



**Yeshiva University
High School For Boys
Reopening Plan for**

2020-2021

Updated April 18, 2021

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Introduction

Yeshiva University High School for Boys (YUHSB) is the affiliated all boys high school of Yeshiva University, located on the university campus in Manhattan. We have prepared this comprehensive plan for reopening in compliance with the New York State Education Department and Department of Health standards for the year 2020-21. We look forward to welcoming students back to school. We have compiled our current plans based on information gathered from both education and health experts. As YUHSB plans for reopening our building after being closed due to COVID-19, we recognize that the health, safety and overall well-being of our entire school community is the ultimate priority. This handbook provides information, action steps, planning considerations, and communication guidelines that will guide the administrative team to assure a safe environment. Our guidelines are based on the Center for Disease Control, New York State and New York City guidelines and the guidance of our medical professional.

Over the past two months, we have met with our medical director, a parent committee, members of our educational leadership, and colleagues in other schools to map out our approach to re-opening, which is guided primarily by CDC, NYS and NYC protocols.

Our reopening plan is based on the following principles:

- Commitment to providing our students with the most ideal educational environment.
- Prioritize student, faculty, and staff health, safety, and well-being.
- Enable face-to-face learning over remote learning whenever it is safe to do so. Ensure hygiene- and health-related policies are research-based, clearly communicated, effectively implemented, and diligently enforced.
- Promote practices and policies to reduce risk of virus transmission and support our capacity to be responsive and agile when facing changing health circumstances.

All that we do at YUHSB, both in the academic realm and in the social-emotional realm, is informed by our Mission Statement:

The mission of YUHSB is to provide an outstanding secondary Jewish education through an unwavering commitment to serious Torah learning, the instilling of a strong and passionate love for Israel, and the rigorous study of modern science and the humanities. With access to a caring community of teachers and mentors, and the resources of Yeshiva University, our students have an unparalleled experience where interests are ignited, bonds are forged, and the paths to a life of meaning and distinction are charted.

The planning involved in reopening the YUHSB campus is in fulfillment of this mission. Over the past few months, we have been reminded of the power of in-person learning

and relationship building. Our educational vision is best maximized through the healthy give and take of the in-person classroom and through the powerful experience of being physically together in school. Our education is not only academic. In planning for the upcoming year, our focus includes providing a full student life experience for our students. Simultaneously, as a school, the strength of our community is in the care and responsibility we feel towards each other and our responsibility to protect the health of each individual. To achieve these goals, we will need to commit to the guidelines and protocols described below. While the strength of a community always requires the commitment to a code of behavior and standards, the risks of COVID-19 require a heightened sense of awareness and commitment to ensuring that we each abide by these guidelines and the spirit involved, both inside of yeshiva and outside of yeshiva.

YUHSB Reopening Task Force

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Yeshiva University Medical Director

YUHSB Administration

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Section 1: Communicating our Plan to Family and Community

Communication is critical for partnership. Our comprehensive plan to provide a safe and healthy educational experience for our school community is predicated on an emphasis on communication. In addition to robust and consistent email communication, we are implementing a text message system and will be holding ongoing town hall meetings. Our website is being updated to reflect our plans and ongoing updates. Finally, we will be posting signage throughout our building reminding our students of the policies and guidelines. Specific steps will include a commitment to:

- Publish our reopening plans on our website and update them as they evolve
- Provide resources and education on COVID-19 prevention and safety, including information on CDC and DOH COVID-19 guidelines
- Ensure that students, faculty, and staff are trained in how to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene
- Use verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings, when social distance cannot be maintained.

Section 2: Health and Safety

Our goal is to provide the best option for our students at the start of the school year, recognizing that the safety of our stakeholders is of primary concern. Health and safety are multifaceted, and include physical, psychological, emotional, social and developmental considerations. Our decisions have been and will continue to be guided by science with the advice of our medical director while remaining adaptable to the ongoing scientific development and governmental guidance.

Our approach has been to **reduce risk** of COVID-19 to the best of our knowledge and ability. Safety precautions are intended to:

- Limit the likelihood of transmission of COVID-19;
- Create ongoing awareness of the need to adapt our behavior to current reality;
- Focus on what is in our control;
- Be adaptable, as experts continue to learn more and adjust their recommendations; and
- Take into account the practical needs of our stakeholders.

Our approach is built on 4 pillars:

- Maintaining social distance and reducing density whenever possible;
- Health screening;
- Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting; and
- Communication, training and coordination.

Admittance to the Building

For the safety of our students, faculty, and staff, only faculty, staff, and students will be permitted to enter the building. Non-student family members, outside tutors, vendors, contractors, or other individuals will not be permitted entry without prior permission from school administration and will require the completion of our symptom assessment and temperature check. A log of all visitors will be kept at the security desk. Deliveries will be left outside of the front door. People handling packages should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer after handling packages. In addition, people may wear disposable gloves when handling packages

Health Checks

To start the year, all faculty, staff, and students must have a negative COVID-19 nasal swab test before the start of the school year. Exams must be taken after August 1 and the results must be received by us prior to entry to school. Please note that currently, it can take 7 - 10 days to receive results.

Mandatory Daily Online Screenings

For those entering the building, including students, faculty, staff, and where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors, YUHSB will implement mandatory health screening to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

YUHSB will implement a dual temperature check system. All students will be required to take their temperature before leaving their house and enter the results in our daily symptom assessment. In addition, all individuals entering the building must have their temperature checked before they enter the building each day at the entrance to the building. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, or (if a student) sent directly to an isolation area prior to being picked up by a parent.

Each morning, each student, faculty, and staff will be required to submit a symptoms-monitoring assessment, which will be done on a specified Yeshiva University High School app. The questions the students, faculty, and staff will fill out are available here. These forms will be updated periodically to make sure they reflect any updated understandings of the COVID-19 as expressed by the CDC and/or DOH. An individual will need a completed form, reflecting that he is symptom free, to be permitted to enter the building.

Additional Safety Guidelines

- As per state guidelines, there will be mandatory quarantine for any students, faculty or staff who have traveled to COVID-19 “hot spots”. Please [click here](#) for the updated list of states.
- In promoting health, we are mandating that every student receives a flu shot this year.
- Students may need to remain online for learning due to family situations. We will provide distance learning for these individuals. The arrangements will be a balance of synchronous classes via Zoom and asynchronous learning, and will be coordinated through the Grade Dean.

Positive Screens

Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing. Please [click here](#) for a list of symptoms. Students who are being sent home because of a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) will be immediately separated from other students and supervised in an isolation area next door to the nurse’s office until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can pick them up from school. When possible, the school nurse will provide such individuals (or their families) with information on health care and testing resources. The school will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if the individual’s diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.

If an individual’s responses to any of the aforementioned screening questions changes, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of school hours, they must report immediately to the nurse’s office for follow-up. Teachers will receive training prior to the start of the school year in how to identify pediatric symptoms of COVID-19, and will refer any students they see exhibiting such symptoms to the nurse.

YUHSB will follow the local DOH requirements and our medical guidance from Dr. Van Amerongen for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment. At a minimum, a return to school will require documentation from a healthcare provider evaluation and/or a negative COVID-19 test, and symptom resolution.

Protections for Individuals Conducting Screenings

YUHSB will ensure that any personnel performing in-person screening activities, including temperature checks, are appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious individuals entering the facilities. Personnel performing screening activities will be trained by individuals who are familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols.

Screeners will be provided with and use PPE, which includes at a minimum, an N-95 mask, and may also include gloves, a gown, and/or a face shield.

Management of Ill Persons

YUHSB has developed protocols for caring for a student, faculty, or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. These protocols include:

- An isolation room next door to the nurse's office to isolate students, faculty, or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness,
- Plans to ensure that symptomatic students who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is socially distanced and will be escorted out by the staff member.
- Families must have a plan before the start of the school year to be able to pick up their child within 1 -2 hours of being notified.
- PPE requirements for school nurse office staff caring for sick individuals, which include both standard and transmission-based precautions.
- Cleaning and disinfection as specified by CDC guidelines.
- Development of protocols to care for students with asthma that reduce the need for nebulizers or suction, or make provision for the use of these items in a safe location, since they are aerosol-generating procedures.

Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols

If COVID-19 cases are discovered at the school, the immediate response will include closing off areas or classes where individuals were infected and engaging in a process of "deep cleaning" either in the affected area, portions of the school, or more broadly the entire school, as determined in consultation with DOH guidelines or conversations with our local DOH contact.

We may choose to modify operations prior to instituting school-wide closures to help mitigate a rise in cases.

Contact Tracing Support

Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus. YUHSB is committed to supporting state and local health department contact tracing by knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:

- Keeping accurate attendance records of students, faculty and staff members;
- Ensuring student schedules are up to date;
- Keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited; and
- Assisting local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. This does not mean schools are required to have staff members take the contract tracing program. Questions should be directed to the local health department.

In the case of an individual testing positive, YUHSB is required by NY State to support the DOH in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. YUHSB is also required by law to cooperate with state and local health department isolation, and quarantine efforts.

Whereas state and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of COVID-19 infected or exposed persons, YUHSB is responsible for notifying faculty, staff and students' families if they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19. Please note that privacy laws prohibit YUHSB from revealing the name of the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. We may only reveal that the student, faculty or staff member has come in close or proximate contact with an unnamed person, and how we came to know this information (school tracking systems, governmental contact tracing, or another mechanism).

Return to School

If a person **is not** diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) based on a negative test or otherwise, they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines, and the individual is symptom-free for 24 hours; or
- If the individual has been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person **is** diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a positive test or their symptoms (if they do not get a test), they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

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

Face Masks/Coverings and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Who Must Wear Them and When

All persons in the building must wear masks indoors as a general rule. This applies to all students, faculty, staff, and any other individuals in the building. There are exceptions and special circumstances as outlined below. Masks must always be worn when entering "public areas" such as hallways, stairwells, bathrooms, or other spaces multiple individuals or groups may pass through, or in situations where social distancing may be difficult to maintain, such as riding in elevators, restrooms, entering/exiting classrooms with others, or in narrow halls and passageways. Individuals should have their masks with them at all times, as they must be prepared to put them on if they are unable to socially distance (as when stepping into an elevator).

Exceptions to general mask-wearing are outlined below.

- When eating morning and afternoon snacks, as well as lunch, seated and maintaining 6 feet social distance, students will be permitted to remove their masks.
- A student who is having difficulty breathing should immediately be given a mask break and, if the difficulty continues, should be evaluated by the nurse.

What Types of Masks and Protection are Appropriate

General Guidelines

Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection against COVID-19 and should not be used except in combination with an acceptable mask.

For staff engaged in workplace activities that require a higher degree of protection due to the nature of the work (e.g. health screenings, nurse's office work), N-95 masks, N-95 respirators, or other PPE used under existing industry standards should be used, in accordance with OSHA guidelines.

Provision of Masks

Each student, faculty and staff member will be provided with two cloth masks at the beginning of the school year.

For students who forget their cloth masks or for families who prefer to use

disposable masks, the school will have a supply of disposable surgical masks on hand that community members can use at no charge.

Teachers will be provided by the school with cloth and transparent masks. Since teaching often involves projecting the voice, leading to greater aerosolization, teachers are required to wear these masks when leading class.

Cloth face masks should be washed, disinfected, or replaced after each day's use and must not be shared. Disposable face masks should be discarded and not re-used after a day's use. Everyone should take responsibility for maintaining their individual face coverings. The CDC provides guidance on its website for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of PPE, as well as instructions on use and cleaning.

YUHSB will provide all students, faculty and staff with training on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including face masks.

Hygiene

Handwashing

YUHSB follows all hygiene requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH. These include:

- Training all students, faculty, and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, including providing information to families and guardians of students on ways to reinforce this at home.
- Creating extra time in the schedule for handwashing, especially after restroom breaks, lunch, using shared equipment, or other higher risk activities.
- Creating extra hand hygiene stations around the school that have soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- Installing touchless hand sanitizer dispensers filled with at least 60% alcohol-based sanitizer for areas where handwashing is impractical.
- Providing hand sanitizer and wipes in common areas or near shared workplace items (copy machines, computers), as well as in classrooms.

Cleaning and Disinfection

The school's custodial staff is primarily responsible for cleaning and disinfecting. A comprehensive COVID-19 specific cleaning plan per state guidelines has been developed for the school and is available through the Business Office. Per DOH guidelines, custodial staff will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfection.

In addition to the work of the custodial staff, classrooms and common areas will be stocked with child-safe, CDC-approved disinfectant wipes so that students and teachers can also contribute to cleaning efforts at periodic intervals during the day. Extra time has been built into the schedule for hygiene maintenance - both handwashing and the disinfection/cleaning of surfaces. High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day. These surfaces include:

- Tables
- Doorknobs
- Light switches
- Desks
- Keyboards and mice

In addition to these measures, the following extra steps will be taken in classrooms, offices and common areas:

- Water drinking fountains will be closed and touchless bottle refilling stations will be used instead. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to bring their own labeled water bottles for refilling.
- In general, students remain in their own classroom with their cohorts, with teachers rotating classrooms. However, shared items (lunch tables, gym equipment, etc) will be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort's use.
- Students will each have their own personal classroom supplies that they will use rather than using common materials.
- Materials and tools used by faculty and staff will be regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection, causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, YUHSB will supply disposable gloves and/or place limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.
- Custodial staff will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfection.

Food Services

YUHSB provides breakfast daily. This will be done through individual cereal containers. In addition, students will be permitted to order breakfast in advance from local restaurants, which will be delivered to our building and distributed by our staff. For lunch, YUHSB does not provide lunch. Students either eat food that was prepared at home or may order food from a local restaurant, following the protocols above. This coming year, the following adjustments will be made to our normal lunchtime routines.

For eating, students will eat with their capsule. On alternating days, students will either eat in their classroom or be permitted to eat in a designated and socially distant outdoor area (weather permitting).

Restrooms

- Restrooms designed for multiple people will be limited to half their usual capacity. Alternating stalls, urinals, and sinks will be closed off to provide distance between students. Signage demarking the maximum capacity will be posted on doors.
- Faculty and staff will use designated bathrooms to limit cross-exposure.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently during the day, following recommendations established by the DOH.
- Windows will be kept open to ensure proper air flow.
- Signage will be posted in the bathroom to remind everyone of proper

precautionary protocols.

Cleaning and Disinfection After a Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

In the event an individual at the school is confirmed to have COVID-19 while at school, YUHSB will immediately:

- Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, we will wait as long as possible to allow aerosolized particles to settle.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
- Reopen the area once it has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected.

If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection will continue.

Social Distancing

Medical experts have recommended social distancing whenever a group is together for a sustained period of time. Based on the updated guidelines of the CDC and the DOH, our classrooms set up has been adjusted to ensure that during class time our students will sit 3 feet away from each other, 6 feet from the teacher.

- Our classrooms are being set up ensuring there is at least 3 feet of social distance between students. For larger classes, we are using additional spaces in our building that can accommodate larger groups.
- This year to minimize movement, faculty may be changing rooms and students movement from classroom to classroom will be limited, whenever possible.
- Our faculty and staff will wear face coverings at all times when they are with students or others. Students will be expected to wear masks, too, at all times, unless eating.
- Recognizing that social distance cannot be maintained in our common spaces, such as hallways, staircases and bathrooms, everyone must wear masks in these spaces. Signage will be posted throughout these spaces reminding everyone of our protocols. Capacity in our bathrooms will be limited. In addition, as these are spaces not intended for sustained contact, no one will be allowed to congregate in these areas.
- Given the balance between creating social distance and the finite space of our building, we are looking to provide as much spacing as possible to reduce density. This is important in order to best monitor the traffic flow in our building and limit the necessary situations in which social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Protective barriers will be placed around each teacher's desk to provide a further barrier to transmission.
- Recreational times, such as gym and lunch, are important parts of the students' day. They are also times in which large groups are often together in close contact.

We plan to provide these healthy outlets for our students while ensuring that appropriate social distance measures are maintained.

- Our buses will be limited to one student per seat, with the exception of siblings, who will sit together when needed. In addition, students will be required to wear masks while on the bus and the windows will be open to ensure proper air flow. Busing information will be sent out closer to the start of the school year.

Creation of Cohorts

Educating each student means providing a personal approach to tracking. Our educational philosophy has therefore always meant that we can track students appropriately for each discipline. In order to provide a quality education, consistent with this educational philosophy, each grade will be designated as its own capsule. This will allow us to provide appropriate tracking for each student, as well as meaningful social opportunities, while limiting exposure to other grades. In instances in which the cohort model will not work, students not from the cohort will sit at a social distance of 6 feet from other students.

Arrival, Departure, and Scheduling

Arrival and dismissal will take place using multiple entrances in order to reduce density and crowding.

In past years, the entire school had lunch at the same time. This year, we are splitting lunch into two different periods, to stagger lunch time. This will also ensure greater access to time eating outdoors, as well as safe and well-ventilated places to eat.

Finalized schedules will be released at the end of August.

Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty

Our commitment to the health and safety of everyone is paramount. As such, we are taking the following precautions to provide a safe work environment for our faculty.

- We will reconfigure the faculty lounge to ensure social distance. This will include adding an additional faculty lounge.
- Specific rooms will be designated for teachers to meet with a student while maintaining social distance. Teachers will also be provided with the option of having any student meetings take place via Zoom or other video conferencing.
- Teacher desks in the classroom, as well as office desks will be fitted with a plexiglass style barrier to ensure an additional level of protection.

Metrics Used in Decision-Making

During the coming year, there may be times when we are ordered to close the campus by the Governor. The state has established metrics that they will use to order a regional or state-wide lockdown. We will be monitoring cases on an ongoing basis. The President will be deciding on the final determination. The Governor has said that an increase to 9% of confirmed positive cases after August 1 will prompt him to close schools.

However, there may be situations within our own borough, neighborhood, or school community when community spread of COVID-19 needs to be addressed. Under

guidance from the state and local authorities, YUHSB has identified the following policies to help us track and trace the level of transmission in the school setting, so that we can responsibly provide for the health and safety of our students, families, faculty, and staff.

Metrics for Quarantining a Class

Students will be grouped in cohorts to allow for fewer opportunities for cross-exposure, and easier containment of the virus if there is an outbreak. If a student from a given class is confirmed to be COVID-19 positive, then the class will quarantine at home for the following 10 days and the school community will be alerted that we have entered “watchful” mode. The school may take extra precautions in the form of increased cleaning, changes in school schedules or space use, etc. during this time to mitigate the risk of spread.

If the student who tested positive has a sibling in a different class, the sibling will also quarantine for 10 days; however, the sibling’s classmates will not need to quarantine unless the sibling himself tests positive.

Similarly, if more than five percent of students from any given class are out sick, the class will self-quarantine at home either for 10 days or until all students are tested for COVID-19 and come back negative, whichever is sooner. In the case of sickness but no positive test, the community will not be alerted until such time as a positive test result comes back from a quarantined student.

Students who present with symptoms of COVID-19 during a period of self-quarantine need to follow the procedures for returning to school as outlined above.

During the time of a full-class quarantine, when possible the class lessons will continue remotely.

Metrics Used for School-Wide Decisions

In deciding whether to close the school building and enter a phase of remote learning, YUHSB will use the following metrics (either alone or in combination, as circumstances suggest):

- We will review the questionnaires weekly. If we see a 5% increase in positive responses to the symptom reports, we will move to daily reviews of the reports.
- If there is a 9% cumulative increase in medically diagnosed or confirmed COVID-19 cases, we will temporarily shift to remote learning.
- We will continue to monitor the science and guidelines to this approach.
- Our larger community (NYC) rate of new cases, as determined by the DOH-published rolling 7-day average, reach 9%.

Section 3: Facilities

Utilization of Space

YUHSB is utilizing our facilities to ensure that we provide social distancing. In doing so, we are reconfiguring larger spaces to serve as classrooms. In addition, we are utilizing outdoor areas for exercise and eating spaces. Spaces that are not large enough for social distance classrooms will be converted to faculty offices or meeting spaces for students and teachers.

Safety Drills

YUHSB maintains an internal guide for conducting drills entitled “Best Practices for Conducting Emergency Safety Drills.” This will be reviewed and updated before the start of the 2020-21 school year to take into account social distancing requirements by, for instance, indicating that students, faculty and staff are to maintain a distance of six feet when they gather on the sidewalks outside for our headcount, and by reviewing where each class should gather in order to preserve maximum distance.

Ventilation & Plumbing

Many of our classrooms and larger spaces have high ceilings and open windows for healthy air circulation. Our labs have a central air system and we will provide an upgraded filtration system. For our classrooms, we will be keeping the windows open and are exploring the option of using a HEPA air filtration system.

Our plumbing systems have been checked throughout the summer and determined to be safe.

Section 4: Transportation

As a “commuter” school, our students take private busing to travel to school. Our safety precautions include the following:

- Students will maintain social distancing while waiting at their bus stop. Our buses have small communal stops, ensuring that the routes are relatively short while the number of students waiting at the bus stop is manageable.
- Students will wear a mask on the bus at all times.
- Students will have their own assigned seat.
- Windows will remain open to ensure proper air circulation.

Section 5: Social-Emotional Well-Being

Our commitment to education is to provide a holistic educational experience for our students. This educational philosophy is the focus of our plans for this year, as every year. To that end, part of our planning includes ensuring healthy social emotional development of our students. YUHSB has worked to support faculty, staff and students during this COVID-19 period in a number of different ways.

Support Team

YUHSB has a strong Social-Emotional Multi-Tiered Support System in place, which involves the following personnel:

Mrs. Tamar Sheffey, MSW - Director of Guidance

Rabbi Eli Cohn - Freshman Grade Dean

Rabbi Elon Soniker - Sophomore Grade Dean

Rabbi Netanel Danto - Junior Grade Dean

Rabbi Avraham Shulman - Senior Grade Dean

Rabbi Daniel Konigsberg - Director of Student Activities

Our team has been planning towards ensuring that our typical programming is able to take place, within the guidelines of social distancing, cohorting, and our general commitment to physical health.

Advisory Program

This year, we are introducing an advisory program for our freshmen and sophomores. Advisory will meet weekly and will provide a balance between a structured curriculum, focused on Social Emotional Learning, as well as an opportunity to discuss timely topics, based on current events and what our students are experiencing at that point in time.

School Procedures and Teacher/Staff Professional Development

In addition to our curriculum, we will provide support for students, faculty and staff to process reactions to COVID-19 in the upcoming school year by:

- We will be having a pre-school orientation to provide our students and parents with an overview of our guidelines for this year, as well as an in-depth understanding of the guidelines they will need for the first part of their first day.
- We are significantly enhancing our typical first day orientation. We will be discussing the guidelines and procedures for the upcoming year. There will be a focus on the educational opportunities embedded in these guidelines so that our students understand and “buy in” to the guidelines, as well as the guiding principles.
- Offering support to faculty and staff, as well as families, through individual appointments with our school social worker.
- Our Director of Guidance and another member of our leadership team attended a conference on social emotional learning in the current pandemic. We will be incorporating what they learned in the pre-school faculty meetings to provide our entire faculty with a framework for how to support social emotional

development within their classroom.

- Professional development for teachers in how to work with students in class during a prolonged crisis--lessons taken from other trauma-informed schools and settings. Expectations of what “normal” child development and behavior looks like under these circumstances will be discussed, as well as opportunities for professional and personal growth around meeting students’ needs in NYC during and after both COVID-19 and the extreme social unrest many neighborhoods have experienced.
- Professional development for teachers around identifying signs of depression, anxiety, and trauma in children of different ages, and how to appropriately refer them to support staff for follow up.
- Our faculty will be set up with a buddy teacher to check in with each other regularly and to discuss pedagogical issues, as well as care for each other’s social emotional well-being.

Section 6: School Schedules

Models and Considerations for Learning

Education is a flexible and constantly evolving field. Over the past four months, we have learned several lessons. Firstly, our experience has reaffirmed the value we place on face-to-face learning. The in-person interaction that takes place in the classroom is almost irreplaceable. Our experience is consistent with the well documented findings of the known advantages of in-person learning. We have also had a chance to reflect on what worked and what needs to be adjusted for remote learning. Our approach to remote learning was crafted in an emergency type of setup. Over the summer, we have been training to fine tune our pedagogy, should we need to utilize it this year.

Our goal for the start of the school year and beyond is to have the maximum number of students in school for face-to-face learning for a full day. Our planning for in-person learning takes into account the reality that some individuals will not be comfortable participating in-person and therefore, our faculty has been planning for a remote learning set up as needed. The past four months have taught us that we must plan for a variety of scenarios, therefore, we have planned for a range of possibilities.

We are exploring three different models of teaching and learning: face-to-face, remote learning, and a hybrid model.

Face-To-Face Learning Model

- Students will be in school five days a week.
- We may need to utilize additional spaces for learning.
- Limiting students to small cohorts may be an educational challenge based on the educational and social needs of our students and the priority we place on voice and choice in course decisions for the older grades. We are therefore focusing, to the best of our ability, on maintaining grade-wide cohorts.
- Masks and social distancing coupled with barriers in the classroom will be used to adequately provide for the safety of the students and teachers.
- A focus is being placed on ensuring that social and extracurricular programming can take place in a safe manner.
- Larger gatherings in the building, including prayers and assemblies, will be limited to the grade cohorts.
- Trips will likely be canceled and co-curricular activities, including athletics, will need to be re-imagined in order to protect the safety of our students, while at the same time allowing for them to have a robust educational experience both in and out of the classroom.

Remote Learning Model

- In the remote learning model, we are planning a robust educational and full programmatic experience for our students, using Zoom, Google Classroom, and other online tools. Our plan has been guided by our continuing professional development around remote learning and the feedback that we heard over the Spring semester.
- This model will be implemented if it is deemed unsafe to be in school.

Hybrid Learning Model

- In the hybrid learning model, students will learn both face-to-face and with coordinated online learning experiences.
- Based on our current understanding, three grades can be safely situated in our building.
- Students may be in school for 3-4 days a week and be home for 1-2 days of the week.
- This model introduces physical distancing and density reduction as key strategies for further reducing exposure within our community, while at the same time, providing face-to-face interaction between students and teachers for most of the time.

Section 7: Attendance

Attendance

The school collects student attendance data every day, both for in-person and online settings. Attendance will be taken in every student's "homeroom" classroom (first-period classroom). Attendance will also be taken in every subsequent class. Attendance records are collected and maintained by Rabbi Baruch Gopin, Attendance Coordinator, as outlined in our School Handbook. If a student will be absent from school, due to any COVID-19 related issue, they have been instructed to email Rabbi Joshua Kahn, Head of School, as well as Rabbi Baruch Gopin, Attendance Coordinator.

Chronic Absenteeism

YUHSB will work to identify any student at risk of becoming chronically absent due to sickness, family situation, or other circumstances, reaching out to families and providing educational support services that include:

- Check-ins from the student's Grade Dean.
- Check-ins with all classroom teachers to provide work at a rate and level that is appropriate to the student's situation.
- Additional support from our Learning Support team, if needed.
- Help obtain the necessary technology to ensure continuity of learning.
- Appointments with our Director of Guidance who can refer out to additional services, as needed.

To achieve these goals we will use phone, email, and even socially distant meet-ups to engage and converse with family members and students who are experiencing difficulty.

Section 8: Teaching and Learning

Our goal is to enable our students to continue their lifelong learning in our building, which includes both their academic experience and the relationships that they build with themselves, their fellow classmates and their teachers and administrators. As mentioned above, we aim to provide students with an in person model while at the same time modeling radical flexibility by planning for multiple learning models.

Access to Technology

YUHSB is committed to ensuring each student has the necessary access to technology. We provide a chromebook to each student and have surveyed our parent body to ensure they have sufficient internet and other necessary technology for remote learning.

Platforms and Security

The pivot during the Spring to online learning offered YUHSB with valuable learning opportunities regarding our online learning platform. Based on feedback, we have moved to using Google Classroom as our learning platform. In addition, we had success in safely and effectively using Zoom as our video conferencing platform.

Education for Families and Teachers

Last Spring our educational technologist did a tremendous job providing support for both families and teachers as we pivoted rapidly to remote learning. The feedback collected through our surveys reflected this success. Having established a successful Zoom platform, we now are in the position of simply providing “maintenance” support to families who need troubleshooting here and there with the technology.

Similarly, teachers are relatively well-equipped for remote learning. Again, the feedback shared by our faculty through surveys also reflected this feeling of support. Tech staff have time built into their job duties and schedules to work with teachers who are experiencing tech difficulties.

Professional development on the pedagogical side of remote learning continues to be offered both in optional and mandatory formats.

Our students will continue to have science laboratories in a combination of synchronous and asynchronous models.

Our physical education teacher is exploring new options for PE that are safe and allow for students safety and at the same time to improve their physical and mental health, which may have been impacted this year by COVID-19.

Educational Support Services

Supporting each student’s academic success is integral to our mission statement. As such, our Learning Center is committed to supporting each student who receives services. Whether school convenes in-person with social distance requirements,

remotely, or somewhere in-between, the particular needs of our students need to be considered to provide the most positive and advantageous program for our students whether they are enrolled in our Support Program, whether they receive consistent services or whether they simply need occasional support. It is widely acknowledged and accepted that without such attention, the disparity in opportunity and achievement widens.

To enable our students to receive the support they need, care has been taken to ensure the schedule spreads out when our students will be coming to the Learning Center. Our Learning Center has been refurbished to ensure that the furniture is set up for students to work and receive support, while maintaining social distance.

Shifting to an online platform, as was done in Spring 2020, has proven for some students to be an atmosphere of comfort and flourish, noticed by the learning specialists, faculty, parents and the student, himself. In these cases, the altered setting provided an improved atmosphere for some students who appreciated the relative quiet and focus. It was a welcome positive outcome. In other cases, students who had a hard time sitting for longer periods were challenged with the seat time required in online instruction. Thought is being given to this and how to help our students should online learning be reintroduced. Various modalities will be interspersed in online lessons to respond to the challenge.

In addition to meeting with the students, our learning specialists are ombudsmen between students/parents and faculty. They attend classes, either in-person or online, as needed. Their quiet presence is felt as supportive by their students and helpful to the faculty. This participation will continue in the upcoming year and will happen either within our building when possible and online when necessary. Similarly, supporting our students is a partnership we share with our parents. This entails in person meetings with the learning center. For the upcoming year, these meetings will continue, however, they will shift to an online platform.

Section 9 : Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Athletics

Exercise is an important part of a healthy school experience. We will follow the guidelines of the NYSDOH regarding interscholastic sports. Currently, based on these guidelines, we will not participate in interscholastic sports. However, we will provide grade wide intramural activities, provided that they meet the NYSDOH criteria regarding risk category. Athletics will take place outdoors, whenever possible.

Extracurriculars

YUHSB values the development of each student and seeks to support his growth inside and outside the classroom. During the school year, students are invited to explore and nurture their interests and talents by joining a robust array of existing clubs, academic teams, school publications, or initiating and leading new co-curricular opportunities.

Last March, when COVID-19 closed our building, we quickly transferred our robust Student Activities and Life programs to Zoom. We ran interactive night activities, club hour, schoolwide Color War, a virtual Senior Dinner, G.O. Elections, and an incoming Freshman event.

Looking ahead to the Fall, we will work together to create a new vision of Student Life at YUHSB. At this point, competitive Athletics have been suspended, but we are hopeful that it will be reimagined to comply with safety restrictions. We are planning for a virtual Club Fair and online club opportunities. Most competitive clubs and teams will be planned on Zoom from the start, and this year we have the opportunity to compete with schools from across the US, Canada, and even overseas. We hope to hold in-person programming in small groups (within grade levels), when possible, in large spaces or outdoors. As of now, schoolwide programming will take place on Zoom. Our G.O. will be actively involved in online programming and school spirit. Our community service committee is already planning for various online and off-site opportunities for our students. Names, Not Numbers, is a wonderful and enriching program for our Seniors, and has already been revamped for COVID-19 safety.

Conclusion

YUHSB believes we are currently well prepared to return to an in-person scenario in the Fall.

Our thorough preparation, enthusiastic support, thoughtful guidance and safety precautions ensure that our students are being set up for success. Our commitment to provide the full educational experience, while prioritizing holistic health and safety will provide our students with a productive learning environment. We will continue to use science and data to guide us through this constantly evolving pandemic. Recognizing this dynamic situation, we are prepared to adjust our plans as necessary and to share those plans with our school community.