



School Reopening Plan 2020-2021

Introduction

On August 7, 2020, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that schools in New York can reopen for in-person schooling in September if COVID-19 infection rates stay at 5%, over a two-week period, in a given region. Determinations will be made by region about opening and closing schools as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. While schools have been instructed to prioritize efforts to return all students to in-person instruction, many schools are also planning for remote/distance learning, as well as a model that combines in-person instruction and remote learning.

At this time, The Shield plans to start the September 2020-2021 school year using a remote only model, as we continue to prepare our physical environments for the safest possible return to on-site learning. The Shield has taken the necessary steps to establish a remote learning platform to ensure continuity of instruction for all of our students. The following plan also outlines the in-person reopening of schools for the 2020-21 school year, including protocols and procedures, for both our Bronx and Flushing school locations.

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is the top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to school buildings. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

It is possible that The Shield may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to updated recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies and/or stay-at-home orders from the Governor. The level of infection, the spread of the virus, and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of the decision-making process. Dr. Susan Provenzano, Executive Director and Dr. Roberta Donin, Medical Director will serve as The Shield's COVID-19 Coordinators. They will work closely with the local health department and will serve as a central contact for schools, stakeholders, families, staff and other school community members and will ensure the schools are in compliance and following the best practices per local, state, and federal guidelines.

The closing of schools in March 2020 had a profound impact on The Shield community. This impact will continue to be felt through the 2020-2021 school year. While no one can predict all of the challenges that may arise, The Shield has developed a plan for the safe and orderly return to school for students and staff.

The Guiding Principles for The Shield's Reopening of schools are:

1. The health, safety, and security of our students and staff is paramount in the successful reopening of our schools.
2. It is critical to have strategies, support, and communication with students, families, and staff members for each phase of recovery.
3. Due to the loss of in-person instruction last year, as a result of COVID-19, it is necessary to deliver a program that ensures the successful growth of our students in the 2020-2021 school year.
4. It is necessary to maintain a collaborative relationship with parents/guardians and the school community.



I. Health and Safety

The Shield's Reopening Plan is based on SED guidance and recommendations from the DOH and CDC for ensuring safe and healthy learning and working environments. The Shield is collaborating with medical professionals, union representatives, and the Interagency Council and its members to establish appropriate guidelines for school operations in 2020-2021. All decisions about how schools reopen for in-person learning, as well as decisions about any future closures, will be informed by the most recent local health data.

The Shield's Reopening Plan guidelines are subject to change based on levels of community transmission. The CDC has outlined "levels of community transmission" as:

1. No community transmission (preparedness phase)
2. Minimal to moderate community transmission
3. Substantial community transmission

Response to changes in levels of community transmission include the adjustment of Shield strategies (e.g. dismissals, event cancellations, social distancing measures). Monitoring by The Shield of changes in levels of community transmission in relevant localities would be through collaboration of Medical Director, Executive Director and local health officials at appropriate intervals.

A. Temperature Checks and Screening

- The Shield will implement mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks of students, staff, and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.
- The Shield will ensure that any personnel performing in-person screening activities, including temperature checks, are appropriately protected.
 - i. Personnel performing screening activities will be trained by employer-identified individuals who are familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols.
- Temperature checks will be conducted upon entry in accordance with DOH guidelines.
 - i. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, or sent directly to a dedicated isolation area prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.
 - ii. Records will be maintained, void of any specific health data.
- The Shield will implement daily health screening practices for students, staff, and visitors.
 - i. Staff will be required to complete a daily self-reporting health screen and temperatures will be taken on-site.
 - ii. Designated staff will screen student temperatures daily upon arrival.

B. Screening for all staff, and, where practicable, visitors, contractors, and vendors, will be completed using a questionnaire that determines whether the individual has:



- i. knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
 - ii. tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
 - iii. has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days; and/or
 - iv. has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.
- The Shield will require individuals to immediately disclose, if and when, their responses to any of the aforementioned questions change, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of school hours.
- Students will periodically complete the screening questionnaire.

C. Positive Screen Protocols

- Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will be immediately isolated until they can be sent home.
 - i. Staff and families will be provided with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.
 - ii. The Shield will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.
- Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms will not be able to return to the in-person learning environment until they have clearance documentation from a health care provider or a negative COVID-19 test, and symptom resolution.
- School principals, or a designated party, will serve as a central point of contact, which may vary by activity, location, shift, or day.
 - i. This individual will be responsible for receiving and attesting to having reviewed all screening activities.
 - ii. This individual will be notified by staff if they, or their students, later experience COVID-19-related symptoms or COVID-19 exposure, as noted on the screening questionnaire.

D. Face Coverings

- Any time or place that individuals cannot maintain appropriate social distancing, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings.
- Face coverings are strongly recommended at all times for students, except for during meals and instruction when appropriate social distancing will be maintained.
 - i. All individuals in school facilities and on school grounds must be prepared to put on a face covering if social distancing cannot be maintained; and for this reason, individuals – including students if tolerable – must wear face coverings in common areas, such as entrances/exits, lobbies, and when traveling around the school.



ii. Students who are unable to tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health, are not subject to the required use of a face covering.

- The Shield staff will model for students the appropriate way to wear a mask.
- Staff will be required to wear a face covering when in the classroom, in common areas, and when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Students will receive instruction and routine reminders of appropriate health and safety precautions regarding mask wearing and hand washing.
- The Shield will ensure all students and staff are trained on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings.
- This training will be extended to contractors and vendors, in the event we supply the contractors and vendors with PPE.
- The Shield has procured masks, gloves, and face shields.
- Staff and children may choose to wear their own face coverings.

E. Signage

- The Shield will post signs throughout the school and will communicate regularly with staff and families about health and safety precautions, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage, regarding public health protections against COVID-19. Signage will be placed appropriately for children and adults with reminders to:
 - i. Stay home if they feel sick
 - ii. Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social
 - iii. Distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school
 - iv. Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE
 - v. Adhere to social distancing instructions
 - vi. Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19, and how they should do so
 - vii. Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines
 - viii. Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

F. Personal Protective Equipment

- The Shield has an adequate supply of masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and face shields.
 - i. Staff and children may choose to wear their own face coverings.
 - ii. The Shield staff may use alternate PPE (i.e., face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy).
- The Shield will advise staff and visitors that they are required to wear face coverings in common areas or situations where social distancing may be difficult to maintain, such as riding in elevators, entering/exiting classrooms or common areas, walking in hallways, and traveling around school buildings.
- The Shield will request that students bring their own face covering.
 - i. The Shield will supply face coverings to any student who needs one.



- ii. Families will be asked to take responsibility for maintaining their child's face coverings.
- Staff will be trained on proper use of face coverings and appropriate cleaning or replacement after use.

II. School Health Offices

A. Isolation

- The Shield will identify an isolation space dedicated to caring for a student or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day.
 - i. The Shield will ensure that symptomatic students who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is properly protected.
 - ii. PPE requirements for school health office staff, caring for sick individuals, will include both standard and transmission-based precautions
- Asthma-related acute respiratory treatment
 - i. Children in need of a nebulizer will be provided treatment in an isolated space that will be disinfected following treatment.
 - ii. Staff will be provided with appropriate PPE.

III. Testing, Tracing, and Tracking

A. Testing

- The Shield will ensure that staff and families are provided with testing site information and decisions for testing will be up to the individual's health care provider.
- For any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or exhibits symptoms it will be recommended they obtain a COVID-19 test.
 - i. Decisions about testing will be made by individual healthcare providers.
 - ii. Determinations about return to school/work will be made based on advice from physicians and the Medical Director.
 - iii. The Shield will provide information about testing sites to staff and families as needed.
- The Shield will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including students, staff, and visitors.
- The Shield will communicate with the DOH to determine appropriate steps in response to any positive COVID-19 cases.
- In the event of a positive COVID-19 case, The Shield will make determinations regarding closure of specific rooms, corridors, or buildings in consultation with the DOH, the Medical Director and Executive Director.
- The Shield will continue to monitor COVID-19 statistics in our communities and make decisions regarding delivery of in-person and remote instruction based on health data in the community.



- The Shield will refer to DOH’s “Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure” regarding protocols and policies for staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

B. Tracing and Tracking

- The Shield will cooperate with all efforts to track and trace contacts in cooperation with the New York City Test and Trace Corporation.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as required by local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
 - i. The Shield will record accurate daily attendance for both staff and students.
 - ii. Visitor logs will be maintained.
- The Shield will ensure that reporting protocols are followed for individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted to such exposure via tracing, tracking or other mechanism.
 - i. As coordinators of COVID-19 response, the Executive Director and Medical Director will manage and delegate communications both internal and external.

IV. Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfecting

A. Hygiene

- The Shield has developed a Cleaning and Disinfecting Guide, as per the DOH “Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19.”
 - i. Included in this guidance are routine cleaning and disinfection protocols, a schedule, and logs to record cleaning and disinfection.
- The Shield will train all students and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene and will provide information to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.
 - i. Trainings and communications will remind individuals that alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be flammable and may not be suitable for certain areas in school facilities and on school grounds.
- The Shield will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:
 - i. For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels
 - ii. For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical
- The Shield Medical Director has approved the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers in school facilities without individuals’ physicians’ orders as alcohol-based hand sanitizers are considered over-the-counter drugs.



- i. Student use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be supervised by adults to minimize accidental ingestion and promote safe usage.
 - ii. Parents/guardians can inform the school that they do not want their child to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers by sending a written notice to the school.
 - iii. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout common areas as an alternative to handwashing when appropriate.
- The Shield will place signage 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.
 - The Shield staff will ensure that cleaning and disinfection occurs at regular intervals throughout the day and as needed.
 - Restrooms, high touch surfaces, and tools, will be cleaned at regular intervals using registered disinfectants by staff.
 - Classroom staff and administrators will ensure that frequent cleaning and sanitization occurs throughout the day.
 - Staff will be trained in frequency and methods for cleaning and disinfecting frequently used spaces, surfaces, and materials.

B. Cleaning and Disinfection Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

- The Shield will provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces following CDC guidelines.
- If someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, The Shield will:
 - i. Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19
 - ii. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area where possible
 - iii. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, unless waiting 24 hours is not feasible
 - iv. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas
- Once the area has been properly cleaned and disinfected, the area will be reopened for use.

V. Facilities

The Shield will encourage social distancing of at least 6 feet, when possible, and ensure that occupied spaces allow for such distancing. Physical barriers will be used when staff and/or students are seated at desks/tables for instruction when social distancing is not possible. Staff are expected to prioritize safety and well-being of students. Appropriate precautions will be taken, such as face covering including masks/ shields, at times when social distancing cannot be maintained during efforts to respond to student need for support.



The Shield will repurpose space and will reduce in-person attendance to accommodate the need for social distancing. Communal spaces, such as the gym, will be used for instruction and related services as appropriate.

A. Small Spaces

- The Shield will limit gathering in small spaces (e.g., elevators, supply rooms, staff offices) by more than one individual at a time, unless all individuals in such space at the same time are wearing acceptable face coverings or are members of the same household.
- Even with face coverings in use, occupancy will not exceed 50% of the maximum capacity of the space, unless it is designed for use by a single occupant.
- Staff and children will be encouraged to use the stairs whenever possible. If using the elevator, capacity is limited to two people.

B. Staff Meetings

- The Shield will offer multi-modal options for delivery of staff training/meetings.
- Meetings that are conducted in-person will be delivered multiple times to small groups of staff.
- Large group trainings/meetings will be conducted remotely using teleconference or videoconference platforms.

C. Ventilation

- HVAC system
 - i. Vents and ducts are routinely cleaned, and the system undergoes regular maintenance.
- Windows
 - i. When and where possible, windows will be opened to increase air circulation.

D. Common Areas

- Face coverings will be required in all common areas.
- Signage will be used to indicate revised maximum occupancy to ensure adequate space for social distancing in shared spaces such as break room and restrooms.
- Staggered schedules and continued remote work will reduce density.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the common areas of the building. Additional personal use hand-sanitizers will also be available.

E. Deliveries

- The Shield will use a designated entrance as the sole area for pickups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.
 - i. Any individual who must enter the building to make a delivery will undergo screening procedures.



F. Entrances and Exits

- The Shield will limit on-site interactions (e.g., designating separate ingress or egress for staff, eliminating bidirectional flow of individuals to the extent practicable).
- Bi-flow traffic will be reduced with the implementation of staggered schedules.

VI. Nutrition

- All meals are provided by the Office of Food and Nutrition Services of the DOE.
 - i. The Shield will work collaboratively with the Office of Food and Nutrition Services to enforce food service policies and health and safety requirements.
- Cold food service will be provided.
- Children will eat in their classrooms.
- Staff and children will wash hands prior to meals.
- Tables will be disinfected prior to meal service.
- The Shield will support the implementation of guidelines as outlined by the NYC DOE below:
 - i. During meals and snacks, students will be directed to not share food or beverages.
 - ii. Students who are not receiving in-person instruction may pick up Grab-and-go meals from their home school or an identified school building near their home.
 - iii. After eating, staff will wipe down the area where they ate their meal with disinfectant wipes.
 - iv. Students will be expected to clean their hands repeatedly throughout the day, including before and after meals/snacks.

VII. Transportation

- Bus services are provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) of the Department of Education.
- The Shield will work collaboratively with the bus companies to enforce transportation policies and health and safety requirements as indicated by the NYC DOE:
 - i. All NYCDOE school transportation vehicles will be cleaned and disinfected each day using CDC recommended cleaning and disinfection protocols, the specifics of which will be provided to parents prior to the start of school.
 - ii. School buses will be equipped with non-flammable hand sanitizer, such as foaming sanitizer that is regularly used in medical facilities and is nonflammable.
 - iii. DOE will provide school bus vendors with CDC recommended guidance on COVID-19 symptoms as well as Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance specific to COVID-19, which will include guidance on PPE, cleaning, and disinfection. Vendors will be expected to share with their staff. This will include signage detailing the proper use of PPE and COVID-19 symptoms.
 - iv. In accordance with NYSED and CDC recommendations, the NYCDOE will require all bus operators, monitors, and attendants to wear a protective face covering while on board any school transport vehicle. All drivers, monitors, and attendants in buses will be encouraged to use their own facial coverings but in



the event that they don't have a face covering, or they forgot to wear one, the NYCDOE will provide one to use.

- v. All school bus operators, attendants, monitors, and anyone who has direct contact with students must wear gloves, which will be supplied by the DOE.
- vi. In accordance with NYSED and CDC recommendations, NYCDOE will require all bus passengers to wear a protective face covering while on board any school transport vehicle, unless they are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including where such covering would impair their physical or mental health.
- vii. Students who do not have a face covering when attempting to board a bus will be provided a face covering upon entering the bus. In the event that a child does not have a face covering when attempting to board a bus, protective face coverings will be available for distribution at the bus door inside the bus.
- viii. Students with a disability which would prevent them from wearing a mask will not be forced to do so or denied transportation, but in these cases, the transportation provided may not be the conventional mode that the student had prior to March 2020. These will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- ix. DOE will provide school bus vendors with CDC guidance on PPE. All school transportation vehicles and facilities will display informational signs that detail the proper usage of PPE, as well as the symptoms of COVID-19. Vendors will be expected to share with their staff.
- x. Social Distancing Social distance requirements will be implemented on all school transport vehicles, which will require all passengers to maintain a minimum of 6 feet apart. The only exception to this will be students from the same household who will be seated with each other and will still be required to wear face coverings. This will reduce the typical school bus capacity to approximately 25% of its normal operating passenger capacity.
- xi. Seating on the bus will be clearly marked to designate which seats may be used and which seats will be blocked off for social distancing.
- xii. Parents will be notified prior to the start of school as to what the seat designators will look like so that they can instruct their children prior to boarding the bus. Wherever possible, individual bus route rosters will be scrutinized to attempt to seat individuals in proximity to the rear emergency exit that are capable of operating it.
- xiii. DOE will provide school bus vendors with CDC guidance on social distancing. All school transportation vehicles and facilities will display informational signs that detail the proper usage of social distancing, as well as the symptoms of COVID-19. Vendors will be expected to share with their staff.
- xiv. All school bus operators, attendants, monitors, and mechanics shall assess their own health daily to determine whether it is appropriate for them to go to work that day based on CDC guidelines.
- xv. Transportation may not be the conventional mode that has been previously used. Specific arrangements will be made based on which students require such transportation.



VIII. Social Emotional Well-Being

The direct and indirect impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have a lasting effect on students and staff. The Shield will reinforce and enhance supports from an evidence-based program focused on social-emotional learning, self-regulation, relationship-building, classroom environments, whether in-person or through distance learning. Approaches and strategies will be comprehensive, trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate. Activities will include morning meetings or check-ins and instruction in social-emotional learning and relationship building. Clinical and counseling staff will provide mental health support and resources as needed.

<https://www.shield.org/children-adolescents/#parent-training-grant-program>

IX. School Schedules

Staff, families, and stakeholders will be provided regular email and/or phone communications as plans are adapted to meet needs. Equitable access to instruction and related services will be afforded to all students in our schools.

- Remote Learning: The Shield will employ a remote-only model for September at the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Efforts to create an environment that is safe and appropriate for a return to in-person learning is in process.
- Hybrid Learning: When we phase-in to a hybrid learning model and ultimately a full in-person model, parents/guardians will have the choice to continue with remote only learning.
 - i. We will develop consistent cohorts of students, teachers, and staff.
 - ii. We will design cohorts for in-person instruction and related services that reduces interactions across cohorts of students, teachers, and therapists.
 - iii. Two in-person student groups with a maximum capacity of 50% in-person for each group.
 - iv. Students will receive in-person learning on two consecutive days per week – Monday and Tuesday for one group and Thursday and Fridays for the other group - with all students receiving remote instruction on Wednesdays.
 - v. Remote learning will be provided on non in-person instructional days.
- Students participating in remote learning will receive remote instruction every day.
 - i. Families retain the option to continue with remote learning only.
 - ii. Any family that chooses remote learning as the sole method of instruction will be offered select opportunities throughout the year to join the hybrid model.
- Hybrid Instruction (anticipated start in October)
 - i. While the goal is to return all students to fulltime, in-person instruction, The Shield has prepared for a combination of in-person instruction and remote learning.
 - ii. If COVID-19 cases develop, The Shield may consider restricting access within school facilities to avoid full school closures.
 - i. In such instances, The Shield may choose to temporarily resume remote-only instruction until all contacts can be identified, notified, tested, and cleared.



X. Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

One of our main priorities is to have students actively engaged in meaningful learning opportunities. We will rely upon a variety of methods to reach out to families and ensure students are consistently engaged in learning. The Shield has developed a procedure to focus on the academic consequences of lost instructional time and address absences to ensure students do not fall behind in their learning.

Attendance will be obtained and recorded daily for both remote and in-person learning. The importance of consistency in attendance and adherence to program policies related to attendance will be reviewed at a Parent Orientation and is outlined in the Parent Handbook. Frequent reminders of the importance of consistent attendance will be distributed throughout the year in program newsletters, emails, and other resources.

A. Attendance for Instructional Purposes

- Teachers will collect and report daily teacher/student engagement or attendance regardless of the instructional setting.
- For remote instruction, teachers will check in with students during live instruction (through Google Meet) during the first period (8:30-9:00am) of school.
 - i. If a student has not logged in to the morning session, the teacher assistant or teacher aide will attempt to contact the family.
 - ii. If the teacher assistant or aide is unable to establish contact, the school nurse will follow up.
- For in person learning, if the student is absent, the main office will follow up with a phone call, to ensure student safety and whereabouts.

B. Attendance Considerations

- For remote learning, flexibility will be provided to accommodate parent schedules, availability of technology, or other barriers that may preclude students from connecting with teachers at a certain time.
 - i. Students will have access to participate by submitting work in Google Classroom and/or Unique Learning Curriculum, watching live instruction recordings, participating in live sessions during small groups or 1:1 sessions and daily phone calls to ensure safety and continuity of learning.
- Attendance codes will be recorded for daily remote learning and in-person classroom attendance.

C. Chronic Absences

- If a student is absent for five or more consecutive days, without notification or an excused absence, the student will be referred to the school principal/designee.
- In the event that no response is provided within 24 hours by the family, the principal/designee will notify C.P.S.E / C.S.E. and a certified letter will be mailed to the family.
- Final decisions regarding the student will be made by the district administrator.



XI. Technology and Connectivity

The Shield has purchased electronic devices to provide access to all of our students. At this time, all our current students have been provided with a device either by The Shield or the DOE. We will work collaboratively with families and the DOE to ensure that all new, incoming students have an appropriate device.

XII. Teaching and Learning

- Students will be provided with materials to support and enhance remote learning.
- Students will be provided with individual supplies of any materials that cannot be sanitized between use for in-person learning.
- Staff will disinfect shared spaces and materials between use.
- Each classroom/treatment space will be supplied daily with sanitizing spray for periodic cleaning throughout the day.
- Student workstations will be socially distanced or separated by a protective divider.
- Students will be encouraged to wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Where feasible, The Shield will put in place measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in hallways, spaces throughout the school, and posting signage and distance markers to indicate spaces of six feet in commonly used areas and areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate.

A. Special Education

The Shield's special education programs and services will address the provision of FAPE during this public health crisis. Instructional delivery will be designed to ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE) as required by their IEP.

- As needed based on IEP goals, this will include specialized instruction with accommodations and modifications and related services, both to be provided either remotely or through a hybrid model.
- Students will continue to receive access to instructional materials for use at home, as needed, including assistive technology tools.
- Student support will be enhanced by professional development activities for staff and training for families.
- When necessary, virtual meetings/phone conferences will be used to convene special education procedural meetings, in collaboration with families, such as Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and Committees on Special Education (CSE), reevaluation, eligibility, and IEP team meetings.
- Families will receive communications regarding their child's progress in their preferred language and mode of communication.

B. Communication and Family Engagement

The Shield Institute will maintain high rates of family engagement by hosting parent workshops and support groups in preferred languages. Skills workshops will be provided to families to encourage adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene. Workshops will be held in English/Spanish (Flushing and Bronx location) and English/Spanish/Mandarin



(Flushing site only). In addition, training to prepare families for remote and/or blended learning to promote learning gains and enhance student learning.

- The Shield will disseminate appropriate information regarding school operations using all available technology (phone, email, video, web updates).
- All students will be educated on new COVID-19 safety protocols, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene.
- The Shield Executive Director and Medical Director will be responsible for coordinating and delegating, as appropriate, responses to COVID-19 related questions.
- All staff will be trained on reporting procedures and processes for communications regarding positive COVID-19 cases.

XIII. Bilingual Education

The Shield serves a diverse population of students and families. The Shield has always been committed to, and will continue to, provide access to information and instruction as needed in the home language of the child.

XIV. Staffing and Human Resources

The Shield works towards ensuring that students have access and engagement with a NYS certified teacher or an appropriately licensed clinician. The Shield attempts to have all NYS certified teachers and staff appropriately licensed in their field, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations.

Accommodations

The Shield Institute complies with all applicable employment laws and regulations including, without limitation, all federal, state and local laws and regulations relating to disabilities and reasonable accommodations as appropriate under the circumstances.