



**HEBREW INSTITUTE'S  
DEVELOPMENTAL & EDUCATIONAL CENTER**  
DIVISION OF HEBREW INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF AND EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

**Hebrew Institute for the Deaf and Exceptional Children's  
School Re-Opening Plan**

Submitted: 8/6/2020

**Agency Name:** Hebrew Institute for the Deaf and Exceptional Children

**BEDS Code:** 332000227506

**Administrative Address:** 1401 Avenue I  
Brooklyn, NY 11230

**Program Site Address:** Same

**Program(s) provided at this site:**

- 4410 (Pre-school Special Education)
- Special Class
- Special Class in an Integrated Setting
- Multi-Disciplinary Evaluations
- 853 (School Age Special Education)
- Other:

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**Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted:** <https://hidec.org/>

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all New Yorkers in countless ways. Our families, and surrounding communities have suffered physically, emotionally, financially, and educationally. But, when HIDEC was required to close their buildings in March, instruction and support services continued. Our staff has worked tirelessly with local health agencies and the State/ City Education Departments to ensure that students and their families continue to receive critical resources needed to meet the education needs of our students.

The 2020-21 school year will be our time to recover, rebuild and renew the spirit of HIDEC. Working together, educators, therapists, students and families will continue to address these challenges with resiliency, tenacity and determination.

This document is intended to provide guidance to our families as we plan to reopen our school whether instruction occurs in person, remotely, or in some combination of the two. Specifically, the document outlines the essential elements that will include HIDEC's reopening plan, as well as recommended best practices for moving forward in these incomparable times.

This plan will be revised and updated as needed to adjust to changing public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 virus and all of the new requirements and regulations which may emerge over time. We will rely on continued input from all stakeholders as we move forward implementing this plan and as we contemplate any additions or modifications.

We know our program must be as flexible and as responsive as possible to the needs of our students, families and staff members. We will closely monitor the conditions of our community as the COVID 19 pandemic continues and the effectiveness and appropriateness of our plan. Be assured that nothing has changed our sincere commitment to our students and our determination to provide the highest possible quality of educational programming and related services even during these difficult times.

The goal of the plan is to guide the delivery of high-quality educational services as safely as possible whether that service delivery is in-person, through a remote learning platform or a blended combination of remote and in-person services. Our focus and concerns extend to the social and emotional needs of our students, families and staff members. By diligently working together and remaining focused on the outcomes we desire, we can find solutions to the many challenges ahead.

Once finalized, HIDEC's Re-Opening Plan will be posted on the school website (<https://hidec.org/>) so that is easily located by students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, and other community stakeholders. This plan will be available in the dominant languages spoken in our school community.

Our plan includes all the required elements identified by NYSED and follows the structure of the guidance by addressing the following areas as they apply to our students with disabilities and their families:

Any suggestions, concerns and/or questions about our plan can be directed to HIDEC administration. You may send all inquiries to [email@hidec.org](mailto:email@hidec.org) or call the school directly at (718)377-7507 to speak to an administrator.

## **COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

As plans for reopening HIDEC are being developed, we must work together with families to foster trust and instill confidence. Maintaining our strong relationship takes regular, frequent, and transparent two-way communications. Our communications will be clear and consistent, and families will continued to be encouraged to engage in this ongoing process.

On July 13, 2020, New York State, the Reimagine Education Advisory Council, and the NYS Department of Health released [finalized guidance and guiding principles](#) for reopening schools. Pursuant to this guidance HIDEC is responsible for developing a reopening plan. HIDEC will sign an assurance that its plan includes provisions to meet the following communication requirements:

- HIDEC will engage with school stakeholders and community members (e.g., administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, and affiliated organizations, and/or community-based groups) when developing this reopening plans. HIDEC's reopening plan was a team collaboration with HIDEC's Administration, School Nurse, Human Resources, Psychology Departments (HIDEC's Trained COVID Team) and other support staff members.
- HIDEC has developed a communication plan for students, parents or legal guardians of students, staff, and visitors that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information. HIDEC has developed a webpage, video conferencing and email groups to maintain communication as well as provide communication in multiple languages.
- HIDEC will continue to ensure that all students are taught and trained how to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene.
- HIDEC will continue to encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors through verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings, when a social distance cannot be maintained.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

*NOTE: Students and staff will return to in-person instruction only when governmental authorities permit in-person education. Additionally any return to in-person instruction will necessitate that the school's leadership also determines the number of students and staff allowed to return in person based on: the ability to maintain social distancing; the availability of PPE, including the availability of cloth face coverings and face masks; availability of safe transportation; local hospital capacity according to the local Department of Health*

The health and safety of the children and adults at HIDEC are paramount. Health and safety considerations will always come first in every decision made and every action taken by our school.

Whether instruction is provided in-person, remotely, or through some combination of the two, HIDEC has an important role to play in educating and communicating with school communities about the everyday preventive actions they can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Prevention is accomplished by following the recommendations of health authorities in the following areas:

- Health Checks;
- Healthy Hygiene Practices;
- Social Distancing;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Cloth Face Coverings;
- Management of Ill Persons; and
- Cleaning and Disinfection.

Additional considerations are based on best practice or recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and should also be reviewed and included as feasible in reopening plans. HIDEC will continually monitor the CDC and DOH websites to keep current with the latest COVID information and guidance.

HIDEC will adhere to the following mandatory requirements:

- HIDEC will review and consider the number of students and staff allowed to return in person. These factors will be considered when determining resumption of in person instruction as per the NYS/NYC DOH and the State Education Department
- When applicable HIDEC will maintain appropriate social distancing
- PPE and cloth face mask availability
- HIDEC will engage with school stakeholders and community members (e.g., administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, affiliated organizations, and/or community-based groups) when updating health and safety reopening plans.

- HIDEDEC's plan will include a communication plan for students, parents/guardians, staff, and visitors that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information.
- HIDEDEC's plan includes a protocol developed in collaboration with the COVID Team to instruct staff to observe for signs of illness in students and staff and requires symptomatic persons to be sent to the school nurse or other designated personnel.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol for daily temperature screenings of all students and staff, along with a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff and periodic use of the questionnaire for students when applicable.
- HIDEDEC's plan requires that ill students and staff be assessed by the School Nurse and/or COVID Team. Ill students and staff will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol requiring students or staff with a temperature, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the questionnaire to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation room where students are supervised, prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol to address visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors to the school which includes health screening.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol to instruct parents/guardians to observe for signs of illness in their child before leaving for school that may require staying home from school.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol and appropriate signage to instruct staff and students in correct hand and respiratory hygiene.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol to ensure all persons in school buildings keep social distance of at least 6 feet whenever possible.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol detailing how we will provide accommodations to all students and staff who are at high risk or live with a person at high risk.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol requiring all employees, adult visitors, and students to wear a cloth face covering whenever social distancing cannot be maintained.
- HIDEDEC's plan has a protocol regarding staff and students taking mask breaks.
- HIDEDEC's plan for obtaining and maintaining adequate supplies of face coverings for school staff, students who forget their masks, and PPE for use by school health professionals.

- HIDEC's plan a protocol for actions to be taken if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school.
- HIDEC's plan has a protocol that complies with CDC guidance for the return to school of students and staff following illness or diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19 or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Return to school will be coordinated with the local health department.
- HIDEC's plan has a protocol to clean and disinfect schools following CDC guidance.
- HIDEC's plan has a protocol to conduct required school safety drills with modifications ensuring social distancing between persons.
- HIDEC's has designated a COVID-19 safety coordinator (School Nurse) whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of HIDEC's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.

## Health Checks

Parents/guardians and staff members will be provided with resources from NYS/NYC DOH to educate them regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19 and health screening that must be conducted each morning before coming to school. Parents/guardians and school staff will be instructed that any student or staff member with a fever of 100°F<sup>1</sup> or greater and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present in school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) keep an up to date list of [symptoms of Coronavirus](#) on its website. This list is not all inclusive as some individuals may display other symptoms or none at all. As of 7/13/2020, the following are listed as the most common symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever or chills (100°F or greater);
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- Fatigue;
- Muscle or body aches;

- Headache;
- New loss of taste or smell;
- Sore throat;
- Congestion or runny nose;
- Nausea or vomiting; and/or
- Diarrhea

It is strongly recommended that all staff members are educated to observe students or other staff members for signs of any type of illness such as:

- Flushed cheeks;
- Rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity);
- Fatigue, and/or irritability; and
- Frequent use of the bathroom.

Students and staff exhibiting these signs with no other explanation for them will be sent to the school health office for an assessment by the school nurse. If a school nurse is not available an administrator will contact the parent/guardian to come pick up their ill child or send the staff member home. Health screenings including daily temperature checks and completion of a screening questionnaire are required for staff, contractors, vendors, and visitors. Students are required to have a daily temperature check and periodic completion of a screening questionnaire. Anyone who has a temperature of 100°F or greater or has a positive response on the screening questionnaire will be isolated from others and sent home immediately. Students will be supervised in the isolated area while awaiting transport home. HIDEC will refer such persons to a healthcare provider and provide [resources on COVID-19 testing](#).

Students and staff are required to notify the school when they develop symptoms or if their answers to the questionnaire change during or outside school hours. HIDEC will advise means to collect this information such as a dedicated email or telephone line.

HIDEC will encourage staff to complete required screenings prior to arrival at school and encourage parents/guardians to screen their child before sending them to school. Screening by the parent/ guardian prior to school is preferred in lieu of temperature checks and symptom screening being performed after arrival to school. Screening of students includes a daily temperature check and periodic completion of a screening questionnaire.

A screening questionnaire determines whether the individual has:

- knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
- tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F in the past 14 days: and/or
- has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the [New York State Travel Advisory](#) in the past 14 days.

## **Hygiene Practices**

Healthy hygiene practices will be taught and re-taught for both students and staff. HIDEC will provide instruction to the school community in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time to allow for frequent hand hygiene. Additionally, HIDEC will post signs throughout the school and will regularly share messages with the school community. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

- Stay home if they feel sick.
- Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- Adhere to social distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
- Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Teaching healthy hygiene practices can be accomplished in person, by videos, announcements, and posters or signs. HIDEC will post signage in highly visible areas such as:

- Entrances
- Restrooms
- Classrooms

The CDC provides sample [announcements](#) on reducing the spread of COVID-19, [videos](#) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19, and print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page, along with the NYSDOH [COVID-19 signage](#).

## Hand Hygiene

Students and staff must practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. HIDEK will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene.

### *Hand Hygiene includes:*

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method;
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty. [NYSED's Memo: Handwashing Recommendations and Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer Use in Schools](#) provides information to schools regarding the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers;
- Provide hand sanitizer throughout common areas (e.g. entrances), near high touch surfaces, and use touch free dispensers when able;
- Signage will be placed near hand sanitizer indicating visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; and
- If students or staff are unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers for health reasons therefore they will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water.

As noted in prior NYSED memos, hand sanitizers contain alcohol and are flammable. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers are permitted to be installed in rooms and corridors in limited quantities in accordance with FCNYS 2020 Section 5705.5.

HIDEK will follow [the CDC guidance on when and how to wash your hands](#) provides information on when hand washing should occur, how to wash hands correctly, and how to correctly use alcohol-based hand sanitizers. HIDEK will provide the following:

- Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
- Paper towels or touch free paper towel dispensers where feasible;
- Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol;
- Time in the schedule to allow for frequent hand washing; and
- Promotion of proper hand washing before meals, after recess or physical education, before and after removing PPE, and other times, as appropriate.

At a minimum, all HIDEC staff and students will wash hands, as follows:

- Upon entering the building and each classroom;
- After using shared objects or surfaces (e.g. electronic devices, musical instruments, writing utensils, tools, toys, desks or table tops);
- Before and after snacks and lunch;
- After using the bathroom;
- After helping a student with toileting;
- After sneezing, wiping or blowing nose, or coughing into hands;
- Upon coming in from outdoors; and
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

## **Respiratory Hygiene**

The COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, we will stress the importance that students and staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately.

If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. HIDEC recommends always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

## **Social Distancing**

Social Distancing also called “physical distancing” means keeping a six foot space between yourself and others. HIDEC has attempted to develop, implement, and enforce social distancing in our facilities and on school grounds.

HIDEC will strive to ensure that student groupings are as static as possible by having the same group/cohort of students stay together.

- Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times will be organized to allow increased social distancing during arrivals.
- HIDEC will follow all safety requirements when considering the use of other entrances and ensure that all entrances are monitored and are locked after use.

- HIDEC will making arrival schedule changes for students who walk or are dropped off at school by a parent or caregiver;
- HIDEC will establish designated areas for student drop-off and pick-up, limiting contact and entry of parents/ guardians into the building, to the greatest extent possible.
- HIDEC will reduce in-school movement where possible by keeping students within a defined area or classroom and modifying class schedules or class transitions using these recommendations:
  - When possible, have the same cohort of students with the same teacher each day
  - Special area teachers (e.g., music, yoga) will teach remotely versus floating into classrooms. Whenever possible Music or Yoga classes may be held outdoors to encourage students to spread out.
  - HIDEC will stagger the use of restrooms, allowing use at other times when necessary. Bathrooms will be monitored by staff to ensure social distancing by using a flag system as advised by the NYC DOH.
- HIDEC will instruct staff to open windows to improve ventilation if there is no health risk (e.g., allergies, or potential fall);
- HIDEC will attempt to keep individual student belongings separated. Limit use of shared supplies and clean between use;
- HIDEC will use visual aids (e.g., painter's tape, stickers, posters, cones etc.) to illustrate traffic flow and appropriate spacing to support social distancing;
- HIDEC may explore the use of alternate spaces (e.g., classroom) for eating lunch and breakfast. This may include staggering lunch periods within the cohort;
- HIDEC will restrict the use of classrooms and other places where students, faculty, and staff gather (e.g., cubbies, entryways, hallways), so that individuals can be socially distanced;
- HIDEC's playgrounds may continue to be used when proper safeguards are in place. Wash hands before and after touching play structures and keep 6 feet of space from other children as much as possible. When possible, build in visual cues that demonstrate physical spacing;
- HIDEC will alter parent and student assemblies, performances, school-wide parent meetings. Consider changing in-school events to a virtual format;
- HIDEC will limit visitors to school buildings.
- HIDEC will use online meetings with parents and other persons when feasible.

## **Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups**

HIDEC will make accommodations and be able to accommodate the needs of medically vulnerable.

Students with special needs or students who are medically fragile may not be able to maintain social distancing, hand or respiratory hygiene. It is important for parents/guardians to work with their child's healthcare providers so that an informed decision can be made before returning to school.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

HIDEC has reviewed the [OSHA COVID-19 guidance](#) and the [CDC guidance on the correct use of PPE](#) for information on how to protect staff from potential exposures, according to their exposure risk pursuant to their [Exposure Control Plan](#). The OSHA guidance also sets forth when PPE is needed by staff pursuant to the OSHA standards.

## **Cloth Face Coverings**

Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. [Cloth face coverings](#) are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. All individuals in HIDEC's facility and on HIDEC's grounds must be prepared to put on a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance. All students and staff members must wear cloth face coverings:

- Whenever they are within 6 feet of someone;
- In hallways;
- In restrooms; and
- In other congregate settings

Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear therefore, HIDEC students and staff will have ample opportunities to take mask breaks while ensuring social distancing.

HIDEC will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings;
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering;
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings;
- The importance of routine cleaning of reusable face coverings; and
- Face coverings are for individual use only and should not be shared.

Students and staff may use alternate PPE (i.e., face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (e.g., hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the staff member.

## **Management of ill persons**

Students and staff with symptoms of illness will be sent to a designated area appointed by the school nurse for assessment. The school nurse is available to assess individuals as chronic conditions such as asthma and allergies or chronic gastrointestinal conditions may present the same symptoms as COVID-19 but are neither contagious nor pose a public health threat.

If a member of the COVID Team is not available, HIDEC will isolate and dismiss any student or staff member who has a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 that are not explained by a chronic health condition for follow up with a health care provider. Administrators will work collaboratively with the school nurse to determine if additional staff is needed to assist with non-nursing tasks such as:

- Student supervision;
- Telephone calls, text, or emails to parent/guardians; and
- Assistance with completing any required paperwork other than nursing documentation

HIDEC has designated the nurse and her medical expertise to make final health determinations.

## **If students or staff become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 at school**

HIDEC will follow [Education Law § 906, which provides](#) “[w]henver...a student in a the public schools shows symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease reportable under the public health law that imposes a significant risk of infection of others in the school, he or she shall be excluded from the school and sent home immediately, in a safe and proper conveyance. The director of school health services shall immediately notify a local public health agency of any disease reportable under the public health law. The director of school health services, or other health professionals acting upon direction or referral of such director, may make such evaluations of teachers and any other school employees, school buildings and premises` as, ***in their discretion***, they may deem necessary to protect the health of the students and staff.”

HIDEC’s staff must immediately report any illness of students or staff to the school nurse/COVID TEAM. Such reports should be made in compliance with FERPA, and

Education Law 2-d. HIDEC's school nurse may choose to go to classrooms to make assessments of students, this also will be done in a manner that protects the student's confidentiality. To avoid having several students waiting to see the school nurse, the staff will be directed to contact the nurse via phone to arrange a designated meeting area.

Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet

HIDEC will follow the CDC and NYSDOH recommendations by:

- Closing off areas used by a sick person and not using these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred;
- Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas.
  - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected it can be reopened for use.
  - Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- 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.

If a separate room is not available, keep at least a 6-foot distance between ill students and other persons. If they cannot be isolated in a separate room from others, it is recommended that a facemask (e.g., cloth or surgical mask) be provided to the student if the ill person can tolerate wearing it and does not have difficulty breathing, to prevent the possible transmission of the virus to others while waiting for transportation home. It is recommended that:

- Students should be escorted from isolation area to the parent/guardian;
- The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center;
- Symptomatic students or staff members follow CDC's [Stay Home When You Are Sick](#) guidance unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. If the student or staff member has emergency warning signs

such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19;

- School staff be aware of the symptoms of [Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\) associated with COVID-19](#) which is a serious condition associated with COVID-19 in children and youth. Schools should notify the parent/guardian if their child shows any of the following symptoms and recommend the child be referred for immediate follow up with a healthcare provider:
  - Fever abdominal pain
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Neck pain
  - Rash
  - Blood shot eyes
  - Feeling extra tired
- HIDEC will call for emergency transport (911) following HIDEC policies, for any student showing any of these emergency warning signs of MIS-C or other concerning signs:
  - Trouble breathing
  - Pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away
  - New confusion
  - Inability to wake or stay awake
  - Bluish lips or face
  - Severe abdominal pain
- If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, school administrators or his/her designee will notify the local health department to determine what steps are needed for the school community.

### **Return to School After Illness**

HIDEC will follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a

healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have 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 test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- 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.

The CDC provides specific guidance for individuals who are on home isolation regarding when the isolation may end. [Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings](#). CDC recommendations for discontinuing isolation in persons known to be infected with COVID-19 could, in some circumstances, appear to conflict with recommendations on when to discontinue quarantine for persons known to have been exposed to COVID-19. CDC recommends 14 days of quarantine after exposure based on the time it may take to develop illness if infected. Thus, it is possible that a person known to be infected could leave isolation earlier than a person who is quarantined because of the possibility they are infected.

## **COVID-19 Testing**

It is strongly recommended that schools comply with CDC guidance and not conduct COVID-19 testing or require testing or antibody testing of students or staff members. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted should be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. [CDC Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing](#). However, According to the August 3, 2020 memorandum from The NYC Department of Education states that, "All school staff members are asked to get tested for Covid-19 in the days leading up to the beginning of school, and will be prioritized for expedited results at the 34 city run testing sites. All school staff are also asked to get tested monthly during the school year. This free testing is also available for families city wide."

HIDEC will identify who in the community is responsible for referring, sourcing, and administering testing (e.g., local health department testing site, physician offices,

hospital system) particularly in the event that large-scale testing at the school is needed. If HIDEC wants to perform COVID-19 testing we must apply and be approved as a limited service laboratory (LSL). Please refer to the [instructions and application materials](#), and if applicable, the [worksheet for multiple locations](#).

## Contact Tracing

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. HIDEC will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing. HIDEC will assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at the school with a confirmed case by:

- keeping accurate attendance records of students 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
- Assist 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.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. HIDEC staff will not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local department of health.

## School Closures

HIDEC will collaborate with our local health department (NYCDOH) to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

The CDC provides [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection](#) with specific guidance for schools along with the [Cleaning and Disinfection Decision Tool](#) to aid in determining what level of cleaning and/or disinfection is necessary. School wide cleaning must include classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, libraries, playgrounds, and

busses. The guidance provides a general framework for cleaning and disinfection practices. The framework is based on doing the following:

- Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure;
- Disinfection using [US Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved disinfectants against COVID-19](#). Where disinfectants are used, products should be registered with EPA and the [NYS Department of Environmental Conservation \(DEC\)](#). Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important;
- When [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (e.g., 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water or 70% alcohol solutions). Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. This can cause fumes that may be extremely dangerous to breathe in. Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children;
- HIDEc will identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for the facility and area type; and
- HIDEc will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection in a facility or area.

Cleaning plans will include considerations regarding the safety of custodial staff and other people who are carrying out the cleaning or disinfection.

High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day. Examples of high touch surfaces include:

- Tables;
- Doorknobs;
- Light switches;
- Countertops;
- Handles;
- Desks;
- Phones;
- Keyboards and tablets;
- Toilets and restrooms; and
- Faucets and sinks.

Students will not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.

- HIDEC has established a schedule for cleaning and/or changing heating/air conditioning system filters. Opening windows, if it can be done safely, and conducting classes outdoors are other strategies to increase airflow;
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection of electronic devices such as laptops, iPads or Chromebooks, keyboards and computer mice, etc.. Consider the use of wipeable covers for electronics. If the manufacturer's guidance is unavailable, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes [per CDC Guidance](#). Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid the pooling of liquids;
- Shared instruments will be cleaned between use per the manufacturer's directions when applicable;
- Playgrounds will be cleaned [per CDC guidance](#):
  - outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection
  - do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds- it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public
  - high touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings should be cleaned routinely
  - cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended
- Sidewalks and roads should not be disinfected.
- Shared athletic/gym equipment (e.g., balls, protective gear) should be cleaned between use per manufacturer's directions.

## **School Health Office Cleaning**

School health office cleaning will occur after each use of:

- Cots;
- Bathroom; and
- Health office equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, etc.) should be cleaned following manufacturer's directions.

Disposable items will be used as much as possible including:

- Disposable pillow protectors; or
- Disposable thermometers, or disposable thermometer sheaths or probes.

More information on cleaning health office equipment is on the [New York State Center for School Health's](#) website under COVID-19.

## Health Physicals and Screenings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect it is having on healthcare providers, the Department released the memo [Health Examinations in Light of COVID-19 Pandemic](#), which provides direction to schools when students are delayed in obtaining required health physical examinations, along with information on the required health exam form [Required NYS School Health Examination Form](#).

The memo states:

- Schools are to continue to accept proof of a health examination regardless of the form it is completed on for exams conducted on or before January 31, 2021;
- Parents/guardians are provided with additional time to provide the completed health exam to the school;
- Student athletes are able to participate in the fall 2020 sports season even if they do not have a current health examination if they meet certain criteria;
- Beginning February 1, 2021 health examinations for schools are to be completed on the NYS Required Health Examination Form or an electronic health record equivalent form. This directive may change depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the fall; and
- Hearing, vision, and scoliosis screenings will be waived for the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 crisis, unless such screening has otherwise been deemed necessary, pursuant to an amendment to Commissioner's Regulations section 136.3(e).

## Safety Drills

Modifications to evacuation drill protocols may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting drills on a "staggered" schedule, where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once, and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site. Staggering by classroom, minimizes contact of students in hallways, stairwells, and at the evacuation site. If conducting drills using a modified procedure, it is required that the drill be conducted with all students in the school building on that school day, it may be necessary to do so during a class period that is extended for this purpose; and
- If HIDEK re-opens with a "hybrid" in-person model, such as one where students attend school alternate school weeks to reduce the occupancy of the school building, HIDEK will be certain that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures, and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person.

Modifications to Lockdown Drills may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct lockdown drill in classroom setting while maintaining social distancing and using masks;
- Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing, however schools must be certain that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person; and
- Conduct lockdown drill in classroom without “hiding”/ “sheltering” but provide an overview of how to shelter or hide in a classroom

## **FACILITIES**

When students and adults return to HIDEC’s building for in-person instruction, it will be vitally important that the physical spaces they occupy are configured and maintained in a way that provides the maximum possible protection from spreading the Corona Virus.

HIDEC will follow health guidance related to social distancing and other safety measures that will be put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. To meet the requirements of that guidance, HIDEC has rearranged and/ or re-purpose physical spaces.

### **Ventilation**

HIDEC will direct staff to increase the fresh air ventilation rate to the extent possible to aid in maintaining a healthy indoor air quality. We recognize there are many different types of ventilation systems, natural or mechanical, that may be limited for increasing ventilation outside air due to available heat or fan/relief airflow capacity. HIDEC has installed a higher efficiency filters.

## **CHILD NUTRITION**

HIDEC believes that meals boost learning, and studies show that students perform best academically when they are well nourished. No child should ever go hungry, and HIDEC will continue to provide meals to all students following SFA guidelines.

- HIDEC will provide all students enrolled in the SFA with access to school meals each school day. This will include all students in attendance.
- HIDEC will address all applicable health and safety guidelines.
- HIDEC will insure all classroom staff protects students with food allergies by posting allergy alerts in the designated feeding area(classroom) and food preparation area.

- HIDEC will include protocols and procedures for how students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating, how appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted and how sharing of food and beverages will be discouraged.
- HIDEC will include protocols and procedures that require cleaning and disinfection prior to the next group of students arriving for meals, if served in the same common area.
- HIDEC will ensure compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements.

### **Safety and Sanitation**

- HIDEC has updated standard operating procedures for sanitation of school kitchen, cafeteria;
- HIDEC has Identified any additional equipment or supplies such as thermometers, alcohol wipes or other equipment that will be needed to keep food, students, and staff safe;
- HIDEC has adequate supplies of face masks, soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues in food service areas;
- Routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces including tables, chairs, carts used in transportation, and point-of-service touch pads;
- Wear **single-use** gloves when handling or delivering all foods;
- Allow only program staff, custodial staff, and approved volunteers to enter program areas.

### **Food Service Staff**

- HIDEC will ensure that staff are trained on policies and protocols on health and safety;

### **Meals Consumed Onsite**

- Meals at HIDEC will be served within the classroom
- HIDEC will continue to discourage food sharing between students;
- Coordinate with custodians to establish sanitation procedures;
- Tables, chairs and other frequently touched hard surfaces will be sanitized between groups of students;
- HIDEC will coordinate with the school nurse in order to meet the feeding safety needs of student
- When students eat in classrooms:
  - train teachers on food allergies, including symptoms of allergic reactions to food
  - train all non-food service staff on any meal service-related activities they will be responsible for obtaining or developing posters or other aids to assist non-food service staff to implement meal service.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The school bus is a mandate for all preschool students with disabilities therefore, many of the recommendations that apply for HIDEC should be applied to the school bus, as well. HIDEC transportation is covered under the jurisdiction of the NYC DOE Office of Pupil Transportation. All questions referring to bussing should be directed to the OPT office at (718) 482-3800.

### **Protocols Once Students Disembark from Transportation**

- When students embark and disembark from the bus, they will follow social distancing protocols. This may increase the time required to load and unload buses at the school in the morning and afternoon.
- HIDEC will stagger arrival and departure times to ensure social distancing.
- HIDEC will reconfigure the loading and unloading locations for students who are transported by bus, car and/or are pedestrians.
- Since hand sanitizer is not permitted on school buses, HIDEC will ensure that students and staff wash their hands upon arrival at the classroom.

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

HIDEC has addressed the following considerations which are intended to assist in creating a welcoming and caring school community that ensures our students are met with compassion and the support they need to achieve and thrive. HIDEC recognizes that academic learning cannot be effective until the basic human needs for physical and emotional safety are met.

HIDEC will continue our social emotions learning through our Second Step curriculum to meets our student's needs through both in-person and remote learning to ensure the importance and continuity of their social emotional growth.

- HIDEC will continue to offer the services of our Psychology Team
- HIDEC will continue to address professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide supports for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff.

HIDEC will direct the psychology team to participate in ongoing training so that they may obtain a deeper understanding of mental health, well-being, trauma-responsive and restorative practices related to COVID-19, in order to better serve staff, students, and families. Communication of social emotional well-being will be addressed at parent meetings, staff meeting, and team meetings.

## **SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

Per the New York State Department of Health guidance, HIDEC's plan will address a combination of in-person instruction and remote learning to facilitate a phased-in approach or hybrid model, which may be necessary at various times throughout the 2020-2021 school year. In cases where in-person instruction is not feasible, phased-in and hybrid models of education will be considered. These priorities if applicable shall be determined at the discretion of school, NYC/NYS DOH, NYSED/NYCDOE based upon the needs of student populations within HIDEC.

If COVID-19 cases develop, HIDEC, NYC/NYS DOH, NYSED/NYCDOE may consider restricting access within school facility and across school grounds, particularly in affected areas to avoid full school closure. In such instances, HIDEC will temporarily move classes where an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 to remote/virtual format until all contacts can be identified, notified, tested, and cleared. To maximize in-person instruction, HIDEC will consider measures that can be implemented to decrease density and congregation in the school facility and on school grounds, when possible, such as:

- staggering schedules and allowing more time between classes to reduce congestion in hallways, walkways, and buildings; and/or
- shifting design of class schedules to accommodate social distancing guidelines, including cohorts

HIDEC has collaborated with stakeholders including, but not limited to, teachers, staff members, parents, and community groups when considering alternate schedules, including but not limited to surveys. Plans will include how schedules will be shared and made available to the school community. HIDEC will share their scheduling plans with families, and staff as soon as possible before the start of the school year and anytime a change is required in order to allow families to plan childcare and work arrangements. When HIDEC begins to implement in-person and/or hybrid learning models we will also be prepared to shift back to fully remote learning models should circumstances change and school building is required to close.

Regardless of the instructional model implemented, equity and access will be the priority for all students including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.

Our ultimate goal is to service students in person when applicable. HIDEC has offered its families a hybrid model. Families were offered a choice between in-person/hybrid/remote. HIDEC in-person model will follow NYS/NYC DOH regulation of cohorts 15 or less.

HIDEC's in-person model is the ideal learning model when available for all students. HIDEC will comply with the 15 or less cohort recommendation and will continue to follow the NYC DOH/Article 47 guidelines. Students, staff and therapists will be required

to remain with their cohort at all times to eliminate unnecessary exposure. All HIDEC staff members will be required to follow the above mentioned health and safety protocols.

HIDEC's remote learning model will continue to provide families with home instruction schedules, individualized classroom family friendly weekly lesson plans, multiple classroom daily sessions through live and/or recorded video conferencing, interactive websites and resources that support our theme based curriculum, support for parents via phone and video conferences including providing community resources, tech support and outreach. HIDEC'S service providers will continue to collaborate with parents to develop a schedule to service students as per the IEP mandate through video conferencing. Providers are required to create weekly therapy plans to ensure preparation for their sessions. Therapist will continue to log their session notes and collaborate with the student's team to ensure the best possible treatment in both sessions and classrooms.

HIDEC's hybrid approach will follow both the in-person and remote learning models. Teachers and therapists will continue to adhere to the in-person and Remote Learning instruction protocols to address Remote Learning students in day to day activities. HIDEC has given families an option of their choice of a learning model for their child/ren for the 2020-2021 school year. Families were given the option of choosing the learning model that best meets their families' needs.

HIDEC will be providing a hybrid approach for the start of the school year. Families are aware that they have an option to change their child's learning model throughout the year. If HIDEC is directed by the NYS/NYC DOH, NYS/NYC DOE, and/or an authoritative agency/government to change the school's preferred model choice HIDEC will be prepared for immediate change.

## **BUDGET AND FISCAL MATTERS**

Both the national economy and New York State's economy have been dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and the various mitigation efforts that have been undertaken since March 2020. What is still unknown is the extent to which the impact will improve or worsen, how long it will last, and which sectors of the state economy will be most severely impacted.

HIDEC will continue to do its very best to alter the given budget for the school year to be prepared for the impact of COVID-19 expenses.

### ***180 Day Calendar and Attendance Reporting for State Aid Purposes***

HIDEC will continue to report enrollment, attendance, and school calendar information to all required state/city systems. HIDEC will continue to comply with the minimum annual instructional hour requirement and 180 days of session requirement.

## **ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

In many schools and districts, large numbers of students did not log on or otherwise participate in online learning opportunities. It is therefore critical for HIDEC to continue to use a variety of creative methods. HIDEC's policies and procedures will focus on the academic consequences of possible lost instructional time and address absences before students fall behind in their learning.

### **Attendance for Reporting Purposes**

#### ***Reopening Mandatory Requirements***

- HIDEC will continue to report daily attendance to all required state/city systems;
- HIDEC will report chronic absenteeism to the student's local district administrator to determine continued placement.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

Extensive research indicates that missing ten percent of school days is when student's achievement declines. Chronic absence, or absenteeism, is defined as missing at least ten percent of enrolled school days, which in New York State is eighteen days per school year, or two days per month.

- Chronic absence includes all absences from instruction, both excused and unexcused. Instead of school policies and procedures focusing on truancy, it is essential for school attendance policies to focus on the academic consequences of lost instructional time and for the school procedures to address absences before students fall behind in school.
- HIDEC will continue to monitor attendance in both remote and in-person instructions. Students who have not engaged regularly through their selected learning style will and school staff outreach to parents/guardians has been unsuccessful, HIDEC will continue to explore a variety of methods for reaching out such as:
  - phone calls to families are often the simplest solution and provide an immediate opportunity to offer resources and assess student and family needs
  - where families do not respond to phone calls, email may offer a lower-stress alternative and a subsequent phone call can be arranged

HIDEC will continue to provide translation for families who speak a language other than English in the home. Once contact is made, emphasis will be on addressing the student's or family's barriers to "attendance" or engagement with instruction.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY**

HIDEC will continue to support parents with both training and access to the NYC DOE available technologies. HIDEC provides parents with bi-monthly parent trainings which cover topic such as but not limited to: video conferencing, connectivity resources, and remote learning protocols.

### **Considerations for Reopening Plans**

The following recommendations were considered as HIDEC developed its reopening plan:

- HIDEC surveyed parents and guardians to determine available technologies and assisted in obtaining those technologies from the DOE
- Provide professional development for families, leaders and educators on designing effective remote/online learning experiences and best practices for instruction in remote/online settings.
- Provide both support and flexibility to students when designing remote/blended/online learning experiences.
  - Work with colleagues, students, and families to identify multiple effective structures and supports
  - Provide flexibility to decrease stress and increase equitable access for students and families. Younger students may not be supervised by a parent or guardian during the school day, and their caregivers may not be in a position to effectively guide remote/online instruction.
    - One area requiring flexibility is printing. Many students do not have access to a printer, especially if libraries are closed. HIDEC considered alternative learning activities that do not require students to print.

HIDEC will continue to ensure student data privacy through Remote Learning by providing parents choices of how information is released. HIDEC will also use our secure network and website to stay in compliance with federal and state laws related to student technology use, including NY Education Law 2-d and Part 121 of the Commissioners Regulations.

# **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

## **Early Learning**

### ***Health and Safety Considerations***

State-administered Prekindergarten Programs such as HIDEC's will follow all guidelines set forth by the New York State Department of Health when planning for 2020-21 Prekindergarten programming. The following health and safety guidance will also be considered:

- Family style eating will not be practiced due to social distancing requirements and for health and safety requirements.
- For classrooms without an interior bathroom, an adult will accompany each child to and from the bathroom outside the classroom and ensure that proper hand washing protocols are followed.
- Napping materials will be sanitized daily and, to the extent practicable, assigned to individual students for the school year.
- Center-based and small group learning is a critical component of a Prekindergarten instructional program. HIDEC will:
  - avoid centers that include multiple students using it at one time, such as water/sand tables, sensory tables, etc.;
  - provide students with individual sets when applicable of materials to avoid sharing of common items; and
  - follow proper sanitation guidelines from the Department of Health after children have been at a learning center or in small groups.

### ***Instructional Practices***

- While the Department recognizes the importance of teacher and student interaction and peer interaction as part of the best practices of Early Learning, districts, HIDEC will refrain from strategies and practices that encourage physical contact, such as hand-holding buddy systems.
- While developing remote learning plans, HIDEC was cognizant of the amount of time young learners are spending directly viewing screens. Time spent learning remotely will continue to offer parents approaches to authentic learning

activities at home. For suggestions on activities parent should continue to visit the school website, Remote Learning page at <https://hidec.org/>.

### ***Staffing Regulatory Flexibilities***

To provide flexibility for in-person Prekindergarten programs in the 2020-2021 school year, the following will be allowable:

- Primary Instruction
  - Primary instruction will continue to be delivered by a certified teacher as outlined in Education Law sections 3602-e and 3602-ee.
  - For flexibility and to comply with social distancing requirements for the 2020-21 school year, another staff member can oversee students during learning centers in an alternate learning space so the lead teacher can provide primary instruction to students.
- For districts and programs receiving UPK/SUFDPK funding, any class size above 7 students for 3-year-olds or 8 students for 4-year-olds must adhere to the staffing ratios required by 8 NYCRR [151-1.3 \(as described above\)](#).
- For New York City:
  - For 3-year-olds: 1 teacher in the classroom with up to 10 students including, but not limited to, preschoolers with disabilities and English Language learners to comply with [New York City Health Code 47.23](#).
  - For 4-year-olds: 1 teacher in the classroom with up to 12 students including, but not limited to, preschoolers with disabilities and English Language learners, to comply with [New York City Health Code 47.23](#).
- For districts and programs receiving UPK/SUFDPK funding, any class size above 10 students for 3-year-olds and 12 students for 4-year-olds must adhere to the staffing ratios required by 8 [NYCRR 151-1.3](#).

### ***Cohorts Consideration***

- To the extent practicable, HIDEC will cohort” students to limit the potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus. For the younger students, this means that they are self-contained, reassigned groups of students with reasonable group size limits.
- HIDEC will prevent intermingling between cohorts, to the extent possible and make reasonable efforts to ensure that the cohorts are fixed – meaning containing the same students – for the duration of the COVID-19 public health crisis.

- Faculty may instruct more than one cohort so long as appropriate social distancing is maintained.

### ***Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Screening Considerations and Flexibility***

- Prekindergarten screenings will be done as soon as possible, following guidance from the New York State Department of Health.
- Under [NYCRR 117.3\(b\)](#), HIDEC will have until December 1, 2020 to complete screening of new students. Students who will be screened by the district as a Prekindergarten student, under regulations, do not have to be screened in Kindergarten.
- To the greatest extent possible, the Emergent Multilingual Learner language profile to assess home language exposure should be administered to newly enrolled Prekindergarten students as soon as practical.

### ***Considerations for Volunteers, Visitors, and Service Providers***

- HIDEC will limit the number of volunteers and unnecessary visitors to Prekindergarten classrooms.
- HIDEC will communicate clearly to volunteers and visitors any protocols that must be followed prior to entering prekindergarten classrooms.
- While in prekindergarten classrooms, volunteers and visitors should follow all the health guidance and protocols set forth by the Department of Health, districts, and eligible agencies.
- Disability service providers for preschoolers will follow all health and safety protocols set forth by the Department of Health, districts, and eligible agencies prior to entering the classroom.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

*NOTE: CTE does not specifically apply to 4410 programs except for the basic Learning Standards which can be achieved in remote, blended or in-person instructional preschool models.*

## **Athletics and Extracurricular Activities**

*NOTE: While athletics and extra-curricular activities are generally not part of any 4410 program and may have only limited manifestation in an 853 program. However, should such events or activities be contemplated and permitted by governmental authorities, our agency will comply completely with the guidance and requirements set forth in the DOH Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Should facilities under our control be used at any time by external community organizations, those groups will be required to follow State and local directives and health requirements regarding social distancing, hygiene and sanitation.*

### **Physical Education**

Participating in Physical Education (PE) is important for our students' health and wellbeing. Not only do PE activities benefit students' physical health, but research indicates regular physical activity improves students' mental health as well as contributes to academic success. HIDEC will ensure that whether in-person, remote, or hybrid models are utilized, students will participate in physical activities such as Yoga, outdoor play and music and movement within the classroom.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

HIDEC's reopening plan considered the special needs and requirements of students with disabilities.

Special education programs and services provide equity and access for students with disabilities to be involved in and to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. HIDEC's reopening plan provides a framework that ensure that all students with disabilities continue to have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. In consideration of the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and staff, HIDEC's reopening plan was designed to enable transitioning between in-person, remote, and hybrid learning environments to ensure the provision of FAPE consistent with the changing health and safety conditions that exist.

NYSED's Office of Special Education (OSE) has created guidance documents to address frequently asked questions raised by parents, educators, administrators, and other key stakeholders regarding the implementation of special education programs and services and the provision of FAPE during this public health crisis. The OSE guidance is based on current information released from the United States Department of Education (USDE) as well as information contained in New York State Executive Orders and New York State Department of Health guidance.

### ***Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)***

All HIDEC students with disabilities will continue to have equal access to high-quality programs that are designed, based on their individual needs and abilities, to enable them to achieve the desired learning results established for all students. HIDEC will continue to be creative in ensuring that students with disabilities have opportunities for instruction with students without disabilities to the greatest extent possible consistent with their IEP. If providing in-person instruction, HIDEC will ensure that health and safety requirements do not result in the unnecessary separation of students with disabilities from their non-disabled peers.

### **IEP Implementation**

HIDEC will continue to use the same flexibility with respect to IEP implementation for delivery of services during school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to apply to the program and services whether delivered in-person and/or remotely (e.g., flexibility with respect to the mode and/or manner; group or individual sessions; specific group size for related services, frequency, duration and location of related services, and special class size ratio etc.).

HIDEC will continue to work collaboratively and communicate with CPSE/CSE via in-person, phone, email, and/or video conferencing to ensure ongoing communication and guidelines. HIDEC will continue to work with CPSE in order to meet with student's remote learning needs during intermittent or extended school closures.

### ***Provision of Services***

Consistent with previously issued OSE guidance, HIDEC will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP. During the 2020-21 school year, due to the health and safety requirements that must be in place when school resumes, HIDEC may not be able to provide all services in the same mode and/or manner they are typically provided. HIDEC will need to determine what methods of delivery of services will be utilized to deliver special education programs and services to meet the needs of students with disabilities as they plan for various types of instructional models including in-person and remote learning. When providing remote services, HIDEC will continue to use the information included in OSE's [March 27, 2020](#) and [April 27, 2020](#) guidance documents.

### ***Progress Monitoring***

Teachers and service providers will continue to collect data, whether in-person or remotely, and use these data to monitor each student's progress toward the annual goals and to evaluate the effectiveness of the student's special education services. Determining student progress is necessary for understanding the student's present

levels of academic achievement and functional performance, and for determining whether, and to what extent, the school closures may have disrupted the student's learning. Reports of progress to parents will be made via telephone, mail or other electronic means if progress reporting procedures specified in the student's IEP cannot be met with reasonable efforts.

### ***Best Practice for Contingency Plans***

In March 2020, NYSED provided guidance in conformance with the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that IEPs did not need to be amended as schools converted to online or virtual learning platforms. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, CPSE/CSE should prepare for all contingencies and consider plans to address students' remote learning needs in the event of potential future intermittent or extended school closures.

## **BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES**

The spring 2020 COVID-19 crisis was extremely challenging for all students, but created particular difficulties for our most vulnerable students, including English Language Learners (ELLs). These challenges exacerbated existing educational inequities, like a lack of access to technology and reliable Wi-Fi needed for remote learning. HIDEC's reopening plan addresses the special needs of ELLs, and that all communications with ELL students and their families be in their preferred language and mode of communication.

As HIDEC prepares to reopen schools in 2020-21, we will remain mindful of legal requirements and proactively address inequities, including, to the greatest extent feasible, providing support and instruction to all parents/guardians regarding the use of technology in their preferred language of communication. ELLs must be provided with the supports needed to close the potential learning loss that may have been a result of the school closures due to COVID-19.

As HIDEC designed its reopening plan, ELLs were afforded the opportunity for full and equal participation whether it be through an in-person, remote, or hybrid model of instruction. While many ELLs may have benefitted from learning through remote learning platforms, it is important to consider their unique needs and to strengthen the home language and supports necessary for English language development utilizing synchronous and asynchronous learning.

### ***Emergent Multilingual Learners in Prekindergarten***

As more children in New York State begin their education in prekindergarten, there is an increasing need to support children from families who speak a language other than English at home in order to ensure that they have equitable access to these programs' advantages. As discussed in previous [guidance](#), the Emergent Multilingual Learners

(EMLLs), profile process allows prekindergarten programs to assess the home language exposure of children in Prekindergarten. EMLLs are identified by the Profile as having exposure to a language other than English but are not assessed for English proficiency (which occurs in kindergarten when the ELL identification process is conducted).

HIDEC's Prekindergarten programs will continue to implement best practices to leverage the home language in instruction, as well as to implement culturally responsive-sustaining education, in accordance with NYSED's [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#). This practice will help set the foundation for positive self-identity and acceptance.

### ***Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework***

NYSED has created the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining \(CR-S\) Education Framework](#) to help educators create student-centered learning environments that affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities, prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference, elevate historically marginalized voices, and empower students as agents of social change. The Framework provides guidelines that address contributions to be made by multiple stakeholders—including teachers, administrators, students, and community partners—in developing a strong CR-S education. HIDEC will to the greatest extent possible, will continue to apply the principles of the CR-S Framework in planning for the reopening of schools in 2020-21.

## **STAFFING**

Among school-based factors, teaching and school leadership are the two greatest influences on student learning. As HIDEC creates its plans for the 2020-2021 school year, we will : must ensure that all teachers, school, leaders, and pupil personnel service professionals hold a valid and appropriate certificate for their assignment; can continue to utilize incidental teaching when determining how to staff their classrooms; can also employ substitute teachers to address staffing needs for the allowable number of days, given their qualifications and teaching assignment; should work with educator preparation programs to identify appropriate ways in which student teachers can support classroom instruction.

Our school will undertake robust recruitment efforts to identify and process qualified substitutes. In the 2020/2021 school year, as permitted by NYSED, if qualified substitute teachers cannot be engaged, individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent, even those not working toward certification can first be engaged for up to ninety (90) days and then beyond the first ninety (90) day period through the end of June, 2021, as long as the superintendent documents and attests that recruitment

efforts did not identify a fully qualified substitute teacher. The superintendent must attest to the shortage of qualified recruits initially and then at the end of the first ninety (90) day period. Recruitment efforts will be extensively documented. HIDEC may need to employ additional staff to meet the elevated standards due to COVID-19. This may include but not limited to: maintenance, substitute teachers and support staff.

Staff members who are requesting an accommodation from reporting for in-person work due to concerns about their own health must notify the Human Resources department and then comply with submitting requested information before the agency can determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made based on applicable law, regulation and the agency's needs and resources.

### **TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM**

*NOTE: This required section of the reopening plan is not applicable since 4410 and 853 programs are not subject to the specific laws and regulations regarding professional evaluation cited in the NYSED guidance.*

### **STUDENT TEACHING**

Since NYSED permits and encourages student teaching, HIDEC will welcome student teachers during the 2020/2021 school year to participate in-person and/or remote instruction.