

# Montessori Pathways School / Summer Camp

## COVID-19, Phase 4 Reopening Protocol



*Updated: October 7, 2020*

Because of the Coronavirus/Covid-19 pandemic, we are all living through some trying times. To date, Illinois has not seen significant transmission of COVID-19 in childcare settings, which is encouraging evidence that childcare can be provided safely. Public health experts emphasize, however, that there is much we still do not know about this new virus, how it spreads, and what effects it has on children. Therefore, Illinois is implementing a cautious approach that appropriately balances the need to greatly expand childcare and schools with the need for prudent restrictions that lessen the risk of spreading the Coronavirus.

On May 5, 2020, Governor JB Pritzker announced the Restore Illinois plan, which lays out a public health approach to safely reopen our state. This document focuses on considerations during Phase 4 of the plan.

Executive Order 2020-40, filed on June 4, 2020, allowed schools to reopen for in-person instruction in Phase 3. In-person instruction is strongly encouraged in Phase 4; however, it is critical to note that this does not signify a return to pre-pandemic operations.

Please be assured that we at Montessori Pathways School (MPS) take the safety and health of our students, including your child, and our staff very seriously. Because of this, we have implemented protocols and practices in accordance with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and the Illinois Department of Health and Environment.

The safety and health of our students, faculty, staff, and families will lead how and where we learn and operate. Our belief in our mission and our many years of experience and expertise will ensure the quality and high standards of our instruction.

## General Health

### Minimum Guidelines:

During Phase 4, IDPH guidelines will:

- ✓ require staying home if sick
- ✓ require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings (face shield or mask). Exceptions may be made due to health conditions and where accommodations are appropriate.
- ✓ require hand hygiene
- ✓ require social distancing be observed, as much as possible
- ✓ require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings
- ✓ require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection
- ✓ prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space

It is important to note that these requirements are subject to change pursuant to updated public health guidance and changing public health conditions.

Schools and families should prepare for a return to remote instruction in the event of a resurgence of the virus or a second wave of it in the fall.

# Type of Learning in 2020-2021

Most of the school districts have made their decisions on how the beginning of the school year will look like in public schools. Some of the schools will go with blended education (in-person + remote learning), some of them will go with full remote learning at least in the beginning of the school year.

As a private school that has a very small community, more flexibility and ability to follow the state's reopening guidelines, Montessori Pathways will be offering **full in-person education** beginning August 27 unless school closure will be required due to another state emergency situation. In this case, we will be offering remote learning until further notice.

However, we take the COVID situation seriously and do not want to put our faculty, students and their families at risk. Therefore, we ask our families to read all of our updates attentively and follow all of our rules and requirements respectfully.

*Please understand that all students and teachers' families have their own circumstances and health history, and coming to school every day can make them feel unsafe and uncomfortable if some of us simply ignore school's requirements. Let's be protective of and respectful to each other.*

## Health and Safety Guidelines

### Daily Staff and Students' Health Screening:

#### Temperature as an Indicator.

1. Parents must measure their child(ren)'s temperature in the morning prior to bringing them to school. If the child's temperature is 100 degrees or greater, he or she must be kept at home until fever free for 48 hours, in the absence of fever-reducing medications (per DHEC Guidelines).
2. Keep your child home if your child is experiencing any symptoms of sickness (temperature, cough, sneezing, fatigue, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye, etc...)
3. MPS staff member will ask the parent/guardian to confirm that the child does not have fever, shortness of breath, or cough.
4. MPS staff member will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
5. MPS staff member will take the temperature of all students using a contactless thermometer upon arrival at school. **Parents should wait while their child is under the screening.** If the child's temperature is 100 degrees F or greater, an MPS staff member is not allowed to accept this child and the child will be sent home with parents immediately.
6. MPS staff member will take the temperatures of all students using a contactless thermometer during the day (every 2 hours). If the child's temperature is 100 degrees F or greater, an MPS staff member will mask the student immediately, isolate him/her from others, and notify the office. The office will use emergency contact numbers to call a parent or caregiver to return to school and pick up the child as soon as possible.
7. Faculty and Staff members will measure their temperature at home and remain there if they have a temperature of 100 degrees F or greater or any other symptoms of sickness.
8. All staff members will have their temperatures taken upon arrival at school each day. The same procedures as described above apply to staff members.
9. All staff and student temperatures will be recorded daily.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up Procedure\* (wearing a mask for parents and teachers is required):**

*~ Parents or guardians are not allowed to enter the building or playground during the pandemic. ~*

Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

### Carpool line (scheduled) arrival / dismissal

- Arrival - teacher picks up child(ren) from the car and escorts them to the front door
- Dismissal – teacher brings the child(ren) to the car

### All Day Program or mid-day (not scheduled) arrival / dismissal

- Arrival - park your car in the school's parking lot, bring your child to the front door, ring the bell, and leave as soon as your child is in and supervised by the teacher. Do not enter the building.
- Dismissal – park your car in the school's parking lot, come to the front door, ring the bell, and wait outside until your child is getting ready to go home. To make this process faster, you can call the school 5-10 min prior to arrival.
- Do not enter school.

### Back yard arrival / dismissal

- Arrival - park your car in the school's parking lot, bring your child to the gate and leave as soon as your child is supervised by the teacher
- Dismissal – park your car in the school's parking lot, come to the gate, and wait until your child is released.
- Do not enter school's playground.

*No contact with other kids or staff during arrival or dismissal please. All notes, questions, or concerns should be addressed via email or phone call.*

## **Hand Hygiene:**

1. All students and staff are required to wash their hands with soap and water for no less than 20 sec. upon arrival.
2. Hand washing should be done every hour by everyone present at school.
3. In addition, everyone will practice hand washing:
  - Each time when entering the building after recess or other outside trip
  - Before using any work or material from the shelf
  - Right after using any work or material from the shelf
  - Before and after serving meal (for staff)
  - Before and after each meal
  - Before and after touching face
  - After using bathroom
  - After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
  - Before and after health screening (for staff)

- Before and after using gloves for any purpose, including cleaning and disinfecting
- As necessary

## **Social Distancing:**

To reduce the spread of infection:

1. Parents and guardians must follow the school's "Drop off and Pick Up Procedure" and will not be permitted to enter the school building, walk their children to the classroom door, or enter the school's playground.
2. Parents are required to practice social distancing and wear a mask for drop off/pick up.
3. No visitors or volunteers, except officials or maintenance workers (mask is required), are allowed in the building while social distancing is required. All officials or workers will be screened, and their information will be recorded in case contact tracing is needed.
4. Faculty and Staff members will avoid congregating in common areas.
5. Limited number of persons (no more than 3) are allowed in the hallway.
6. Classrooms' exit doors will be used for each class to enter and exit the classroom as much as possible.
7. Students will be waiting for dismissal in designated spots that are 6' apart if inside the building.
8. East and South Room students are encouraged to use the restrooms in their classrooms. Elementary students and staff will use the restrooms in the hallway (one person at a time in each restroom except when teacher needs to help the child to be cleaned and changed)
9. Classroom Teachers and Extended Day Teachers will make every effort to ensure students maintain work areas 6 feet apart from their nearest neighbor.
10. No more than 15 Primary or Elementary students in each classroom are allowed during Phase 4 or until further notice. The same MPS staff member will be kept with the same group of children to the extent possible.
11. Primary or Elementary students will work in separate, assigned spots (regular or floor tables).
12. Work rugs will be replaced by bath towels that must be washed after each use.
13. Spots for group presentation or line time should be marked on the floor or carpet to keep a 6 foot distance.
14. Singing and movements in circles should be avoided and reconsidered for another position where kids are facing the same direction.
15. No community shared supplies should be used. Each student will have a personal plastic pencil box with lid and plastic basket filled with school supplies (pencils, markers, glue stick, scissors, water paint, paint brush) that will be kept in his/her assigned work spot.
16. If practical, children from the same household should be within the same group.
17. The groups will be static as much as possible and will be taking turns for recess time.
18. There will be 2 adults per primary classroom or one adult per classroom with a "floating" staff member between 2 classrooms depending on the class sizes. One staff person per room is permissible at the start/end of day as long as ratios are met.
19. Staff will be limited to working with one group of children. A "floating" staff member is permitted between no more than 2 rooms if smocks/overgarments are changed between rooms.

20. Outdoor activities will be increased as much as possible. Activities requiring physical exertion and/ or exertion of voice should take place outdoors. Kids will be regularly switching between indoor and outdoor activities.
21. No swimming activities, field trips, or school-wide events while social distancing is required.
22. Parent/Teacher Conferences or other meetings with parents will be scheduled virtually.
23. Waving and smiles will replace hugging, handshaking, high fives and other forms of physical contact until further notice.
24. Children's naptime cots will be spaced out as much as possible, 6 feet apart. Children will be placed head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread. Nap items should be washed weekly. Nap stuffed animals will not be allowed until further notice.
25. No toys or other items from home that are not related to the educational process or child's daily care are allowed at school.
26. More space will be provided between cubby areas/storage spaces to help prevent the mixing of children's belongings.
27. All items, materials, lunch, spare clothes and other items that need to be sent to school should be placed in labeled disposable bags and dropped off by parents in the special outdoor "Drop Off Box"

### **Modeling and Reinforcing Social Distancing:**

**Teachers should implement strategies to model and reinforce social and physical distancing and movement.**

Suggestions include:

- Use carpet squares, marks, mats, trays, or other visuals for spacing.
- Model social distancing when interacting with children, families, and staff.
- Create and develop a scripted story/role play around social distancing, as well as handwashing, proper etiquette for sneezes, coughs, etc.
- Give frequent verbal reminders to children.
- Hang pictures within the school building to give constant reminders.
- Send home a tip sheet to parents and caregivers so they can also learn about social distancing.
- Offer more opportunities for individual play and solo activities, such as fine motor activities (e.g., drawing, coloring, cutting, puzzles, and other manipulatives).
- Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children. Keep groups separate for special activities, such as art, music, and exercising.
- Stagger indoor and outdoor activities and adjust schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area.

**Teach, model, and reinforce healthy hygiene habits and social skills:**

Suggestions include:

- Explain to students why it's not healthy to share drinks or food.
- Practice frequent hand hygiene by teaching a child-friendly song or counting to 20.
- Teach students to use tissue to wipe their nose and to cough inside their elbow.

- Model and practice hand hygiene before and after eating, coughing, sneezing, playing outside, and using the restroom.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/training-education.html>

## **Create a classroom environment that promotes positive teacher and student relationships that support student social-emotional well-being and self-esteem:**

Suggestions include:

- Promote empathy through conversations about other people's feelings and perspectives.
- Talk about respect and responsibilities.
- Build a coping toolbox that includes body- and mind-calming strategies.
- Read children's books to help support the children when they may be feeling anxious or sad (e.g., "Grumpy Monkey," which explains that it's OK to be sad or have unexplained feelings).

## **Face Covering (masks, face shield, cloth covering, etc.):**

**(IDPH Day Care Guidance - <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/daycare-centers>)**

We keep receiving more and more phone calls from prospective families about our program and all of these conversations begin with the question *"Will kids be required to wear masks at school?"*

We do not want to say that yes, all kids will be wearing masks all day long, knowing that for some of them it is simply impossible and not realistic. At the same time, we do not want a scenario where parents think that masks are not required at Montessori Pathways and all families from our community who do not take the COVID situation seriously will come to us. The health and safety of our Pathways Community is absolutely our priority.

Based on our observation of the kids over the last 4 weeks, most of the kids are tolerant of masks if they have a proper explanation, presentation, and great role modeling from us, adults.

## **Mask Policy**

### **1. Staff.**

To slow the spread of COVID-19, program staff shall wear a face covering while serving children in the building and interacting with parents and families.

Teachers are allowed to consider the use of transparent face coverings during presentation to allow for the reading of facial expressions, which is important for child development.

### **2. Children.**

- a) The kids, who can safely and appropriately wear, remove, and tolerate masks, are highly encouraged to wear masks in the building unless there is any condition that is listed in the "Exceptions to Use of Face Coverings" part of our protocol. We ask parents to practice wearing a mask at home before sending them to school to prevent frequent touching of the face and mask.
- b) Increased social distancing will be considered for students who are not able to tolerate either a face covering or a face shield due to sensory or other issues.
- c) Physician's note documenting the medical condition is required for any student who is not able to wear a face covering due to their health condition.
- d) If student works alone in his/her assigned spot that is 6 ft apart and feels that he/she needs a break from face covering, the mask may be taken off for a while and put in zip-lock bag.

- e) As soon as student needs to move around the classroom in a way that might affect the social distancing requirement, the mask must be on.
- f) If a student will choose and would like to participate in a close contact partner work or teamwork, he/she will be required to wear a mask.
- g) If a student participates in individual or small group presentations, the mask is required.
- h) All students must have at least 2 **clean cloth masks** or **new surgical masks** in a labeled zip-lock bag at school.
- i) Cloth masks will be sent home in the same zip-lock at the end of the day and **must be washed** at the end of each day.
- j) Surgical mask **will be disposed** of at the end of the day. **Used surgical masks are not allowed at school to be re-used.**

**Children do not need to be encouraged to wear a face covering:**

- a. When children can be safely kept at least 6 feet away from others.
- b. While children are eating / drinking, sleeping, and napping. Strict and consistent physical distancing must always be practiced during these activities.
- c. While engaging in active outdoor play as long as children are able to keep physical distance from others.

*Since kids are not required to wear masks while outside, outside work, presentations, story time, and explorations should be encouraged by teachers as much as possible.*

- d. If wearing the face covering causes the child to touch their face more frequently

**Exceptions to Use of Face Coverings, may include, but are not limited to:**

- a. Children under 2 years old
- b. Children who cannot safely and appropriately wear, remove, and tolerate face coverings
- c. Children who have difficulty breathing with the face covering or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance
- d. Children with severe cognitive or respiratory impairments that may have a hard time tolerating a face covering.
- e. Children for whom the only option for a face covering presents a potential choking or strangulation hazard.
- f. Children who, due to a behavioral health diagnosis or an intellectual impairment, are unable to wear a face covering safely.
- g. Individuals who need to communicate with people who rely upon lip-reading.
- h. Individuals who have sensorial disorder, medical conditions or disabilities that prevent use of a face covering.

**3. Parents.**

Parents are required to practice social distancing and wear a mask for drop off/pick up.

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*Note: Many parents are very concerned about kids wearing masks at school. There is no judgment. Everything that is new and unknown and especially if it is related to our kids, makes us very suspicious and concerned. We all see that things are not getting better. It is time to actively step up and do something. It is always easier to say "no". But what if our openness will help us to make situation better? No pressure. Just let's think about it and start with more studies.*

["Five Myths about Face Masks and Kids: What Experts Say Parents Need to Know"](#)

["Face Masks: How to Help Kids Adjust"](#)

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**Food Preparation and Meal Service Changes:**

1. No self-serve snacks until further notice. Snack (fruits or veggies) will be served on individual plates by teachers or parents can provide individually packaged snacks that are placed in a labeled Zip-lock for disposal.
2. Children cannot assist with snack preparation.
3. Teachers must use appropriate PPE, including gloves and face coverings, while preparing and distributing snack. Frequent hand hygiene is required. Teachers should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling food service items that have been used.
4. Since no family style lunches are allowed at this time, the school will not be able to provide complimentary hot lunches as we usually do (until the requirements are relieved)
5. Parents are required to send their PEANUT/NUT FREE healthy cold lunch from home. No sweets and juice please.
6. Milk and water will be provided.
7. Lunch and all necessary disposable utensils should be placed in one labeled Zip-Lock. All leftovers and utensils will be placed in Zip-Lock and disposed after lunch.
8. Lunch should not require re-heating. If refrigerating is required, a "Refrigerate" note should be written on the zip-lock next to the child's name.

*We will be happy to return to our family style lunches as soon as it is allowed.*

**Music-Related Activities:**

There is documented evidence of substantial spreading of the coronavirus during musical events caused by the possibility of droplet and fomite (objects or materials likely to carry infections) transmission.

Indoor music activities and rehearsals are discouraged. Music and movements will be moved outside as much as possible, organized into smaller groups, minimizing the number of students for group activity to provide for social distancing.

Singing and movements in circles should be avoided and reconsidered for another position where kids are facing the same direction.



## **Physical Education:**

Physical activity can support students' overall health and well-being and help reduce stress and anxiety.

Since wearing masks outside is not required, outdoor physical education activities that allow natural social distancing will be selected whenever feasible and weather permitting.

No Gym Class inside during wintertime. Outdoor time will be increased for elementary students when gym class is not possible outside.

Hand shaking, high fives, or other physical contact is prohibited.

## **Respiratory Treatment (for students with asthma):**

Nebulizer treatments should be administered at home.

Consult with your health care provider for alternate asthma medication delivery systems. Any asthma action plans should be reviewed prior to student arrival at school.

## **After School Enrichment Program:**

To keep our small community safe, we decided to postpone all extracurricular activities that require instructors coming from outside until the situation will improve (mostly until Phase 5). This will protect our students and staff from any unknown contacts.

## **Water Bottles:**

Water bottles should be sent with kids for recess time daily and they will be sent home at the end of each day for cleaning, sanitizing, and refilling.

**Water bottles must have a flip top lid** to cover the "mouth part" and protect it from constant touching.

## **School / Summer Camp Bags:**

Reusable school bags are not permitted until further notice. Any items that need to be sent home (such as dirty/soiled clothes) will be sent home in a disposable bag. A replacement should be sent to school in a new disposable bag.

All students' projects will be collected at school and sent home at the end of Summer Camp attendance or when a specific amount is collected during the school year (approx. once a week) in a disposable bag.

## **Sunscreen / Insect Repellent:**

1. Since there are no swimming activities this summer, we will not be applying sunscreen at school. If parents wish, they can apply sunscreen at home before coming to school.

**Sunscreen should not be applied on child's forehead to avoid failure of temperature screening.**

2. DEET FREE (labeled) insect repellent may be sent to school and will be applied per parents' request.

## **Personal Protective Equipment / Staff Training:**

Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is made available to and used by staff, as needed, based on exposure risk. Staff is trained prior to the start of student attendance on the proper use of PPE, including putting on and removing PPE. In addition, training also includes directions on the proper disposal of PPE since inappropriate application or removal of PPE can increase the transmission.

Prior to re-opening, staff members are required to attend an in-service training on COVID-19 information and new protocols (how it spreads, requirement for face masks, hand washing requirements, material sanitizing, proper cleaning techniques, food prep and service, what to do if a child displays symptoms).

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing:**

1. The school will continue to provide cleaning services that follow CDC requirements at the end of each day.
2. Visibly dirty areas should be scrubbed to remove visible dirt/soilage and then an approved disinfectant should be used to kill germs.
3. Classroom and office staff will intensify cleaning and disinfecting efforts, including but not limited to frequently disinfecting items that are touched often (**doorknobs, sink and faucets, light switchers, tables, chairs, counters, refrigerator door handles, microwaves/ovens, pencil sharpeners, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, phones, cubbies, coat areas, etc.**), with a required chlorine solution (*4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection for up to 24 hours*)
4. Gloves and other appropriate Personal Protective Equipment must be used during cleaning and disinfection:
  - ✓ Always follow label directions.
  - ✓ Allow the required wet contact time. Disinfectants need to remain wet on surfaces up to 10 min to properly disinfect.
  - ✓ Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children.
  - ✓ Do not mix bleach or other cleaning products and disinfectants together.
5. Cleaning products will not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
6. Air circulation in the areas will be increased by opening screened windows as much as possible.
7. Air Purifier with HEPA filter and UV Sanitizer will be used in every classroom, office, and hallway.
8. Shared materials will be cleaned after each use. Students will be returning used materials to a designated cleaning/sanitizing area. Materials will be returned to the shelf only after being cleaned, sanitized, and air dried.
9. All permissible items will be regularly washed in our commercial high temperature sanitizing dishwashing machine.
10. There are a lot of unique Montessori materials in our classrooms that can be easily ruined by constant cleaning and sanitizing. Materials that are not safe for sanitizing will be removed from the shelves for a while or quarantined in the basement for several days after each use.
11. Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. However, used books will be quarantined for several days.
12. If the school will operate on a split schedule, all materials handled will be disinfected between morning and afternoon sessions (as well as at the end of each day).
13. Per CDC, outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection. Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.

## **Back-to-School Events:**

Typical introductory events, such as visit days and orientation meetings designed to allow students and parents to tour building facilities and meet teachers, may not have occurred at the end of the Summer 2020 as they have historically. While parent programs, such as back-to-school nights, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences, etc. may occur during Phase 4 in accordance with IDPH guidelines, schools are strongly encouraged to hold these events virtually.

## **Assessing Students' Skill Levels:**

Teachers should identify the standards that were not covered during remote learning. When making determinations to fill in learning gaps, teachers will consider the following questions:

- Which standards were missed or partially covered?
- What are the aligned standards at the current grade level?
- What are the skills required to master the missed or partially covered standards?
- Will the standard stand alone in instruction or can it be layered in the current grade-level standard?
- What is the timeline in which the standard will be covered?

Most students will have had a unique remote learning experience. Students will enter the 2020-21 school year with various levels of mastery of prior coursework. For this reason, teachers may consider assessing students in each content area to learn current student's achievement and needs.

## **Addressing Learning Loss:**

As educators, we have an opportunity to leverage our current situation around what we want our students to know and be able to do. Students may enter the upcoming school year with academic knowledge that varies more greatly between students than in previous school years. Teachers should use targeted interventions and differentiated instruction to help individual students reach their learning goals.

Designing curriculum around students' lived experiences can provide opportunities for student to engage more deeply with content while providing the time and space for students to process recent events. Care should be taken to ensure that these curricular experiences are appropriate for and respectful of students' experiences.

While advancing student learning, teachers will develop plans to bring students up to grade level. They must provide time for students to address incompletes while not falling further behind.

Students must have the opportunity to recover from skill deficits that resulted from remote learning. The creation of curriculum in remote learning (if required) should be grounded in best practices/pedagogy so that it will be utilized in both remote and in-person learning environments.

Some regression during remote learning is expected. Consider the following suggestions to address the loss of academic skills and knowledge during the school closure:

- During the first several weeks of school, prioritize a strong review and infusion of the critical standards and key skills that were not addressed or mastered from the previous year.
- Provide and/or expand intervention time within the school day to help fill learning gaps for individual students.
- Meet (virtually, if possible) with students' families to have evidence-based discussions regarding a student's skill levels and academic and social-emotional needs, how the school will support the student's individualized goals and needs, and how families can support the student at home.

## If someone is or becomes sick:

Currently known symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| ✓ Fever                                       | ✓ headache                   |
| ✓ Cough                                       | ✓ sore throat                |
| ✓ shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | ✓ new loss of taste or smell |
| ✓ chills                                      | ✓ congestion or runny nose   |
| ✓ fatigue                                     | ✓ nausea or vomiting         |
| ✓ muscle and body aches                       | ✓ diarrhea                   |

1. Any MPS staff member or student who is experiencing any symptoms of illness while at school will be sent home immediately and recommended to seek a health care specialists' consultation.
2. Any student who is experiencing any symptoms of illness will be **removed from the group and isolated** in a designated area (front lobby) on a bench or cot. The child's **parents will be contacted immediately** and **required to pick up their child from school** as soon as possible, but no later than in 2 hours. **Students should never be left alone** and must always be supervised while maintaining necessary precautions.
3. Surfaces in the isolation room or area and used items will be cleaned and disinfected after the sick child has gone home.
4. All students and staff sent home with COVID-like symptoms should be diagnostically tested. Student and staff should remain home from school until they receive the test results.

## Keep our school informed:

**The faculty and students' parents of Montessori Pathways School are required to notify the school in the following cases:**

- a) If they or members of their families are / were / or will be traveling outside of USA or Illinois.
- b) If they or members of their families are diagnosed with COVID-19
- c) If their child who is currently enrolled in our program is diagnosed with any communicable or complicated disease such as COVID-19, Influenza, Strep, Pink Eye, Head-Foot-Mouth, Chicken Pox, Croup, Mums, Head Lice, Pneumonia, etc.
- d) On 1st and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month or upon returning after each break in school attendance every family is required to fill out the "Montessori Pathways Families' Self-Declaration" form electronically and email this form back to the school on the required day. Students will not be allowed in the school without this form.

## Emergency Travel Order

On Thursday, July 2, Chicago Department of Public Health Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D., issued an Emergency Travel Order directing travelers entering or returning to Chicago from states experiencing a surge in new COVID-19 cases to quarantine for a 14-day period from the time of last contact within the identified state. This includes both Chicago residents returning from travel to a designated state, and travelers arriving in Chicago from a designated state.

As part of our continuous effort to ensure the health and safety of our Montessori Pathways community, our school is strictly following the recommended guidelines: **If your family has recently traveled to any of the states currently experiencing a rise in COVID-19 cases, your child will need to quarantine for 14 days upon your return.**

States Currently Covered by the Order

Travelers from the following states should quarantine upon arrival in Chicago:

**Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin**

The list will be updated every Tuesday and go into effect the following Friday at 12:01 a.m. You can check this list here: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home/emergency-travel-order.html>

We know that a lot of families are traveling now. Please take the above information into consideration while planning your vacation.

### **Friends and Family Gatherings / Going Out:**

According to the CDC:

- The *more people* an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading.
- The higher the level of community transmission in the area that the gathering is being held, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spreading during a gathering.

At Montessori Pathways, we do our best to keep the school's environment clean and safe and avoid the students' and staff's exposure to people from outside as much as possible.

We understand that each family has their own lifestyle and beliefs. However, **we expect our families to remember the increased possibility of spreading COVID-19 at our school before planning any vacation, party, family or friends gathering, or going out.**

Any thoughtless and careless action may lead to someone's illness and, as a result, to school closure.

### **If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member (CDC recommendations):**

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
- Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours are not possible, wait as long as is possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
- Vacuum the space, if needed, with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.

*Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night, and temporarily turn off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.*

- The area can be opened for use once it has been appropriately disinfected.
- Individuals who did not have close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- Those who had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Close contact means the individual was within 6 feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes.

- Additional cleaning and disinfection are not necessary if more than seven days have elapsed since the person who is sick visited or used the school.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that schools normally use to maintain a healthy environment

McHenry County Health Department will be notified for further guidance. The school might be closed for 2-5 days depending on MCHD recommendation. Distance learning will be provided to our students if emergency school closure is required during the school year.

## **Returning to School:**

In accordance with state and federal guidance, school community members who are sick should not return to school until they have met criteria to return. Schools may wish to consider a symptom checklist for families and staff to use to determine if they are well enough to attend that day.

### 1. I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms:

You can be with others after:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **AND**
- Symptoms have improved

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19.

If you are tested, you can be around others when you have:

- No fever **AND**
- Respiratory symptoms have improved **AND**
- You receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

### 2. I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:

- 10 days have passed since test

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for "I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms."

**Students and staff members with confirmed COVID-19 or related to Covid-19 symptoms can return to school only with official health care specialist's approval**

### 3. For Anyone Who Has Been Around a Person with COVID-19

Student or staff member who has close contact with someone with COVID-19 **should remain in mandated quarantine at home for 14 days** before they are able to return to normal activities. Such protocols are important given that individuals can continue to shed the virus for 7-21 days after initial infection.

**Returning to school will be possible only with official health care specialist's approval.**

#### 4. If student or staff member is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, but being diagnosed with a non-COVID

✓ Medical evaluation and COVID-19 diagnostic testing is strongly recommended for all persons with COVID-like symptoms.

✓ Students and staff returning to school after experiencing COVID-like symptoms but being diagnosed with a non-COVID illness must meet the criteria for returning to school for the illness with which they have been diagnosed. At a minimum, the individual must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and have had no diarrhea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours. Other diseases have specific criteria for when a student or staff member can return to school (see Parent Handbook). Follow school health policies and communicable disease guidance for those illnesses.

**A doctor's note documenting the alternative diagnosis, or a negative COVID-19 test result should accompany a student or staff member returning to school** with an alternative diagnosis after experiencing COVID-like symptoms.

✓ Students and staff with COVID-like symptoms who do not get tested for COVID-19 and who do not provide a healthcare provider's note documenting an alternative diagnosis, must complete:

- 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset **and**
- be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- other symptoms have improved before returning to school.

#### **If school closure will be required by state due to increased level of pandemic:**

We all understand that the school operation will not be the same at least for a while. Depending on our community's level of respect, responsibility, and ability to follow the state's requirements, the level of the pandemic can be lower or higher.

We ask all of our school community members to remember about their own health and safety, and the health and safety of the people around them. Please follow all school's rules and requirements regarding health and safety to avoid frequent school closures.

If school closure will be required during Summer Camp, the program will be cancelled for the required period and parents will be released from payments for the closure period.

If school closure will be required during the School Year, distance learning will be provided by the school's faculty.

#### **Tuition during school closure:**

During distance learning, all parents will be responsible for School Day tuition or for Morning program tuition if your child was initially enrolled in the Morning program.

Before and After school care tuition will be waived for the closure period.

If parents will refuse to pay tuition for distance learning program during emergency school closure, their children will be automatically un-enrolled from the school until the end of the school year and their spot will be offered to families on the wait list.

We ask parents to remember that our private school relies on tuition. It does not rely on government funding, so when parents don't pay their tuition because their kids are home schooling due to the pandemic, it causes a shortfall.

Switching to distance learning does not mean the school reduces its expenses such as teachers' and other support specialists' (like school's accountant or attorney) salary, rent, property taxes, insurance, maintenance, landscaping, utility bills, official inspection fees, membership fees, etc.

Conversely, distance learning requires additional expenses in online and technical support.

As your family chose Montessori Pathways School for your child's education, we are counting on your family's understanding, cooperation, and support in saving our school for your child's education and for the future.

## **Epilogue**

We are counting on a close and trusting partnership between the school and community in order to ensure understanding, cooperation, and support in COVID prevention and mitigation strategies. Clear and open communication is vital for overall success. Such stringent mitigation strategies are designed not only to protect the students but also to protect the more vulnerable members of the school community and staff.

The policies outlined above will continue to evolve as the country moves through the phases of reopening, and as impacts of initial reopening regulations become understood. Montessori Pathways School will continue to monitor state and federal changes and notify parents of any changes to this document.

Parents will initial and sign an agreement that they will support faithfully the measures outlined above before their children may attend school.

## **Resources:**

[Starting the 2020-21 school year; June 23, 2020; PART 3 – Transition Joint Guidance](#)

[IDPH Day Care Guidance; June 26, 2020](#)

[Child Care, Schools, and Youth programs](#)

[Emergency Travel Order](#)

[Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

[How to protect yourself and others](#)

[What to do if you are sick](#)

[How to care for someone who is sick](#)

[How to clean and Disinfect your home if someone is sick with COVID-19](#)

[Quarantine and Isolation](#)

[IDPH Testing Guidance](#)

[IDPH FAQs](#)

[FAQ for Businesses Concerning Use of Face-Coverings During COVID-19](#)



Montessori Pathways School / Summer Camp  
COVID-19, Phase 4 Reopening Protocol  
Updated on October 7, 2020

*Please read this protocol attentively, sign, and return this page to school prior to your child's first day attendance.*

I / We \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Parents/Guardians' name)

have read this protocol, agree and support faithfully the measures outlined above.

Parents/Guardians Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signature: \_\_\_\_\_