

### **Pathfinder School Reopening Task Force:**

- COVID-19 Safety Coordinator: Maura Iorio, Sr. Director of Education
- COVID-19 Resource Person: Anne Koch, School Nurse (RN)
- Nichole Carney, Education Department Administrative Assistant

With approvals from:

- Paul Landers, Chief Executive Officer
- Dan Osborn, Corporate Compliance Officer

These plans have been made in collaboration with families, community members, and other school stakeholders. Included are options for in-person, hybrid, and virtual models. Although Pathfinder School's hope is to offer in-person special education and related services to students throughout the year, as circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic change, plans will need to be revisited.

All plans below are subject to change. And updates or modifications made will be communicated promptly to all school community members.

### **Health and Safety**

- Reopen three classrooms
  - Pre-Academic (6:1:2)
  - Life Skills II (8:1:2)
  - Pre-Vocational (12:1:2) \*No more than 10 students in this classroom
- Social Distance: Students' desks will be spaced with at least 6 feet of space between them; all desks will be facing the front of the classroom
- PPE: disposable and/or cloth masks will be made available to all staff; it will be mandatory for staff and visitors to wear masks; students will not be required to wear PPE, though they may choose to do so if medically able.
- Reopening plans have been made in consultation with local public school districts, students' families, Pathfinder Village's Committee of Senior Leadership, the Pathfinder Village Nursing Department, and with the support of our local department of health
- All reopening protocols and procedures will be mailed to students and parents; In addition, this document will be posted to Pathfinder School's website and will be available for review. All employees will be in-serviced on reopening protocols and procedures during our Conference Days; Signage will be put up on the front door and visibly throughout the school to inform visitors of these policies and to remind everyone of proper hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Should changes need to be made to the reopening plans, including but not limited to closing the school due to an uptick in local COVID-19 cases, students, families, and employees will be notified via phone. Pathfinder School will utilize phone, email, and social media to keep families and employees informed throughout the school year.
- Parents will receive a screening tool to utilize at home to monitor their children for symptoms, and to help determine when their children should stay home.
- The School Nurse (or trained staff in the case that the School Nurse is unavailable) will monitor

students' temperatures upon arrival at school; Should a student's temperature be 100° F or higher, the student will be taken to our designated Illness Room; Staff accompanying that student will be provided full PPE and the child's parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to come and pick their child up with instructions to follow up with their child's healthcare provider.

- Should a student become ill during the school day, the student will be sent to the School Nurse to be assessed.
- Visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors will be kept to a minimum; those required to visit will be thoroughly screened upon arrival by being asked designated questions regarding travel, symptoms of illness, and contact with people who have tested positive for COVID-19. Upon successful completion of screening questions, visitors will be asked to take their own temperatures to ensure they are below 100° F, wear a mask, and sanitize their hands before exiting the Main Office. Visitors' access to the school building will be restricted to ensure they do not have any unnecessary contact with staff and students beyond their reason for visiting.
- Social distancing will be encouraged as much as possible. Students will not come with students outside of their own classroom; Students' desks will be 6 feet apart; If students must be closer than 6 feet, approved physical barriers will be utilized; Staff will wear acceptable PPE at all times as it will be necessary for staff to be in close proximity to students for support and assistance. Students who are physically and medically able to wear masks may do so if they choose; staff will ensure these students receive mask breaks throughout the day.
- Special education teachers will be responsible for providing direct instruction to students in the areas of personal and respiratory hygiene. Parents/guardians who wish their children to participate in mask tolerance training may request further information from Pathfinder School's Behavior Analyst.
- Considerations and accommodations will be made for students and staff who are considered to be high risk on an individual basis; Students will continue to have the option of a Distance Learning Plan with virtual/remote instruction as agreed upon by the family and home school district.
- Pathfinder School will provide all staff, visitors, and students who so choose, with disposable masks. In addition, staff will be provided with options for gloves, face shields, goggles, and gowns as needed. PPE has been purchased and kept in supply through the Pathfinder Village Organization through trusted vendors.
- Should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Pathfinder School, the local health department will be contacted immediately for further guidance and instructions regarding closing, cleaning, and notifying families, employees, and visitors. For this reason, an accurate visitor log will be kept, as well as a daily record of student and employee attendance.
- **Please see Appendix A for Screening and Return to School Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure policies**
- The school will be cleaned and disinfected daily using safe and approved disinfecting products in accordance with CDC guidelines; detailed logs will be kept to ensure each space is properly cleaned; Items used by students (such as physical equipment, toys, mats, surfaces, etc.) will be disinfected after each use throughout the day using only products that have been deemed safe for use in a school setting.
- Pathfinder School will conduct the required school safety drills while utilizing social distancing and PPE.

- Pathfinder School does not run before or aftercare programs; this requirement does not apply to our program.
- The Senior Director of Education will act as the Pathfinder School COVID-19 safety coordinator to ensure continuous compliance with all aspects of the school’s reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or “new normal” levels.
- The School Nurse (RN) will act as the Pathfinder School COVID-19 resource person; responsibilities include, but are not limited to: being the main contact upon identification of positive COVID-19 cases and subsequent communications regarding these cases; ensuring there are adequate supplies of PPE; consulting on development and revision of Pathfinder School’s Reopening Plan.

## **Facilities**

- General Health and Safety Assurances
  - Please see above Health and Safety Assurances
  - Classrooms will have adequate square footage per student (guidelines recommend 50 square feet of space per student).
  - No non-classroom space will be utilized for instruction at this time.
  - Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed throughout the building for easy access.
  - All building spaces have access to adequate ventilation with options to open windows for increased air flow.
  - No major changes will be made to the school building; however—employee offices have been moved to ensure staff are not sharing offices that do not allow for proper social distancing; unnecessary items and furniture have been put into storage to create more space within classrooms; a room within the building has been repurposed as an “Illness Room” to ensure that there is a safe place for a student to be isolated from other students should he or she come to school with symptoms of COVID-19.
- Fire Code Compliance: At this time, no changes have been made to the school building which would require review by the Office of Facilities Planning; should changes be necessary in the future we will submit proposed changes to the OFP for review and approval.
- Doorways: No changes will be made to doorways
- Emergency Drills: Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills will still be performed as required; social distancing will be maintained throughout these drills.
- Inspections: No changes anticipated.
- Lead Testing: Testing will not be conducted during a period of school closure. It will only be conducted when the building is “normally occupied.” Pathfinder School has been open for summer program, as per the Governor’s Executive Order that enabled us to provide in-person services to children with significant special needs. Should our building be required to close for an extended period of time during the 2020-2021 school year, we will follow recommended procedures to ensure we provide safe and clean drinking water when school reopens. Parents have been encouraged to send their children in with personal water bottles from home as well.

## **Child Nutrition**

- Pathfinder School does not participate in the Child Nutrition Program.
- Parents have been encouraged to send in their child’s lunch from home to minimize points of contact between staff outside of the classroom (such as those preparing meals) and students; however:
  - Students continue to have the option to order a school lunch, which Pathfinder School offers to all students free of charge, regardless of socioeconomic background.
  - Lunches are prepared in Pathfinder Village’s Central Kitchen following strict health and safety guidelines; meals are individually packaged and delivered to the School daily via a no-contact delivery method.
  - Appropriate accommodations will be made in consideration of student’s with known food allergies.
  - Students will eat lunch in their classrooms, at their desks spaced 6 feet apart.
  - Students’ personal desk spaces will be disinfected before and after lunchtime.
  - Students, and staff, will wash their hands before and after lunchtime.
  - Students, and staff, will not be permitted to share food items.
  - Staff will wear PPE when assisting students with mealtime; staff will be given space away from students to remove their own PPE to eat their lunch at a separate designated time.

## **Transportation**

- Pathfinder School Day Students are transported daily by their home school district; parents have been notified that they must contact their child’s home school district to learn more about the specific guidelines and protocols that will be in place when their child is being transported to and from Pathfinder School.
- Pathfinder School Residential Students live on campus; they walk to and from School with staff support.
- Pathfinder School has several DOT certified vehicles for use during the school day to transport students to and from community-based learning activities, job exploration opportunities, and other field trip experiences. These outings have been put on hold. At this time, no student will be transported via Pathfinder vehicles during the school day. This plan will be revisited frequently and adjusted as needed.

### **Social Emotional Well-Being**

- Pathfinder School does not have a certified school counselor
- Pathfinder School’s Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) will monitor the social/emotional well-being of students in conjunction with teachers, therapists, and the school nurse.
- Pathfinder School’s BCBA will provide employees with training on how to talk with and support students regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency, including the development of coping skills and resiliency skills.
- Students will be provided with social stories to help prepare them for all the changes they will encounter when school reopens.
- Additional resources will be made available to students and families upon request, in collaboration with students’ home school districts.

### **School Schedules**

- Student drop-off will be between 8:00am and 8:30am; student pick-up will be between 2:00pm and 2:30pm.
- Students receiving Related Services at the Group level will be grouped with students from their own classroom as much as possible.
- Related Service schedules will be staggered as much as possible to allow for cleaning of equipment in between sessions.
- A detailed record of student schedules will be maintained should this information be needed for contact tracing.

### **Budget and Fiscal Matters**

- Not applicable to Pathfinder School, though adjustments may be needed to ensure we have enough funds allocated for PPE and disinfectant.

### **Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism**

- Student and employee attendance is documented daily
- Students' attendance is reported to their home school districts on a monthly basis
- Should a student or employee be absent for an unknown reason, the School Nurse, Administrative Assistant, or Sr. Director of Education will contact the family, or employee, to determine if the absence is due to illness.
- Should it be determined or reported that a student or employee is absent due to illness, Pathfinder School Screening and Return to School protocols [Appendix A] will be implemented; The COVID-19 Resource Person (School Nurse) and/or the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator (Senior Director of Education) will follow-up with families and employees daily to ensure all protocols are being followed, and to determine when it is safe for the student/employee to return to school.
- If there is a risk of exposure to COVID-19, the local department of health will be contacted immediately for guidance.
- For students participating in virtual learning, either by parent choice or due to a need to convert to Pathfinder School's hybrid or virtual-only plans, engagement and active participation will be expected each school day. This will be documented through:
  - Attendance during scheduled virtual web-based sessions with teachers, therapists, or other designated school personnel.
  - Submission of completed electronic assignments via Google Classroom
  - Phone or email contact with a designated school personnel
  - If Pathfinder School is unable to verify student engagement and active participation in virtual learning through any of these means, or if parents have not notified the school that their child is unable to participate for the day due to illness or another legal reason, students may be documented as being illegally absent

### **Technology and Connectivity**

- Parents will be surveyed to determine the technology and internet available in their home
- Should students be participating in virtual/remote learning, every effort will be made to ensure students have the tools and equipment needed in collaboration with students' home school district
- Teachers and therapists will provide instruction in an alternative format (to be mailed home, or delivered by designated school personnel) that does not require technology or internet access upon request from the parent

## Teaching and Learning

- All plans below (in-person, hybrid, and virtual-only) will provide students with substantive interaction with teachers, therapists, and other designated school personnel to the greatest extent feasible; all models will provide students with accessible, appropriate, and individualized instruction in accordance with students' Individualized Education Plans, State Standards, including feedback and support from teachers. To the greatest extent possible, teachers, therapists, and other designated school personnel will continue to collect data for progress monitoring as per students' Individualized Education Plan to the greatest extent possible. In the case of virtual-only learning, parent reporting will be an integral component in progress monitoring.
- In-person instruction: As per Health & Safety protocols above
- Hybrid: There may come a point in the school year where a high number of staff are out due to being COVID-19 positive and/or coming into direct contact with others who are, or are suspected to be, COVID-19 positive. Should staff shortage become a concern to the point where in-person instruction cannot be implemented safely, Pathfinder School will consider a hybrid model. In this case:
  - Half of the students will attend school Mondays and Tuesdays; the other half of the enrolled students will attend school Thursdays and Fridays.
  - The school building will be closed on Wednesday for thorough cleaning, and to provide teachers and therapists with time to prepare and implement virtual learning plans.
  - On the days students are not attending in-person, students will engage in their individualized Virtual Learning Plans, to be developed by their Pathfinder School education team at the start of the 2020-2021 school year.
- Remote: In the case that Pathfinder School is directed to close due to COVID-19 concerns, we will switch to our Virtual Learning Plans. Teachers and therapists will develop students' individualized Virtual Learning Plans at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. These plans will provide students and families with options for web-based sessions, engagement activities posted to Google Classroom, and supplemental materials/equipment mailed or delivered to the home. All instruction will be aligned with students' Individualized Education Plans to the greatest extent possible.
- **\*For students who are considered to be high risk, Pathfinder School will continue to offer families the option of Virtual Learning Plans, meaning that these students would not attend Pathfinder School in-person, but would continue to receive their school services remotely.**
- Pathfinder School does not provide Early Learning services; this section is not applicable.
- Students and families will be provided with contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses, of all members of their child's educational team to ensure uninterrupted communication throughout the school year.

## Career and Technical Education

- Pathfinder School does not provide Career and Technical Education services; this section is not applicable.

### **Athletics and Extracurricular Activities**

- Pathfinder School does not currently offer Athletics and Extracurricular Activities; this section is not applicable.

### **Special Education**

- Pathfinder School exclusively provides services to students with special needs, including students with classifications of Autism, Intellectual Disability, and Multiple Disabilities. All plans and protocols throughout this Reopening Document are in consideration of students' Individualized Education Plans, with every effort to provide the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology required to meet each student's needs.
- Pathfinder School will collaborate with each student's CSE to ensure programming meets all requirements of FAPE.
- Communication will be provided in families' preferred language or mode of communication.

### **Bilingual Education and World Languages**

- Pathfinder School does not currently provide services to any students identified as being English Language Learners. This section will continue to be reassessed based on students enrolled.

### **Staffing**

- Professional staff certification requirements will remain unchanged.
- All staff will be thoroughly trained on COVID-19 protocols and the use of PPE.
- We will minimize the sharing of staff between classrooms to lower points of contact.

### **Teacher and Principal Evaluation System**

- As a private school, Pathfinder School is not required to implement APPR plans. All employees are evaluated annually; this will remain unchanged.
- Teaching certification requirements will remain unchanged; all teaching staff at Pathfinder School will be required to hold valid NYS teaching certificates.

### **Student Teaching**

- No student teachers are currently scheduled to participate in a student teacher education program at Pathfinder School; Applicants will continue to be welcomed and will be considered on an individual basis.



## **APPENDIX A**

### Screening for COVID-19 and Return to School following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure

#### Home Screening:

Students must stay home from school for any of the following:

- 1) symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever or temperature of 100.0F or greater, cough, or shortness of breath, within the past 14 days;
- 2) tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 test in the past 14 days;
- 3) close or proximate contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- 4) travel out of the country or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

Parents must immediately notify the school whenever any of the above criteria are met.

If any of the criteria in #1-3 are met, the student must be evaluated by a health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) and obtain documentation from the provider stating they are clear to return to school.

#### In-School Monitoring:

The New York State Department of Health Guidelines requires that, if the student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the student must be separated, and parents will be contacted to pick up their child immediately and given instructions to contact their health care provider for follow-up and evaluation.

Return to School After Illness or Exposure to COVID-19: Any student who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure must be evaluated by a health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) and obtain documentation from the provider stating they are clear to return to school.

#### **1) Health care Provider does not diagnose COVID-19.**

If after the student has been evaluated by a healthcare provider and is not diagnosed with COVID-19, the student can return to school when:

- a) They have been fever-free without the use of fever reducing medications and they have felt well for 24 hours; or,
- b) They have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

**2) Health care provider diagnosis is positive for COVID-19.**

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- a) It has been at least 10 days since the individual first had symptoms;
- b) It has been at least 3 days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
- c) It has been at least 3 days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

**3) Student has been exposed to COVID-19:**

If the student has COVID-19 symptoms and close contact with a person with COVID-19, the student may return to school after at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms.

If the student has not had COVID-19 symptoms but has had close contact with a person with COVID-19, the student may return to school after isolating for 14 days.