



## Kessler Center Re-opening School Following COVID-19 Closure March 5, 2021

This document was prepared with the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NYS Department of Health, NYS Education Department, and other agencies. Updates may be added. Health and safety of students, staff, and families is the top priority.

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The COVID-19 Virus is believed to spread from person to person, primarily through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus is also believed to be spread by people touching surfaces that contain droplets and then touching their own eyes, mouth, or nose. This plan represents an attempt to mitigate risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus within the school community while providing continuity of learning for the unique students enrolled in The Kessler Center.

# KESSLER CENTER SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES RISKS CONSIDERED IN THE CREATION OF THIS PLAN

Characteristics and Needs of Student Population  
Staffing  
Sporting Events  
Field Trips  
In School Gatherings  
Cafeteria Usage  
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## General Re-Opening Steps After Each Closure

- Communicate with state and local authorities to obtain guidance on re-opening
- Assess if there is sufficient staff to carry out school operations
- Review and modify policies based on current guidance
- Review and Update School Safety Plan
- Post signage on social distancing, hand washing, visitor policy, and cleaning
- Update current emergency contact information for local health and safety authorities
- Ensure infection control protocols are in place for school operations
  - Ensure sanitary conditions are maintained across the campus
  - All staff are trained in exposure control
  - Social distancing requirements are in place and followed by staff who are in the building
  - Social distancing and mask guidelines are communicated to staff and families
  - Food service operations follow COVID-19 prevention standards
- Equipment and supplies needed (30 Day Supply)
  - Cleaners and Sanitization chemicals
  - Hand soap and paper towels
  - Face masks and shields
  - Gloves
  - Thermometers
  - Hand sanitizer in all required locations
  - Containers to provide individualized material supplies to students
- Instructional Planning- Teachers are able to transition students between hybrid distance learning and in school learning as needed.

## Health Education and Communication

- Each family will receive a handbook outlining the expectations of pre-screening their child and monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms, school re-entry protocols, and updated health policies, school cleaning protocols, and resources
- One-call now and News Station access will be up to date and used to communicate school closures
- District busing contact list will be up to date
- Staff and families will receive information on wearing PPE
- Staff will be trained on how to address close contact interactions with students as part of everyday job tasks
- Substitute staff must be trained in procedures
- Staff, students, and families will notify the school nurse or an administrator to self-report symptoms.
- Administrators will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately in the event of a possible case of COVID-19 exposure while maintaining confidentiality.

## STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

- Is additional staff required? Is there an adequate supply of substitute backup staff to ensure safe operations?
  - Custodial Staff substitutes and additional trained staff in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19
- Who on the HR team will assist with staffing issues related to COVID-19?

## STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Continue to regularly inform employees of company mental health supports available and establish a culture in which staff access these supports.

Continue to offer monthly wellness activities

- Anticipate potential staff issues and emotional reactions and plan for additional staffing as a backup in the event that staff are unable to perform duties

## TRAINING TOPICS FOR STAFF

- COVID-19 Symptoms and Transmission
- Maintaining a strong immune system
- Safety practices, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, social distancing
- Supporting colleagues in maintaining personal safety during behavioral crises
- Employer and employee responsibilities
- PPE Use Per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.17
- Use of face masks for staff and students (cloth vs. disposable, donning/doffing)

- Use of face shields/ students with disabilities that prevent use
- Use of student materials
- Use of shared equipment
- Cleaning and Disinfection responsibilities
- Signage and labeling
- Altered work practices during COVID-19
- Pre-return to work trainings (protocols)

## SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE WORKPLACE PROTOCOL

- Restrooms, lunch areas, refrigerators, microwaves
- Office desks will be at least 6 feet apart
- Staff will attempt to maintain social distance of 6 feet when practicable
- Planning of activities will reflect attempts at social distancing
- Hallway traffic will be one way to the extent possible

## ISOLATION PROTOCOL

- Isolation protocol for employees who become ill at work
- Provide training on the Positive Screen Isolation Protocol
- School nurse and administrator will manage isolation protocol
- Staff must indicate emergency contact to transport them home or to a healthcare facility in the event they cannot transport themselves.
- Staff may not return to the campus until they have met DOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.

## TRACING AND TRACKING

- The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will communicate with the local and state agencies as required.
- A log will be maintained and kept on site of every person who has visited the facility excluding deliveries that have been performed with contactless means or that have entered solely into the initial front entry area using PPE.

## COVID-19 FEDERAL AND STATE LEAVE LAWS AND MEDICAL ACCOMMODATIONS

- Post COVID-19 federal and state laws and leave notification expectations on HR board and FEDCAP employee portals
- Medical Accommodations Under ADA and COVID-19
  - How does disability create limitation?
  - How will accommodation address the limitation?
  - Is there another accommodation that will address the request?
  - How will the accommodation allow the employee to continue to perform the essential function of their job?
  - Is the requested accommodation reasonable or will it create an undue hardship?

- During the accommodation process, actions taken under guidance from CDC, DOH, or any other state or federal agency will be documented with decision making steps.

## BUILDING PROCEDURES

### HEALTH SCREENINGS

NYSED guidance requires mandatory health screenings to include the following:

- Temperature checks of all entrants to the building
- Health screening questions
- COVID-19 and high risk travel exposure questionnaire

All faculty, staff, visitors, and students are expected to pre-screen themselves prior to entering the school grounds. Individuals who fail to pass the self-screening may not enter the building. Upon entry, individuals who passed a home self-screening will be screened and asked to sign an affirmation of health prior to entering common areas.

A COVID-19 compliance safety officer will monitor this process and will be responsible for communication between staff, families, and local health agencies as required.

### CLASSROOMS

- Social distancing of students and staff
- Hold classes outside as much as possible
- Have student walks and breaks outside as much as possible
- Limit mixing of students
- Rearrange classroom furniture to 6 feet apart
- Open windows to ventilate the building before and after students arrive
- Keep windows open when possible
- Avoid sharing of supplies
- Keep supplies in containers
- Teachers will take home personal supplies that they are not using
- Lockers will be cleaned daily by classroom staff
- Hand sanitizer and tissues will be available
- Handwashing routines will be taught and practiced frequently
- Teach non-touch friendship communication (no fist bumps, etc.)
- All unholstered furnishings will be removed
- Classroom surfaces should be free from items that cannot be sanitized.
- Classrooms should contain only items needed for safe and effective instruction.
- Electronics must be sanitized between use by different individuals.
- Classroom staff are responsible for ensuring that all surfaces are washed and all items put away prior to leaving for the day. All attempts should be made to clean throughout the day as well.

### CAFETERIA

- Stagger meal times so that no more than 12 students are present at a time.

- Cafeteria will be separated into quadrants and students will be assigned seating areas.
- No formation of lines
- All students must be at least 6 feet apart
- Staff should social distance as practicable
- Non classroom staff may enter cafeteria after student lunch sessions
- All snack food will be containerized and delivered to the classrooms

## FOOD AND DRINKING WATER

- Staff must be given time to eat and drink in private without masks on.
- Staff water coolers will be changed out by the custodian and sanitized between uses.
- Students will be provided with cups or bottles of water.
- Snacks and cooking group items must not be touched without gloves by individuals other than those consuming the items.
- Anyone preparing food that will be consumed by others must wear a mask.

## GENERAL PROGRAMMING

- Programming will follow current recommended guidelines for participant numbers and personal spacing
- Off campus programming decisions will be based on guidance from CDC and other agencies
- Cleaning must occur between student hygiene activities
- Limit student use of hallways for walks and programming-use the outdoors when practicable.
- Playground use will follow CDC and local guidelines. Students should wash hands before and after using playground equipment.

## MASK WEARING

- All persons entering the building must wear a mask. Students who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons or due to an inability to tolerate the mask or an inability to remove the mask themselves will not be required to wear masks. (Parents must have a physician complete the “Mask Wearing Exemption” form.) No student will be denied entry to in-person instruction due to an inability to wear a mask. Students will be taught how to wear a mask and desensitization strategies will be utilized with students who experience difficulty. Parents may request for mask wearing and excusal from mask wearing to be addressed in the IEP. All students and staff will have an opportunity for regular mask breaks that will be held in a socially distanced manner.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- Hand sanitizer should be applied upon entry to building
- All individuals will be screened upon entry with a no touch thermometer. Thermometer will be disinfected after each use. (Screening questions answered, temperature and symptom check)
- Staff may not enter the building if sick or showing signs of sickness prior to shift.

- Parent drop-offs of students should be brief. Parents may not enter the building beyond the front entryway. Under no circumstances are parents to be allowed into any door other than the front door of the school which faces Rogers Parkway.

## SCHOOL VISITORS

- Nonessential visitors will not be allowed entry to the school
- Parent conferences will occur via Zoom or telephone
- All visitors must follow the screening and social distancing protocols and wear a mask.
- Pens will be sanitized between uses at sign in sheets
- All maintenance and repair visitors must be screened and provide their contact information.
- All visitors must agree to report the school any illness contracted within 5 days of their visit.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

- Personal items should be labeled and kept in separate bags in staff lockers.
- During COVID-19, students may not bring nonessential personal items to school.

## Instructional Program Considerations

When possible, in person instruction is the preferred model. Families may opt for remote learning only. Because of social distancing requirements and the high number of students who are unable to sustain mask wearing due to disabilities, class size may be reduced. The school will adopt an alternating model of in-person and remote hybrid instruction based on student/family need and school resource capacity. In general, the student population of the Kessler Center is not able to access synchronous remote instruction for extended periods of time due to unique learning and behavioral characteristics. Parents and caregivers at home and in the residential program will need to support students in working towards home learning goals in partnership with teachers, related service staff, and the school Principal. Teachers, related service providers, and the school Principal will be available for support and problem solving.

## EQUITY

Whether students are learning at home or face to face, students will be given opportunities to engage in learning activities designed to promote growth in identified learning standards and IEP goals.

Teachers and related service providers will balance high expectations for learning with an understanding of the home supports available in each student home. Teachers and related service providers will be available for consultations with families each week.

Families will be expected to provide evidence of student engagement in a variety of ways. These many include returning assignments, taking photos, or by completing home learning checklists.

## ATTENDANCE

The Kessler Center is an active partner with families in ensuring that students have access to education. During periods of hybrid distance learning, families must enter daily attendance by logging into Class Dojo, having their child participate in learning via Zoom, or by contacting the teacher to indicate that they are engaging in learning.

## HYBRID DISTANCE LEARNING

- Any student who is unable to attend school due to COVID-19 symptoms, illness, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 will receive personalized hybrid distance learning that may be a combination of synchronous distance learning via Zoom or the telephone, differentiated learning packets, and functional and work based learning hands- on skills practiced in their home setting under the guidance of their caregivers. This program of learning will include social-emotional learning and learning designed to increase the functional communication of each student.
- The entire school program may, at any time, due to COVID-19 concerns, move into the hybrid distance learning model.
- Parents may access parts of the instructional program using Class Dojo. Class Dojo will be used to allow parents to communicate easily with teachers and related service providers.
- Students may submit work using the Class Dojo features or via email.
- All attempts will be made to ensure equity with regard to device access. Families who do not have access to broadband will be provided with instruction using other resources.
- Teachers and related service providers will have one week of distance learning ready to send home with students in the event that a school closure occurs.
- Teachers and related service providers will work with families within 24 hours of a school closure to set up synchronous learning sessions when practicable.

## DOCUMENTATION OF LEARNING

Teachers and related service providers will document the programs and services offered and provided as well as communication with parents regardless of the learning model. Documentation will include



- Quarterly progress notes in IEP Direct/Frontline-teachers and parents/guardians will collaborate to obtain the information for the report.
- Goal progress monitoring per student IEP

## COMMUNICATION

- During times of distance learning, teachers will contact families at least once a week. Teachers will contact families during learning days if a family has not checked in for learning using the aforementioned procedures.
- Frequent and timely communication will occur via multiple means
- School reopening communication will be provided in the home language
- The Kessler Center will communicate with staff, district CSE chairpersons, district transportation providers, parents, community stakeholders, 853 Coalition, Community Partners including the Golisano Autism Center, and New York State Department of Education representatives, and the Monroe County Department of Public Health
- The school reopening plan was presented to families during 3 community Zoom meetings and through a digital newsletter. A copy will be mailed to each family.
- This plan will be updated frequently and made available on the following website:

<https://www.easterseals.com/newyork/our-programs/educational-services/the-kessler-center.html>

## PARENT TRAINING

- Parents may contact their child's teacher to request training in Zoom, Class Dojo, and how to work at home with their child. The principal will coordinate requested parent training.

## TEAM MEETINGS

- Regularly scheduled meetings such as IEP meetings, Clinical Team Meetings, and staff meetings will occur. Parents will be invited to participate remotely in IEP meetings and other meetings.

## DEVICES AND CONNECTIVITY

- The school may issue IPADS, MP3 players, or other devices to assist in learning and teaching. These remain the property of the Kessler Center and must be returned to school upon re-opening or when requested.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION, YOGA, RELATED SERVICES, SENSORY AREAS

- Lesson design and equipment selection and care will include COVID-19 safety considerations and cleaning procedures.
- Social Distancing will be at the recommended 12 feet between participants

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- All classrooms will be provided with soaps, bleach-water, and toweling for cleaning. Surfaces should be washed and sanitized throughout the day as students use them when possible.
- NYC DEC and EPA registered cleaners will be utilized.
- Current cleaning and disinfecting protocols as recommended by the CDC and NYSED will be utilized. Staff and custodial staff will follow directions on each product.
- Cleaning products will be kept out of the reach of students.
- A record of each cleaning product utilized will be kept in the front office.
- Cleaning records will be kept in the front office. It is the responsibility of the school custodian to complete and sign the cleaning record each day.
- The record includes classroom cleaning, restrooms, common areas, offices, and athletic areas.
- A school administrator will review the log daily.
- A two- month supply of cleaning products will be kept in the school.

## TRANSPORTATION

The school will work with each district to coordinate transportation. Individual district protocols will determine bus procedures.

- Parents/guardians must home screen their child before escorting their child to the bus.
- Parents will contact districts to request transportation if they are not transporting their child to school.
- Staff will meet cars in front of the school during drop off and pick up.

## SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

- Students will continue to have regular instruction on how to respond to evacuation and lockdowns. Drills will be conducted according to the existing statutory schedule. In the event of an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown, social distancing may not be the first priority.
- Modification to drill procedures will include having staggered drills with small numbers of students and providing instruction on how to lockdown in an area without hiding close to others.

## BUDGET AND FISCAL IMPACT

- Supplies related to COVID-19 prevention will be acquired by donation from community stakeholders to the extent possible.

## PHASE-IN MODEL FOR SCHOOL RE-ENTRY

The Kessler Center will be responsive to the needs of families and the school community and will follow the reopening formulas described by Governor Cuomo with regards to infection rates. The Kessler Center will work to provide in-person learning when it is safe to do so.

### April

The Kessler Center has partnered with Monroe County Department of Health and Upstate Pharmacy in order to be able to offer COVID-19 testing when required as determined by the Governor's determination of COVID-19 color zones.

At this time, the Kessler Center plans to return to Hybrid In-Person Instruction for Residential Students in Cohort B on April 8. These students will attend school in person 2 days a week on Thursday and Friday. Day students in both cohorts will return the week of April 19, 2021. Students in cohort A will attend in person on Mondays and Tuesdays.

The Kessler Center will return to previous phases or close when necessary as determined by school staffing data, notification from the DOH, Governor executive order, or any determination of unsafe conditions based on internal school data.

### COHORTS

The student population is divided into 3 cohorts, A, B, and C. Initially, Cohort B will attend in person learning for two days (Thursday/Friday) and remote education/tele-practice for three days. Cohort A will continue distance learning. Beginning March 1st, students in Cohort A may receive related services in person, by appointment until Cohort A returns for full in-person instruction. Staff training, team meetings, instructional planning and preparation, remote learning, tele-practice, and deep cleaning will be conducted on Wednesdays. Student days in school will increase as the Kessler Center successfully moves through the phases.

Cohort C consists of students who will participate in distance learning only as requested by the parent. Parents may opt out of in-person learning due to underlying health conditions of their child or other factors. Parents may opt to have their child return to in-person learning at quarterly intervals following the school calendar unless the school is undergoing a closure.

### MOVING BETWEEN PHASES

A team consisting of Kessler Center administrators, the Easterseals New York regional director, and other professionals within the organization will assess and determine the safest phase of re-opening regularly by analyzing data on the health of the school community, staff attendance, and the COVID-19 infection rates in the region.

**CRITERIA FOR ADVANCING TO THE NEXT PHASE** The Kessler Center serves students who may exhibit mask wearing intolerance, inability to social distance, unpredictable behavioral dysregulation, and dispersal of bodily fluids and solids into the environment. These unique characteristics will be considered when

making a determination of whether to move into the next phase. All staff have the potential to support students and colleagues at any time. For this reason, a conservative approach will be used to ensure the safety of the school community as most staff have the potential for close contact with any student.

Phase 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sept. 9- April 7 2021	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning

**Data analysis will occur March 19th to determine readiness for Phase 2**

Phase 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
April 8 to April 16th	Cohorts, A, B, C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C Remote Learning	Cohorts A,B,C, Remote Learning	Cohort B Residential in- person	Cohort B Residential in- person

**Data analysis will occur April 8 to determine readiness for Phase 3.**

Phase 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
In-person April 19	Cohort A	Cohort A	Remote A,B,C	Cohort B	Cohort B
Remote Learning	Cohort C	Cohort C	Cohort C	Cohort C	Cohort C

**Cohorts A and B will attend in person M-F for the Extended School Year session if circumstances allow for this.**

## Department of Public Health Monroe County

### Frequently asked questions COVID-19 in K-12 Schools

([https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/health/coronavirus/2020.08.24%20COVID 19%20FAQ%20schools.v3.pdf](https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/health/coronavirus/2020.08.24%20COVID%2019%20FAQ%20schools.v3.pdf))

### NYSDOH COVID-19 Pre-K to Gr 12 COVID-19 Toolkit (In-Person Decision Making Flowcharts)

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/02/>

#### nysdoh\_prekgr12\_toolkit\_update-020121.pdf

- Positive Screening:
- Fever, chills • Shortness of breath • Sore throat • Loss of taste or smell • Headache • Cough
  - Nasal congestion • Runny Nose, Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea • Fatigue • Muscle or body aches

Student will remain or be sent home and referred to family's health care provider.

Alternative or No Diagnosis To return to school, student must be symptom free and obtain: 1. An evaluation document from health care provider. 2. A lab-confirmed negative COVID-19 test result

#### Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Test Result

The MCDPH will place student in isolation, which lasts a minimum of 10 days. Student can return to school after being released from isolation by the MCDPH.

(<https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/health/coronavirus/2020.08.24%20FLOWCHART%20-%20Student%20Screens%20Positive.pdf>)

#### Department of Public Health Quarantine Flowchart:

<https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/health/coronavirus/2020.08.24%20FLOWCHART%20-%20Student%20Placed%20in%20MQ.pdf>

#### Face Mask Requirement for School Attendance Medical Exemption Statement for Children 2-18 Years of Age

<https://www.monroecounty.gov/files/health/coronavirus/Face%20Mask%20%20Requirement%20%20child%20%202%20-%2018.pdf>

## **Screening Questions for Families to Use Daily Prior to Sending Child to School**

**Parents: Please complete this short check each morning and report your child's information to the school nurse.**

### **SECTION 1: Symptoms**

If your child has any of the following symptoms, that indicates a possible illness that may decrease the student's ability to learn and also puts them at risk for spreading illness to others. Please check your child for these symptoms:

Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth

Sore throat

New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)

Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain

New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

### **SECTION 2: Close Contact/Potential Exposure**

Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19

Traveled to or lived in an area where the local, Tribal, territorial, or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases as described in the Community Mitigation Framework

Live in areas of high community transmission (as described in the Community Mitigation Framework) while the school remains open.

Please keep your child at home if you answered "Yes" to any of these questions.

We encourage you to contact your child's physician.

