\$625	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,875	\$2,500	\$3,322	(\$822)
Postage and Shipping	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$150	\$0	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,050	\$1,500	\$1,462	\$38
Other Expenses	\$1,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,000	\$10,000	\$74,443	(\$64,443)
Other Costs	\$57,350	\$0	\$13,625	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$39,825	\$110,800	\$189,134	(\$78,334)
EXPENSES-TOTAL	\$166,350	\$0	\$823,843	\$0	\$164,399	\$0	\$9,270	\$0	\$9,178	\$414,178	\$3,389,851	\$4,977,069	\$4,597,903	\$379,166
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$166,350)	\$410,000	\$21,403	\$0	(\$16,215)	\$7,607	(\$7,814)	\$2,265	(\$2,878)	\$300,076	(\$553,676)	(\$5,583)	(\$295,914)	\$290,331

Exhibit B



THE Montessori School
of Englewood | A Chicago Public
Charter School

Montessori in the Time of COVID



“Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch, what make you go beyond the norm.”
-Cicely Tyson

Introduction

“One single idea runs through every complex activity, and this single idea must be sought as the key to any general problem. There is also a secret key to the perfecting of the most varied types of movements. And this key is balance.”

Dr. Montessori, *The Discovery of the Child*, p. 91

Welcome to this new day in Montessori education, where, in response to a world pandemic, we were called to be adaptive and fully examine our Montessori philosophy and pedagogy. This guidebook is a consolidation of many developing resources for schools to facilitate a return to school under new conditions while continuing to offer adults and children a safe and vibrant Montessori learning experience.

We presume that the 2020-2021 school year will require a blend of remote and in-person learning. This document lays out the essential considerations for this new approach without compromising our method and while continuing to value and support all members of our community.

One of the cohering elements of this plan is a shared curriculum within grade-bands. Supporting students as they move fluidly between home and school requires teams to use the same framework, lessons, and learning platforms. This will accommodate long-term planning that will ensure student growth within this new way of learning. Our plans for each level will be available on our website by the start of the school year: <https://www.tmsoe.org/>

Proposed Scenarios

MSE has designed its 2020-21 School Year plan to meet the requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)¹ and CPS. We have also carefully considered the guidance of leaders in the Montessori community. Most important, we will continually tailor our plan to meet the needs of our own community - e.g, by evaluating scientific data relevant to our area, by surveying parents and staff, and making micro decisions based on the realities facing the families we serve.² We studied current program offerings and best practices in other regions and countries; however, because this is a pandemic, our present proposal is not set in stone. This is an evolving document and we will continue to follow ISBE's requirements and remain nimble.

MSE has prepared for numerous scenarios:

- A. A Fully Away plan: continue what we found to work during the spring of Distance Learning, with more focus on a coordinate curriculum and moving student learning forward
- B. Blended Learning or Full Time In-Person Instruction: to implement these models as smoothly as possible, we must answer three questions:

¹ ISBE non-negotiables include: (1) use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;(2) schools must prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;(3) social distancing be observed, as much as possible; (4) schools must conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and, (5) schools must increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection using the recommended products/ratios.

² MSE's COVID response must be guided by the reality that this health crisis [disproportionately affects the Black and Latinx population](#), and we must take extraordinary measures to create a safe environment for our families.

1. How do we prepare the physical environment in the school to minimize health risks?
 - Reduce student-teacher ratio
 - Increase student-space ratio
 - Decrease material redundancy (put away what we are not using)
 - Build in time for temperature screens, handwashing, and sanitizing of materials
2. Who do we need for staffing, and in what roles?
 - All hands on deck for transitions and cleaning
 - Keep cohorts together: student groups travel together, and adult-child cohorts are self-contained
 - A COVID-coordinator (Maggie Mikuzis) will oversee public health and logistical concerns in partnership with ISBE
3. When do children and families come to school, and how?
 - Prioritize younger children's attendance at school
 - To date, K-5th grade students will attend 5 days/week in groups no larger than 15 students
 - 6th - 8th grade students follow a blended plan: attend school in smaller groups for 2 days of live instruction (Monday-Tuesday or Thursday-Friday), and work with teachers online the other days of the week.
 - All families will be offered a full-time remote learning option; MSE will partner with [NSSI](#) as it rolls out its fall curriculum for distance learning.

For detailed considerations for reopening, see [MSE checklist for reopening](#).

Logistics

“Especially at the beginning of life must we, therefore, make the environment as interesting and attractive as we can. The child, as we have seen, passes through successive phases of development and in each of these his surroundings have an important - though different - part to play.”

-- Dr. Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*, p. 88

Daily Practices

One of the most significant considerations for this time is the health and safety of the community. As made clear in the briefing from the [Montessori Public Policy Initiative](#) there are many unique considerations for Montessori schools returning to the classroom. We have identified five daily practices essential to a safe return:

Five Daily Practices of return:

Screening each day

Together we can do it

Always have a face covering

Necessary hygiene

Distancing

Screening each day

In the past, it was not uncommon for adults to come to work at school sick or for children to arrive at school sick. Runny noses or mild coughs were par for the course in a typical school day. During this global health crisis, neither staff nor students can come to school sick. There must be a screening process that all employees and families complete each day. This screener can be paper, google form, or both.

The screening will ask these questions:

- Do you or anyone in your household have a fever?
- Do you or anyone in your household have a cough?
- Do you or anyone in your household have a sore throat?
- Do you or anyone in your household have shortness of breath?
- Do you or anyone in your household have loss of taste or smell?
- Do you or anyone in your household have nasal congestion or a runny nose?
- Do you or anyone in your household have a rash?
- Do you or anyone in your household have diarrhea or nausea?

Students and staff must have completed a questionnaire for that day - either paper or electronic - in order to enter the school. If a person answers “yes” to any of these questions, he or she must stay home from school - no exceptions. When used in [Mass General Hospital](#) this approach was able to drastically reduce the spread of the disease. [Staying home when sick](#) is a new responsibility to our community.

In addition to the questionnaire, adults and children will be screened each day at the door of the school. We anticipate this will slow the arrival process, but also the rate of infection. We are working to adjust start times to accommodate screening procedures and assign more adults to welcome children at the doors.

At the door:

- Daily temperature check (individuals with a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius may not enter the building)
- Hand sanitizer used by everyone (at least 70% alcohol)³
- Mask check to be sure it fits a child's face effectively

Isolation of and follow-up on symptomatic students

Students with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be isolated from others. MSE will designate a quarantine area and a staff person to care for students who become ill at school. We will also designate a bathroom to be used by anyone who becomes ill at school with COVID symptoms. A student who displays COVID symptoms during school hours will wait in the quarantine area, with a mask on, until he or she can be picked up.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or who are suspected of having COVID-19 infection should seek medical attention, self-isolate, and follow CDC guidelines related to recovery times and distancing. Individuals who have had close contact⁴ with someone positive (or suspected to be positive) for COVID-19 should isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days.

Adult Coverage

Intensive screening will prevent the spread of infection and we anticipate it will also require many more substitute staff. MSE is working on a protocol to ensure classroom coverage when teachers cannot report to work.

Response to a confirmed case of COVID-19

Students or staff returning following recovery from or exposure to COVID-19 should call to check in with the school administration before returning to school.

³ The [CDC recommends](#) using alcohol-based hand sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol.

⁴ "Close contact" means the individual was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected to have COVID-19, and remained within 6 feet of that person for 15 minutes or more.

MSE will close off any area(s) of the school used by a sick person and will reopen them only after proper cleaning and disinfection procedures are completed.⁵ The CDC recommends opening the windows in the area and waiting 24 hours to clean if feasible.

Together we can do it

If our efforts toward safety are going to work, our community must be fully informed about and invested in the daily practices of return. It will be important to have a strong communication plan and to solicit agreement from both staff and families with regard to changes. Creating a school culture that revolves around the needs of others in addition to oneself will mean it must become natural to stay home when unwell, and to accept reminders about safe practices like wearing masks. A strong school culture will support a smooth reentry; we all commit to learn this together and adapt as we go.

Always have a face covering

Everyone over the age of two entering the school building must have a face covering that fits over the mouth and nose and stays on without the use of hands. Face coverings should be washed at the end of the day.

MSE will provide clean reusable masks to each child; we need 10 masks per student to wash and store at school for daily use. Our adjusted school schedule allows time for laundering these masks, and we will create a rotation for the washing machine to ensure teachers at every level have adequate time to wash student masks weekly.

If special circumstances exist that prevent someone from wearing a mask, a doctor's note will be required to excuse any student or staff member from this requirement.

Necessary Hygiene

⁵ Disinfecting procedures include:

- All areas used by the sick person (offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment) will be cleaned
- space(s) will be vacuumed; with a HEPA filter if available.
- Before vacuuming, ensure the room is unoccupied and room fans and the HVAC system to the area will be shut off so particles escaping the vacuum do not circulate throughout the facility.

Hand washing is our strongest defense to the spread of illness and requires at least 20 seconds with soap. We will post pictures, diagrams, and songs that take at least 20 seconds to sing (for example, “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”). Our water faucets are timed to 20 seconds to remind children of the necessary time for adequate washing. We will also consider using hand-stamps for younger children to wash off hands so they can see when they’ve lathered and rinsed for long enough. We will offer hand sanitizer throughout the building where there is not close access to a sink.

Our teachers will prepare to teach these and other non-negotiables through [Grace and Courtesy lessons](#) at the beginning of the year.

Distancing

We will employ visual reminders to help children adapt to the amount of space required to maintain social distancing. Following the approach of grocery stores, we will mark spots on the floor in the hall for children to line up, and ask them to maintain that same distance as they walk down the hall. We recognize that this will take patience, practice, and more time for transitions. Measurement lessons to understand what “six feet” looks like will help children practice social distancing.

Lunch will take place in classrooms within small groups (*see level schedules*), rather than in a shared cafeteria, to ensure adequate social distancing. No children should ride elevators; no more than 3 adults should ride the elevator at one time.

Classroom Considerations

- **Space:** Classrooms will need to be organized to accommodate up to 15 children at a time. This will mean one chair per table with areas for floor work taped out or otherwise indicated. Every child will have an assigned space for work at least 6 feet from another student. Children may collaborate or converse about work but from a socially distant spot. Every child will have his or her own work mat that can be disinfected at the end of the school day. In addition, snack will now be a one-person activity, and we will offer only individually packaged snacks that do not

require utensils to lower the risk of cross-contamination. There will be a clear cleaning protocol between each student's snacktime.

- Routines and Transitions:

The following (and more) will need to be planned in advance and communicate dot children on their first day back:

- Arrival routine
 - Snack
 - Getting help
 - Working together
 - Lunch
 - Silent reading
 - Dismissal
- Supplies: Rather than setting out a shared supply of basic materials (paper, rulers, colored pencils), MSE will require students to use their own individual supplies:
 - Pencil box: pencils, hand sharpeners, colored pencils, rulers, scissors, glue sticks
 - Binder of paper or notebooks
 - Students should each plan to bring a water bottle - water fountains will be closed.
 - Cubbies and Lockers:
 - Cubbies and lockers will not be shared under any circumstances. Students will be allowed to use cubbies on a staggered basis; cubbies should be assigned and children dismissed to cubbies in an order that allows for social distancing. Cubbies and lockers will be cleaned at the end of each day.
 - Cleaning:

Classroom Cleaning

Although cleaning has always been an important element of the Montessori classroom, it will now become a critical and shared responsibility among adults and children.

- Primary: designate a table or shelf in the classroom where children place materials after use for cleaning. Adults disinfect materials and return them to shelves for a new learner to use.
- Elementary: After using a material, each user cleans the material - we will teach the proper way to clean various materials in the classroom.

Many Montessori materials are made of wood. We will refer to the cleaning recommendations from Montessori vendors for best practices. If using a wet solution (e.g., bleach), the materials must be dried immediately. Books in the classroom should be rotated out after single student use for 24 hours.

Building-wide cleaning procedures

More frequently cleaning and disinfection will be necessary to reduce exposure. MSE's custodial staff will increase their routine practices, but disinfection will be an "all staff" effort.

Frequently-touched surfaces like light switches, doors, benches, and bathrooms must undergo cleaning throughout the day. Tables used by students must be disinfected with an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution.

School-Wide Considerations

- Allow Primary and Elementary students (through 5th grade) to attend school every weekday, and create alternating schedules for 6th - 8th grades.
- Keep all classrooms at 50% capacity; do not allow student groups to mix.
 - Enrollment: calculate how many students will come to the school daily
 - Physical layout: what spaces in the building can be used for better space-ratio?
 - Staffing models: who on the team can affect the adult-child ratios?
- Use a mix of "person to person" and "zone coverage" for teaching. As mentioned above, children will remain in the same group of 10-15 students at all times, and should stay in the same physical location as much as possible.

Organization

“[Education]...requires the influence of sacred and deep things to move the spirit, and the new children of civilized humanity must be given a profound emotion and enthusiasm for the holy cause of humanity.”

-- Dr. Montessori, *To Educate the Human Potential*, p. 75

How we organize to return in the fall will ultimately determine the success of the school year for children and adults alike. Our goal is to explore options for a safe return that allows learners the greatest access to the Montessori prepared environment. Rather than what is easiest, our task is to hold the needs of the child at the center of every conversation and to imagine how the plan will impact all students -- from new three-year-olds, to children transitioning to elementary, middle school students applying to high school, and students who need extra support.

[Trillium Montessori](#) has published useful resources for bringing a Montessori lens to this work.

Formula for Calculating Time and Space

Consider how much time we will need to accommodate our communities arriving daily

Number of Children	Time to receive a daily temperature arrival screening	Subtotal time	Divided by number of entrances	Total time by entrance	Divided by number of staff People per entrance	New Total Time

How much space we will need to accommodate our communities arriving/departing daily

Space of largest entry points of school	How many spaces with 6-ft radii can be made here	Number of children	x Number of staff people per entrance

Organizing around Planes of Development

- First Plane Learners
 - *Order and routine* - honoring these characteristics by developing a routine young children can rely on will support any entry plan. Having the same adults greeting at the door each day, the same starting routine (e.g., the same song to sing together) will ease the transition back.
 - *Sensorial explorers* - Using time in school to emphasize the the sensorial curriculum and to allow for sensory experiences means not limiting the young child's need to touch everything. This will mean more cleaning.
 - *Concrete* - Coronavirus and germs are both abstract ideas that younger children will be seeking to understand. Giving [lessons](#) to make new protocols more concrete will help children follow them.
 - *Process-oriented and need for repetition* - young children are not concerned with the product and will happily wash the same clean table over and over again. Primary

teachers will support children's need for repetition and allow it to enhance care for the environment during this time.

- Second Plane Learners

- *Herd instinct and love of peers* - Elementary children need their community in order to thrive. Here are a few ideas that honor that:
 - Daily Zoom meetings of set community times (morning meeting, afternoon meeting - whenever the whole class is gathering) every day. Attending students are there in-person and children at home attend via Zoom. This way, the whole class has an opportunity to be together at least once a day.
 - Group work occurs within the guidelines of social distancing using the length of a work rug or rectangular table while children are encouraged to work safely together.
 - During only virtual learning offer a Zoom recess monitored by an adult for children to meet up and connect as well as Zoom rooms for open work times where children can collaborate.
- *Awareness of fairness and love of debate*
 - Anticipate and accept that elementary children will be keeping track of how this unfolds with a fairness radar. Partner with students to be solution-oriented as they uncover discrepancies. Given their sensitivity to what is just, they are best suited to help find answers that will likely improve the situation for everyone.
- *Product-oriented and love of research* - a stabilizing element for elementary children is exploring topics of interest and getting work done! Having something they can create a cover for and show goes a long way. Keeping this in mind, and having ideas, resources, and supplies available in spite of the pandemic, will help fuel learners and keep them engaged as they move between school and home.
- *Attraction to big work* - the bigger and more outlandish the project idea, the more appealing for elementary children. This is a prime opportunity to include Big Work as an ongoing part of the week. If children have projects going they will be able to continue working and learning fluidly between home and school.

More on meeting the needs of the second plane child in this article: [Building Distance Learning around the Psychological Characteristics of the Elementary Child](#)

- Third Plane Learners
 - *Self-expression* - Adolescents will continue to need opportunities to explore and express who they are and who they want to be. Art, music, poetry, and creative writing are vehicles to support this work.
 - *Morality* - Students will identify many questions of morality during this time, and current events create a natural place for research, discussion, and debate about all subjects from vaccines to voting in the midst of a global pandemic. Remembering and feeding this need to explore the moral issues of our time will lend vitality to the time spent, whether in-person or virtual.
 - *Valorization* - Service work is an important way for middle school students to make a contribution and feel valued. MSE's middle school team will plan to incorporate service-learning into its curriculum.

Communication

“So we must have interest first and then work with an intelligent purpose, work which is freely chosen by the individual.”

- Dr. Montessori, *The 1946 London Lectures*, p. 162

An important part of MSE is the trust we have built and will continue to build with our community. This is now critical to ensure full participation in screening and building a culture of honest talk (e.g., acknowledging opening that a child is sick but the parent must go to work or lose his or her job). These factors will greatly reduce the risk of transmission at MSE.

Our reopening plans also take into account the unique needs of our most vulnerable populations, including our English Learners and students with diverse learning needs. We are working on a plan to bring many of these students back into the classroom during all in-person instruction days, and we

remain committed to providing all children with the support and resources they will need to be successful during this challenging time.

Clear communication will result in stronger and more effective adoption of changes to our school procedures. Four important directions for communication include:

1. Stakeholders
2. Families
3. Staff
4. Children/Adolescents

Stakeholders

- District schools - coordinating with the district and communicating alterations to support the Montessori program will be a critical piece in designing a reentry that allows independent learning to continue. Because we do not use individual desks and typically work with shared materials, we will need to modify our practices more than many other neighborhood schools. We commit to proactively raise these issues with advocates in our district to support a stronger reopening.
- The Board - We will continue to communicate with our Board and involve Board members in our communication plan so that the plan is clear to all and the community can see that school leadership is working as a cohesive team.
- Families - Families will continue to be our partners in this coming year as children will likely move back and forth between learning in school and at home. We should communicate as closely with families as with staff. We will hold an orientation meeting to review the plan for the school year.

Potential Family Orientation Agenda:

Time	Topic	Details	Presenter
	Welcome & Introductions	Introduce each person on the leadership team and their role/responsibilities regarding reentry	Principal
	Overview of Reentry Plan	Outline each area in the guide and who will discuss	Principal
	Logistics	Introduce STAND	COVID coordinator

	Organization	Review school schedule	Assistant Principal
	Communication	Discuss weekly communication structures, on-going Family Engagement Calendar and opportunities for support	Family Engagement
	Curriculum	Roll out of year-long curriculum that teachers will follow, whether at school or virtually; discuss role of family	Team Leads
	Questions and Close		Principal

In order for families to serve as partners in the coming year they will need information and guidance. Setting up a weekly topic and meeting will support their understanding of the Montessori method as well as the unique elements of your school.

- **Staff:** When we first moved into distance learning it was in crisis mode. A pandemic was sweeping the globe and states were closing schools without a plan or any sense of the duration of the school closure. MSE did its best to respond to this directive by communicating with families, making packets, collecting plants and animals from the classrooms, and shifting into a phase one distance learning plan.

Once it became clear that school closure was not temporary, we are adjusted to a more consistent academic plan, rolling out digital platforms (e.g., Seesaw, Google Classroom) and striving to provide every household with internet access and technology. Levels developed their own protocol, and shifted to real-time digital connection with students.

Now we have a window to create a new plan - one that incorporates the best of what worked for our community, but also strengths the components that were not working well. Each level will develop a distance learning schedule and curriculum guide, balancing [fidelity with Montessori principles](#) with creative solutions to the challenges of remote teaching.

- **Children/Adolescents:** From the second plane up, children need clear and frequent communication so they know, understand and are prepared for the various ways they could expect to learn this school year. Our plan should be laid out as clearly for children as it is for parents so our students are empowered to own their learning and step responsibly into their

work. We will also need to review expectations for virtual work and virtual lessons. Just as we share norms in school, there will be school-wide expectations for the digital experience as well.

It will be critical to set the procedures and routines for distance learning at the start of the year. Level teams will create shared expectations and guidelines for learning at home, including, for example:

- No food
- No pets
- No toys
- Come dressed
- Sit up
- Bring tools you need to learn
- Chatbox use defined