



waldorf school  
of saratoga springs

Return to School  
During COVID-19:  
Health and Safety &  
Curriculum and Learning  
Plan

2020-2021

(Prepared for NYSED)

*August 7, 2020*

Updated:

August 16, 2020

September 10, 2020

Updates are made in the document and listed at the end.



## **Table of Contents**

### **7. Introduction**

8. Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs Mission Statement

8. Coordinated and Phased Reopening Responsibilities

8. Communication Plan

### **9. Section I: Health and Safety**

9. Admittance to the Building

10. Health Checks and Mandatory Daily Online Screenings

12. Positive Screens

13. Protections for Individuals Conducting Screenings or Caring for Sick Individuals

13. Staff and Student Testing

13. Management of Ill Persons

13. Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols

14. Contact Tracing Support

14. Return to School

15. Social Distancing, Face Coverings, and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Social Distancing

Who Must Wear Masks and When

16. What Types of Masks and Protection are Appropriate

17. Provision of Masks

17. Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection

17. Handwashing

19. Cleaning & Disinfection

20. Restrooms

20. Signage

21. Food Service

22. Cleaning & Disinfection After a Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

22. Creation of Cohorts

23. Space Configurations

23. Classrooms

23. Common Areas

24. Faculty and Staff Meetings

24. Music, Wind Instruments, Sports

24. Academic Calendar

25. Arrival, Dismissal, and Scheduling

26. Attendance

26. Educational Neglect

27. Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff

27. Metrics Used in Decision-Making

27. Metrics for Quarantining a Class

28. Metrics Used for School-Wide Decisions

**28. Section 2: Social-Emotional Well-Being**

28. Support Team

29. Teacher Support and Professional Development

29. School Study

30. Social-Emotional Support Team

30. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

**31. Section 3: Curricular Approach and Special Education**

32. In-person Instruction

32. Early Childhood:

32. Days of the Week

33. Cohorts

33. Program

34. Lower School:

34. Days of the Week

34. Cohorts

35. Programs

36. High School:

36. Days of the Week

36. Cohorts

37. Programs

38. Remote Learning:

- 38. Early Childhood
- 39. Lower School
- 40. High School
- 40. Hybrid Learning:
- 41. Early Childhood
- 41. Lower School and High School
- 42. Athletics and Extracurricular Activities
- 42. Before Care and Aftercare
- 42. Festivals and Assemblies
- 44. Special Education
- 44. Structure of our Learning Support Program
- 45. Special Education Across the Learning Scenarios for 2020-21
- 45. Screenings, Assessments and Grades
- 46. School Procedures and Faculty/ Staff Professional Development
- 46. **Section 4: Facilities**
- 46. Utilization of Space
- 47. Additional Space
- 47. Safety Drills
- 48. Ventilation & Plumbing
- 48. **Section 5: Transportation**

**49. Section 6: Technology and Connectivity**

49. Access to Technology

49. Platforms and Security

50. Education for Families and Faculty

51. Libraries

**51. Section 7: Staffing & Human Resources**

51. COVID-19-specific HR Considerations

**51. Conclusion**

## ***Introduction***

The Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs (WSSS) is a small independent school serving students in pre-K through Grade 12, located across 4 campuses in Saratoga Springs, New York. Our school is a day-use facility and there are no residential living considerations. This document details our reopening plans for the 2020-2021 academic year in compliance with the requirements and recommendations from the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Department of Education. Additionally, we rely upon the Saratoga County Department of Health, the Center for Disease Control, and the American Academy of Pediatrics for best practices for a safe learning and working environment.

This report was prepared by the WSSS Task Force whose members represent the administration, board of directors, faculty, and parents. The faculty and staff of the Early Childhood, Lower school, and High school thoroughly participated in the creation of this plan in consultation with parents, student input, health care providers, and the Saratoga County Department of Health. This document comprises two main sections for reference: Health and Safety, and Curriculum Plans. Questions about Health and Safety can be directed to our administrator Abigail Reid at [administration@waldorfsaratoga.org](mailto:administration@waldorfsaratoga.org) and pedagogical questions can be directed to our collegium chair Astrea Ravenstar at [aravenstar@waldorfsaratoga.org](mailto:aravenstar@waldorfsaratoga.org).

As a small, community-based independent school, WSSS is in the unique position to be flexible in our approach to maximizing instruction while also upholding the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, parents, and community members with the highest regard. We are driven by our Mission Statement and the guiding principles of Waldorf Education to deliver a curriculum centered on meeting the developmental needs of every child. Adaptability, continued effort, and collaboration with our community, will allow us to meet the varied circumstances in the year ahead so that we can offer the rich and diverse curriculum of WSSS in such a way as to support the academic, emotional, and social needs of our students in the year ahead!

### **Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs Mission Statement**

*The Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs values the healthy development of the whole individual in mind, body, and spirit. Through a focus on academics, music, art, and movement, our bountiful curriculum -- based on established and evolving Waldorf principles -- inspires creative thought, discourse, human connections, and experiential learning. We graduate global citizens who have initiative, social responsibility, and enthusiasm for life.*

### **Coordinated and Phased Reopening Responsibilities**

Abigail Reid, administrator at WSSS, is designated as the COVID-19 safety coordinator and will be responsible for continuing to maintain school compliance with all aspects of the WSSS reopening plan and any activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before in-person instruction resumes.

### **Communication Plan**

The COVID task force at WSSS has reviewed and understands the NYS issued DOH Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 schools published on July 13, 2020, as well as the NYSED Reopening Guidance for Religious and Independent Schools published on July 27, 2020. In order to collaborate on the WSSS reopening plans, administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians, local health care providers, and the Saratoga County Department of Health were consulted and contributed to our reopening plans document. We will continue to consult with these key constituents throughout the school year to maintain our adherence to NYS guidelines, regulations, and mandates; and to monitor the success of our plans as well as the health, safety, and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and community.

Specifically we will:

- Publish our reopening plans on our website and update them as they evolve to meet NYS guidelines
- Email the reopening plans to parents and legal guardians
- Make hardcopies of our reopening plans available to parents and legal guardians
- Host a Virtual Town Hall meeting to go over new policies and procedures, and answer questions

- Use our regular modes of communication to update and inform parents and caregivers through regular emails, social media posts, text alerts through Bright Arrow services, and phone calls
- Provide information and resources to the community about CDC and NYSDOH guidelines for public health and safety related to Covid-19
- Post signage at all of our locations, as well as use verbal communication to remind all students, staff, faculty, and visitors to adhere to NYSDOH and CDC guidelines for social distancing and the proper use of PPE, specifically face coverings
- Ensure that students, staff, and faculty are properly taught and trained to follow the new Covid-19 protocols in hand hygiene, social distancing, respiratory hygiene, and proper face covering application and use
- The school nurse will serve as the coordinator or main point of contact upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases and will be responsible for communication in conjunction with our Administrator. Questions arising from faculty, staff, students, parents or legal guardians should be directed to the nurse and Administrator.
- Feedback regarding WSSS reopening plans and implementation of the plans should be directed to our Administrator;
- Throughout the year, WSSS will continue to collect data from our students, parents and legal guardians, faculty, and staff to deepen our relationships and improve supports for students, staff, and families;
- Our key stakeholders will be consulted to ensure continuous improvement of our program.

## **Section 1: Health and Safety**

### ***Admittance to the Building***

For the safety of our students and faculty, 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 arranged through the front office of the Lower School for the Lower School and Early Childhood buildings, and through the High School front office for the High School. Deliveries will be made at the door and mail will also be delivered to an outside mailbox.

- Access to school buildings by non-school staff (visitors/guests/contractors/vendors/parents) is not permitted unless by appointment.
- Communication with teachers and administrative staff will occur via the phone, virtual meeting or email.
- In all cases, authorized service providers and non-school staff must wash or sanitize hands as per hand washing protocols, complete the COVID health questionnaire, and temperature screening, along with wearing a mask, before entering school buildings.

- In the event of an exception to the above guidelines for visitors/guests/contractors/vendors/parents who have a necessary, but unscheduled need to enter the building, they will follow the same protocol as above.
- In the case of a parent unexpectedly dropping off the personal item of a student (lunch, musical instruments, clothing, homework), a designated drop box will be provided outside of the building where the item will then be retrieved by a staff member of the school.
- To the extent possible, deliveries and pickups from vendors and contractors will be dropped outside the building in a designated location to limit contact and admittance to the building.
- Faculty and staff will use separate building ingress and egress to limit bidirectional flow to the extent possible.

### ***Health Checks and Mandatory Daily Online Screenings***

For those entering the building including students, faculty, staff, and where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors, WSSS 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. All individuals entering the building must have their temperature checked before they enter the building each day. (In addition NYS DOH recommends all individuals be screened at home prior to departing for school via personal car/bus). We will continue to monitor CDC and NYSDOH guidelines and update the following guidelines as warranted.

A daily greeting at a designated check in desk from a staff member who asks if the form has been filled out, and if not, provides a form for the parent/guardian to fill out on the spot. The greeter will also have a handheld non contact temporal or infrared thermometer with which to take the individual's temperature on the spot.

If an individual presents a temperature 100.0°F or greater, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, or sent directly to a dedicated area prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.

Our screening program will have the following components:

- A daily online screening questionnaire filled out at home by all faculty, staff, and parents/legal guardians of students (paper copies available to those who need them) and submitted online before departure for school in the morning.
- These forms will be required for any student enrolled in the school and faculty/staff members who would normally be present at the school, whether or not they are in attendance that day.
- For faculty and other adults, the questionnaire will provide a short list of adult-specific symptoms or situations that might indicate a COVID-19 + status, and the individual will certify whether or not any apply to them that morning.

- WSSS is prohibited from maintaining any records of health data collected in these surveys, but will keep record of the results of the screening such as “clear/not clear.”
- Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to check their child for a temperature 100.0°F or greater, before leaving home for school.
- Daily on-site temperature checks will occur before students, faculty, staff, or visitors may enter school grounds.
- All students will maintain social distancing while waiting for temperature checks and verification that the health questionnaire has been filled out.
- All personnel performing in-person screenings will be trained in accordance with CDC, NYS DOH, and OSHA protocols.
- PPE will be provided for personnel performing in-person screening in compliance with current CDC and NYS DOH guidelines which includes at a minimum, an acceptable face covering or mask, and may include a face shield, gloves, and a gown.

For students, the questionnaire will provide a short list of symptoms or situations that might indicate a Covid+ status, similar to the ones outlined above, but also including some child-specific symptoms. The student’s parents or legal guardians will certify whether or not any of the listed symptoms/conditions apply. These forms will be updated periodically to make sure they reflect any updated understandings of COVID-19 as expressed by the CDC and/or NYS DOH.

The short list of symptoms/conditions in the questionnaire will include (but is not limited to):

- 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;
- Has 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 100.0°F or greater, in the past 14 days;
- 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.

Students, faculty, and staff may be required to quarantine for 14 days following international travel or travel within certain states with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in compliance with CDC and NYS DOH guidelines and Executive Order 205.

Every morning follow-up calls will be made to families of children who are not in school that day. In the case of children who have stayed home, the follow-up call will include the following reminder:

- Any student presenting with a fever of 100.0°F or above must stay home;
- They can return to school when they are 24 hours fever free *without fever reducing medications*;

- If the student has a fever and has possible COVID- 19 symptoms and the health care provider diagnoses the child with COVID-19 without a COVID -19 test, then the student must stay home for 14 days from the start of symptoms and must be 3 days fever free and 3 days improvement of symptoms, and a note citing a clearance and date to return to school from the health care provider before they can attend school.

### ***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 healthcare provider for assessment and testing.

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 will be visually supervised by a staff member who is socially distanced, in a safe, contained area in a designated isolation room until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can retrieve them from school.

The school nurse will provide such individuals (or their families) with information on health care and testing resources.

Reporting of any “not clear” statuses (of children, employees, or visitors who have been turned away or have stayed home) will go directly to the school nurse and/or Administrator for follow-up according to NYSDOH guidelines.

The school will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if the student, faculty or staff diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.

If a student, faculty or staff responses to any of the aforementioned screening questions changes, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, during or outside of school hours, they must report these changes directly to the school nurse or Administrator.

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.

WSSS will follow the NYS DOH requirements 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 health care provider with a release from isolation.

### ***Protections for Individuals Conducting Screenings or Caring for Sick Individuals***

WSSS 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 the school nurse. Screeners will be provided and use PPE as recommended by NYSDOH.

The school nurse or any other staff member caring for sick individuals will also be provided with PPE as recommended by NYSDOH and the CDC.

### ***Staff and Student Testing***

Following strong recommendations by the CDC and NYS DOH, WSSS does not require routine mandatory COVID-19 testing or antibody testing of students, faculty, and staff as a screening mechanism. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted should only be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health.

### ***Management of Ill Persons***

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

- A dedicated area in each building 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 that is separate from our health care office/area;
- Development of protocols to care for students with asthma that replace the need for nebulizers or suction, since they are aerosol-generating procedures;
- 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;
- PPE requirements for school nurse office staff caring for sick individuals, will include both standard and transmission-based precautions. When caring for an individual with COVID-19 symptoms using PPE as recommended by NYSDOH.
- Cleaning and disinfection as specified by CDC and NYSDOH guidelines.

### ***Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols***

If COVID-19 cases are discovered at 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.

In the event an individual at the school is confirmed to have COVID-19 while at school, WSSS 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, 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 should continue.

### ***Contact Tracing Support***

In the case of an individual testing positive, WSSS 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. WSSS 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, WSSS is responsible for notifying faculty or families of students that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19. Please note that medical privacy laws explicitly prohibit WSSS from revealing the name of the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. We may only reveal that the student or faculty 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 student or staff member has informed the school through our morning health screen that they have any COVID- 19 symptoms, in order to return to school and in accordance with NYSDOH,

- they must contact their primary care physician;
- they must provide a medical clearance note from their health care provider, and a documented negative COVID- 19 test;
- they must have resolution of symptoms- including fever free for 24 hours *without the use of medication*;

- If COVID positive a release from isolation is required from the Saratoga County Department of Health.

In addition, if one person in your household is ill with any COVID symptom we ask that [all] student[s] remain at home until the symptomatic person is medically cleared. (see above guidelines)

### ***Social Distancing, Face Coverings, and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)***

#### ***Social Distancing***

Appropriate social distancing of 6 feet must be maintained between individuals while in the school buildings and on the school grounds including students, faculty, staff, or visitors, unless safety or the core activity (instruction, moving equipment, traveling in common areas, etc.) requires a shorter distance between individuals or they are of the same household.

A social distance of 12 feet must be maintained between individuals while participating in specific activities that require projecting the voice such as singing, playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity resulting in heavy breathing.

#### ***Who Must Wear Masks and When***

All persons in the school buildings or on school grounds must wear masks as a general rule. This applies to all students, faculty, staff, visitors, contractors, and vendors. Individuals should have their masks with them at all times, as they must be prepared to put them on if someone else who is unmasked is unexpectedly unable to socially distance.

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, entering/exiting classrooms with others, or in narrow halls and passageways.

Students, faculty, and staff will be trained in the appropriate way to put on masks, wear masks, and take off masks. Additionally, faculty and staff will be trained to wash or dispose of PPE including, but not limited to, appropriate face coverings. Visitors, contractors, and vendors should bring their own masks however, WSSS will provide disposable face masks if needed and provide the required training in mask use as needed. Assistance will be offered to students having difficulty adapting to wearing masks. Students playing games considered “high risk” as defined by the NYSDOH guidelines (e.g. contact sports) must wear masks at all times.

In general, students/faculty /staff should wear masks at all times inside allowing for these exceptions.

Exceptions to general mask-wearing are outlined below:

- Mealtimes when appropriate social distancing can occur;
- Early Childhood students, especially younger ones, may be given “mask breaks” at the discretion of the teacher. Teachers will provide quiet areas in the classroom or outdoor space where students may socially distance themselves from others while taking a break from mask-wearing;
- Older students may take socially distanced mask breaks as needed, at the discretion of the teacher;
- Students of any age learning or playing outside in low-risk activities and able to maintain appropriate social distancing do not need to wear masks. We recognize that it is difficult for Early Childhood students to maintain social distancing and will strongly encourage them to keep their masks on inside and outside, too. This includes most common childhood games and activities that do not involve prolonged close physical contact;
- We recognize that it is difficult for Early Childhood students to maintain social distancing and will strongly encourage them to keep their masks on inside and outside, too;
- A student who is having difficulty breathing should immediately be given a mask break and if the difficulty continues, be evaluated by the nurse;
- Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face mask, including students where such coverings would impair their physical or mental health, are not subject to the required use of a face mask to be determined and noted by a health care provider;
- A teacher has discretion in determining if a child is safe or not to remove their mask, as all teachers receive training on COVID-19 specific hygiene.

### ***What Types of Masks and Protection are Appropriate***

Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, cloth-based face coverings (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut), 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.

Faculty and students, especially in Early Childhood and the younger grades, may use 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., circle time, speechwork, or 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 faculty or staff member.

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 NYSDOH and OSHA guidelines.

### ***Provision of Masks***

Each family is encouraged to purchase or make five cloth face masks (one for each day of the week) per child to reduce environmental waste, although surgical masks can be purchased and are acceptable. Face masks should be labeled with the child's name or initials so it is clear to whom the mask belongs. For children who forget their masks, the school will have a supply of disposable surgical masks on hand (adult and child-sized) that community members can use at no charge.

WSSS will provide all faculty and staff with cloth face coverings at no cost to the employees. If the provided options are uncomfortable or difficult for faculty, they may wear any of the other acceptable face coverings as outlined above.

Face masks should be washed, disinfected, or replaced after each day's use and must not be shared. Students and families 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. WSSS 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, Cleaning, and Disinfection***

WSSS follows all hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and NYSDOH, including "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19" and the "STOP THE SPREAD POSTER" as applicable.

### ***Handwashing***

Soap and warm water are the preferred method for cleaning hands and hand sanitizer will be available for when soap and water can not be used. WSSS will train all students, faculty, and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene and will provide information to parents and legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home, as well as to inform and remind that alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be flammable. Posters will be displayed in the school buildings to reinforce hand and respiratory hygiene, and to remind students that soap and water are best used for visibly soiled hands, not hand sanitizer.

The following facilities and protocols will be put into place:

- Soap, touchless sinks with warm running water, and disposable paper towels will be available;

- Additional hand hygiene stations will be added around the school that have soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels available;
- Extra time will be built into the schedule for handwashing, especially after restroom breaks, recess, using shared equipment, or other higher risk activities;
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol as per the NYSDOH guidelines will be made available throughout common areas including, but not limited to, offices, classrooms, and hallways and near shared workplace items (copy machines, computers);
- WSSS is considering the use of touchless hand sanitizer dispensers;
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for any time that handwashing is not available or practical;
- All elementary students will be supervised by adults when using hand sanitizer;
- WSSS will ensure that hand sanitizer is placed only where it is safe from becoming flammable and its use can be supervised by adults;
- Parents who do not wish their child to use hand sanitizer should inform the school nurse in writing, and provision will be made for the child to use a handwashing station instead;
- Touchless, lidded receptacles will be placed throughout the school building for disposal of soiled items including paper towels and PPE.

*Hand washing protocol for students:*

- Before leaving home, upon arrival at school and before leaving school;
- After using the toilet;
- After sneezing, coughing, or using a tissue;
- After recess breaks and sporting activities;
- Before and after eating any food, including snacks;
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

*Hand washing protocol for faculty, staff, and visitors:*

- Before leaving home, on arrival at school and before leaving school;
- After using the toilet;
- After sneezing, coughing, or using a tissue;
- After recess breaks and sporting activities;
- Before and after eating any food, including snacks;
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty;
- When moving to another class;
- Before and after assisting students with personal items;
- After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, saliva, vomit, blood);
- After cleaning tasks;
- When donning and doffing gloves;
- After handling garbage.

***Cleaning & Disinfection***

The school's cleaning staff is primarily responsible for cleaning and disinfection. A comprehensive COVID-19-specific cleaning plan per NYSDOH guidelines has been developed for the school and is available through the Business Office. Per NYSDOH 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 spray so that faculty and staff 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. WSSS and custodial staff will use the DEC list of products registered in NYS and identified by the EPA as effective against COVID-19. If the frequent cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, WSSS will have hand hygiene stations available near such materials or machinery for hand hygiene before and after use of materials or machinery. Additionally, disposable gloves will be available as well as limiting the use of such materials or equipment.

WSSS will maintain logs that will include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. The scope of this cleaning will be in compliance with NYSDOH and the CDC per facility and the responsibility will be assigned to custodial staff or other staff members when more frequent cleaning is required.

The following steps will be taken in classrooms, offices, and common areas:

- Water drinking fountain at the Lower School (the only one we have) will be closed. All students, faculty, and staff are required to bring their own labeled water bottles filled from home. Paper cups will be available in the front office, or the Early Childhood program, with a water dispenser for adults to fill for students if needed;
- Students will remain with their own cohorts and often in their own classroom space which will limit the need for cleaning and disinfection for the classroom throughout the day. However, shared items (tables, gym equipment, tools, or other shared surfaces) will be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort's use. Such cleaning will be the responsibility of the teachers involved in supervising the cohorts;
- Students will each have their own personal classroom supplies to limit the sharing of objects such as pencils, crayons, paper, notebooks, musical instruments, tools, laptops, and toys. Each student's supply will be labeled and stored in a desk, individual file, or other method that ensures separation of materials;
- Any materials, tools, supplies, or shared surfaces (such as conference tables, photocopy machines, or desks) used by employees, students, or visitors are wiped down before and after use with NYS registered disinfectants, followed by hand hygiene;
- Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will not be provided to students, particularly younger students;

- Touchless sinks, trash receptacles, and touchless paper towel dispensers will be available;
- Hand sanitizer will be available near any high-touch surfaces.

### ***Restrooms***

- Each student cohort will have a dedicated restroom to use. Restrooms at the High School designed for multiple people will be limited to 1 person at a time. All other bathrooms in our buildings are single usage. Signage demarking the maximum capacity will be posted on doors;
- Touchless paper towel dispensers will be in use and there will be no air dryers; Faculty and staff likewise will use designated restrooms to limit cross-exposure;
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently during the day, following recommendations established by NYSDOH;
- Students will have regular reminders to close lids before flushing and signs will help reinforce this;

### ***Signage***

WSSS will post signs throughout the school and will regularly share the information contained on the signs that are in compliance with NYSDOH COVID-19 public health protections against COVID-19, with the school community. WSSS will adapt the signage to be age appropriate for younger children while staying consistent with NYSDOH messaging.

Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

- Stay home if they feel sick;
- Cover nose and mouth with acceptable face covering when unable to maintain appropriate social distance from others;
- Properly store and discard (as necessary) PPE;
- Adhere to social distancing instructions;
- Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines;
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette;
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19 with instructions of how to do so.

### ***Food Service***

WSSS does not have a cafeteria and does not participate in the federal Children Nutrition Program and therefore does not have a School Food Authority. In the past, we have served food from local food vendors but will suspend this practice for the 2020-2021 school year. Vending machines and other food services mechanisms are not and will not be employed at this time.

All students will eat food that was prepared for them at home while seated at their desks in their own classroom space while socially distanced at six feet apart. All students, faculty, and staff will maintain appropriate social distancing while eating. Sharing of food and drinks will be prohibited unless individuals are members of the same household. Faculty and staff will monitor this and remind students that sharing is not permitted at this time.

The Early Childhood and Lower School are both nut-free facilities. All campuses provide sanitation and student-specific locations for eating that protect students with food allergies, as well as mitigate the risk of COVID-19 or other illnesses. All faculty and staff receive training on food allergies including symptoms of allergic reactions to food.

Students will use their own chairs, desks, and tables while eating to the extent possible. If groups need to rotate through any commonly touched surfaces, sanitation and disinfection protocols will be employed.

All food and meal related inquiries should be directed to the School Administrator in English, the primary language spoken by all families at the school. Additional resources will be available in additional native languages if needed.

In the Early Childhood department, students will be provided with a simple snack that will be prepared by staff using PPE including face masks and gloves.

Early Childhood Teachers will:

- Always perform hand hygiene by washing hands before preparing or serving any snack;
- Be alert to hygiene protocols during all mealtimes;
- Model appropriate social distancing and hygiene while eating with children;
- Remind students of safety rules at mealtimes;
- Always perform hand hygiene by washing hands before resuming work after a meal;
- Support all students to wash hands by performing hand hygiene before and after meals.

Early Childhood Students will:

- Always perform hand hygiene by washing hands before and after meals;
- When possible, eat outside in areas designated by the teacher, maintaining appropriate social distancing;
- Will not be seated facing each other while eating, as around a shared table, but will sit at tables facing the same direction or in a wide “U” shape, to mitigate risk and ensure appropriate social distancing;
- Will not help pass out snacks assembled by school staff, but will receive individual portions directly from the adults;
- Students will always wash hands after eating, before resuming the school day.

Lower School and High School Teachers and Students will:

- Perform hand hygiene by washing hands before and after eating;
- Utilize appropriate social distancing and face one direction to mitigate risk while eating indoors;
- Eat outside whenever possible in designated spaces ensuring appropriate social distancing and facing one direction;
- Refrain from sharing food or drink of any kind.

### ***Cleaning & 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, WSSS 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, 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 should continue.

### ***Creation of Cohorts***

WSSS has always valued our relatively small class sizes. In the context of COVID-19, the small classes allow us to make “cohorts” with a specific schedule and space that does not overlap with any other group. Cohorts are a fixed, self-contained, pre-assigned groups of students with reasonable group size of no more than 20 students. Faculty can instruct more than one cohort so long as appropriate social distancing and hand and respiratory hygiene are maintained. Cleaning and disinfection will be performed between cohort use of any shared classroom or material.

Cohorts are as follows:

Each pre-k or kindergarten class is a cohort

Grades 1/2

Grades 3 & 4

Grades 5/6 & 7

Grades 8, 9 & 10

Grade 11 & 12

Students in the same cohort, but different grades, may be combined for some skills classes and at recess to allow for socialization while still keeping their circle small.

### ***Space Configurations***

Space configurations and usage will change for the duration of the COVID-19 period. Some of the changes include:

#### ***Classrooms***

- Desks arranged to ensure appropriate social distancing can be maintained, and all facing one direction so that students and faculty sit side-to-side rather than facing one another.
- Shared surfaces or workstations will be disinfected between student use.
- Outdoor classroom spaces provided, with moveable desks/seats to maintain appropriate social distancing.

#### ***Common Areas***

Students will be encouraged to eat in available outdoor spaces whenever possible. (see above)

- Hallways and staircases will be designated as to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape, signs, and arrows;
- Places in which lines need to form, such as waiting to use the copy machine, front office, or morning temperature checks will have signs or floor markings to delineate appropriate social distancing;
- Community (Eurythmy) rooms in High School and Lower School buildings will be scheduled for special use by cohorts or for meetings and cleaned in between each use;
- WSSS will be used solely for student instruction and other purposes as deemed necessary for use by the WSSS community. Outside rentals will not be possible during the 2020-2021 academic year;
- WSSS has coffee and tea stations available to faculty and staff as well as use of kitchen spaces. Hand hygiene protocols will be put into place in these areas as well as clearly delineated and marked appropriate social distancing requirements to ensure social distancing and sanitation;
- Staggered schedules for faculty and staff to reduce density and promote social distancing in enclosed areas will be considered.

#### ***Faculty and Staff Meetings***

Faculty and staff meetings will occur over Zoom calls for a majority of the time. Some meetings may need to happen in person and during these situations, they will occur in open, well-ventilated spaces and ensure that individuals maintain appropriate social distance. The COVID-19 safety coordinator will determine which meetings will occur in person in compliance

with the “Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)”.

Committee meetings and Board of Directors meetings will continue to be held over Zoom calls for the duration of the 2020-2021 school year.

Parent-teacher meetings or conferences can be made in-person by appointment with health screening, temperature checks, and appropriate social distancing and following mask wearing protocols. During non-school hours, when staff is not available to perform the health screenings, if parent-teacher meetings must occur, they will be remote and held over Zoom or phone calls.

### ***Music, Wind Instruments, Sports***

Whenever possible all activities requiring vocal projection and/aerobic activity producing heavy breathing, should be performed outdoors and a distance of twelve feet in all directions is required between individuals. Chorus will not be offered this year and singing in class cohorts will be limited to outside spaces. Wind instrument instruction will not be offered this year. Recorders may be played outside 12 feet apart. Sports will only be conducted outside with 12 feet social distancing in place. Movement classes will be offered with minimal aerobic activity to allow for the typical 6 foot social distancing.

### ***Academic Calendar***

The academic calendar for the 2020-2021 school year will follow the traditional yearly schedule to the best of our ability with a start date of September 9, for grades 1-12, and September 10, for pre-K and Kindergarten classes. In consultation with parents through a survey, WSSS has made a commitment to add days to the end of the school year in June if necessary due to unforeseen school closures where we can not immediately begin remote learning. A decision will be made by April 1, 2021, to determine if days will be added to the calendar to ensure we meet the NYS standards of 180 days of instruction. Additionally, both the February break and April break remain available as flexible weeks that we may determine are best situated at another place in the calendar for the 2020-2021 school year based on the circumstances of regional or localized illness or outbreaks of COVID-19. WSSS will remain flexible in its use of these weeks in the academic calendar to be best poised to respond to the changing climate of our region and to optimize the health and safety of all members of our community.

### ***Arrival, Dismissal, and Scheduling***

WSSS has planned a window of time for arrival and dismissal to facilitate proper social distancing. Entrance and egress from the building will be through designated doorways specific to each age/grade level. If there is a line to enter the school outside the designated entryway, parents may wait in line with children outside the school. However, parents will not be allowed

inside the building, and will be expected to say goodbye to their children outside. We ask that all adults maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others at all times, except members of their own family, and/or wear a mask if physical distancing is not possible.

Early Childhood student arrival will occur between 7:30 and 9:15 AM depending on the class. Check-in points for temperature and health questionnaires will be outside, and students will then go directly to their cohort/class. Parents must leave the premises once their child has gone through the health screening protocols.

Lower School student arrival will occur 7:40 and 7:55 AM. There will be two check-in points outdoors for temperature and health questionnaire compliance. Students will go directly to their cohort/classroom. One person will enter the door at a time, six feet apart. Parents/caregivers/legal guardians must remain outside the school buildings for drop-off and must leave the premises once their child has gone through the health screening protocol.

High School student arrival will occur between 8:00-8:20 AM. Students will check-in for temperature and health questionnaire compliance outside the building and then go directly to their cohort/classroom. One person will enter the door at a time, six feet apart.

Lunch, snack, and recess times will be slightly staggered so that each class has time outdoors, as well as safe and well-ventilated places to eat. Sharing of food and beverages, unless individuals are members of the same household, is prohibited.

Early Childhood student dismissal will occur between 12:00 and 12:40 PM. Children will be dismissed directly to their parents or legal guardian. Once the parent or guardian has their child, they must leave the premises.

Lower School student dismissal will occur by cohort. Dismissal will take place per cohort between 2:20-2:30 PM. Cohorts will wait at designated and separated locations and students will be dismissed directly to their parent or legal guardian.

High School student dismissal will occur between 2:30-2:40 PM. At the end of the school day, classes will be dismissed one at a time (approximately 7 students per class). A faculty/staff member will be on duty to ensure students who are waiting for pickup are appropriately socially distanced outside.

Specific in-person daily schedules will be shared with students, faculty, staff, and parents/legal guardians prior to the start of school. Remote and hybrid scenarios will be addressed below and there is a plan to fluidly move between educational models to ensure continuous education throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Any changes to the schedule will be thoroughly communicated to all relevant parties.

### ***Attendance***

WSSS is committed to collecting daily attendance during periods of in-person instruction, remote, and hybrid learning models. The participation and attendance of students, as well as faculty and staff will be closely monitored. During in-person instruction, daily attendance will be collected during our health screening protocol at the beginning of the day. For hybrid or remote learning models, the administration will keep record of classes held and faculty responsibility. Faculty will email attendance records to the administration staff and follow-up calls will be made to those not in attendance. Special consideration will be made for the remote learning model to accommodate for parent schedules, availability of technology, or other unforeseen circumstances that might inhibit regular participation in remote learning schedules. In these circumstances, faculty will make an effort to accommodate special circumstances to the best of their ability.

### ***Educational Neglect***

WSSS is committed to partnering with parents and legal guardians, to the extent possible, to collaborate in addressing any concerns that the school has in academic progress due to impermissible attendance. The local department of Social Services will be consulted with any questions or concerns related to child welfare that can not be immediately resolved with the parents/legal guardians themselves. Allegations of educational neglect may be warranted when parents or legal guardians fail to ensure a child's prompt and regular attendance in school or keeps the child out of school for impermissible reasons which result in an adverse effect on the child's educational progress, or there is imminent danger. During the 2020-2021 school year, educational neglect will not be considered when a parent/legal guardian considers it unsafe for their child to attend school during the COVID-19 pandemic and the child is participating in hybrid or remote learning opportunities. WSSS will make every effort to collaborate with families to ensure the safe, healthy, and equitable education of its students.

### ***Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff***

In general, faculty and staff schedules will be arranged so that only faculty members who are needed on a given day are required to be in the building. Otherwise, faculty and staff whose work can be performed at home and who are not scheduled to be in the building that day will be asked to work remotely. A schedule of who is expected to be on campus will be provided for guidance before the start of the school year.

Other changes include:

- The reconfiguration of shared faculty and staff offices to allow for social distancing within the space. If the size of the space makes this impossible, faculty members may be reassigned office space in an area that allows for proper distancing. Under no circumstances should faculty/staff be present together in small spaces ( storage closets, small offices or tutoring rooms) for longer than 15 minutes. Masks must be used inside and when social distancing is not possible;

- All faculty, committee, and board meetings will happen remotely until further notice, except when social distancing can be maintained appropriately for smaller groups.

### ***Metrics Used in Decision-Making***

During the coming year, there may be times when we are ordered to close the school by the governor. The State has established metrics that they will use to order regional or state-wide closures. However, there may be situations within our own school community when community spread of COVID-19 needs to be addressed. Under guidance from the State and local DOH, WSSS 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 cohort is confirmed to be COVID-19 positive, then the class will self-quarantine at home for the following two weeks and the school community will be alerted that we have entered “watchful” mode. The County Public Health Department will also be notified and lead the decision around quarantining and closure. 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 self-quarantine for two weeks; and the County Public Health will determine if that class will need to quarantine or not. In the case of sickness but no positive test, the community will not be alerted until such time as a positive 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, if possible the class lessons will continue remotely. Online classes will NOT take place if more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the class falls ill at the same time.

### ***Metrics Used for School-Wide Decisions***

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

- Three classes within our own school community are under self-quarantine;
- If 50% of any building is ill (COVID-19 or other), we close for 2 weeks ;
- If there is one positive case (student or faculty) on our Early Childhood campus, that campus will close;
- Attendance falls to below 60% of the total school population (students and faculty/staff);

- We are not able to staff our school programs safely because we have over 10% of WSSS faculty/staff absent (currently 3 individuals);
- Our larger community rate of new cases, as determined by the NYSDOH-published rolling 7-day average, reaches 5%.

## **Section 2: Social-Emotional Well-Being**

To quote the NY State Education Department, “Social emotional well-being must be schools’ and districts’ top priority in supporting school transitions, not at the expense of academics, but in order to create the mental, social, and emotional space for academic learning to occur.” To that end, WSSS has worked to support students during this COVID-19 period in a number of different ways.

### ***Support Team***

WSSS has a strong Social-Emotional Multi-Tiered Support System in place. It begins with the class teacher, who, in a Waldorf school, has “looped” with the class for several years, and hence knows the families and students well. Trust is actively cultivated through weekly emails, frequent parent meetings and opportunities for socialization among families, and a close relationship with each student—all possible because of our small class sizes and strong community life. Our curriculum is based and implemented on developmental observations and understanding and intrinsically supports the health and emotional well being of a student by introducing material at the appropriate moment in their development. Therefore, the students feel less stressed and more confident in their growing abilities. Appropriate challenge, rigor, hands-on experience, and self-reliance are valued as a part of the implementation of our curriculum. The WSSS has weekly Branch meetings (early childhood, lower school, high school) where a part of each meeting is dedicated to support the learning needs, behavioral challenges, transitions, and the social-emotional health and learning of every student in our school. Parents and other professionals (including the Saratoga Springs City School District teacher who serves our students daily) are consulted and included in this support work. WSSS works closely with the Saratoga Springs City School District Department of Pupil Services and Special Education who provide psychological and academic evaluation and support to our students including aids, consultations, teacher support, and resource room instruction. WSSS will also make referrals to therapists/counselors/tutors in our community when a student needs help beyond what the school or faculty can provide. WSSS maintains and updates that referral list regularly and it is made available upon request.

In addition, we provide relevant articles on health and well being in relationship to the pandemic on our website and blog. This is updated regularly, is available to our parent community, and to the community at large.

### ***Teacher Support and Professional Development***

The College of Teachers designates a Teacher Development Committee which holds the plan to support teachers and staff in WSSS. The plan includes professional development workshops offered on teacher workdays for everyone to participate in as well as a process to allocate money, make recommendations, and take requests for individual initiative in professional development. Mentoring and peer support are also offered to newer developing teachers.

### ***School Study***

WSSS conducts an ongoing study with faculty every year. The study is led by a faculty member and includes reading, discussion and artistic activity. This deepens our work, our community, and our human connection. Topics have included but are not limited to curriculum study, health, spatial awareness, learning differences and reading instruction, restorative practices, anxiety and depression in children, governance structures, and communication. The study topic is chosen based on a review of needs and issues that have arisen the year before. The whole faculty meets once a week for this study through the academic year.

In addition, WSSS reaches out to the broader (local and world) community to invite speakers to present to our community and the local community. We have worked in partnership with Skidmore College Education Department and with the Saratoga Springs Parent University to sponsor speakers on health, well being, and pedagogy.

### ***Social-Emotional Learning Support Team***

We have identified a group of early childhood, lower school, and highschool teachers whose mission this year is to offer relevant resources for education and support to teachers, students and parents.

- Collaborate with community partners and offer expertise in regards to students' emotional needs;
- Develop a deeper understanding of the school's role in evaluating and supporting a student's social-emotional competencies and well being;
- Support access to mental health resources for students;
- Explore ways to foster increased resilience to help prepare them for additional transitions between in-person and remote learning;
- Provide resources for teaching teams that work with the same cohort of students to improve students social emotional well being and resilience;
- Follow up with parents seeking feedback on school community, classroom community, and individual experiences in regards to social-emotional well being.

### ***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee***

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was formed in March of 2020 and is composed of faculty, staff, and parents to support the social health and education of the WSSS community. The following is the DEI Committee's working mandate:

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at the Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs is committed to leading an ongoing study of examining important literature on diversity, equity, inclusion, systemic injustices and biases in education as well as reviewing relevant school policies, practices, and curriculum. This work will enable the committee to assist faculty and staff with the following:

- organize trainings for all faculty and staff to raise awareness about institutional and individual implicit biases and provide support to faculty and staff to address these biases and inequities;
- organize workshops for students and parents to raise awareness about individual implicit biases and support to address these biases;
- create a welcoming and inclusive school culture where all voices are heard, each member is supported, and diversity is celebrated and embedded in the fabric of the school;
- foster a culture where activism is revered and inequities, injustice and discrimination are not tolerated by faculty, staff, volunteers, students, and parents alike;
- support the ongoing development of a diverse and meaningful curriculum for children from early childhood through high school, an accessible and in-depth library of resources, and diverse collection of classroom materials;
- recommend relevant changes to school policies and practices to ensure they reflect school's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- develop a plan to recruit students, teachers, staff, and board members from diverse backgrounds.

### **Section 3: Curricular Approach and Special Education**

At WSSS, we recognize and value the importance of relationships as the heart of education. Students and parents/legal guardians and faculty and staff are able to develop strong connections to one another through the approach of having multiple years with the same teacher with our Lower School looping model, and the continuity in both the Early Childhood and High School branches. These relationships continue throughout our in-person, hybrid, and remote learning experiences to provide stability and a sense of normalcy no matter the learning environment. While we always work for the benefit of the whole class community, it is critical that we also take care of each individual student's unique needs, especially in the year ahead with so much uncertainty in the world.

Along with all educational institutions, we recognize that some students may need additional social, emotional, or academic support because of remote learning during Spring 2020. Extra care will be taken in reacclimating each student to the new school year and providing the support needed to ensure social, emotional, and academic success. Each branch will develop its own metrics for assessing students and work with parents if learning loss has occurred and needs additional support or remediation. Faculty and staff have been meeting all summer to

prepare for the return to school, to address student needs, and to share best practices for all models of our education; in-person, hybrid, and remote learning.

WSSS is planning for in-person instruction, however, we are also planning for remote learning and hybrid models to facilitate continuous education throughout the 2020-2021 school year or to accommodate a vulnerable student. Due to our small size and sprawling campuses, we can accommodate all students returning to school once our plan is approved by NYSDOH and NYSED, and the Governor has made his decision about the return to school.

Because WSSS is a small private school with adequate space and access to PPE, we will remain open to all students so long as the NYSDOH metrics and those stated above can be met in a safe and sustainable manner. Hybrid models are in place for students who cannot physically be in school, and our remote model addresses any time when the physical school buildings must close.

Parents/legal guardians and students can be in touch with their teachers directly through email or phone for questions, concerns, or clarifications. Additionally, the branch chairs and Administrator can further support communication between parents/legal guardians and faculty. All school emails and phone contact information are available in our school-wide database BigSis.

### ***In-person Instruction***

To maximize in-person instruction, WSSS has implemented the following conditions to decrease density and congregation in school facilities and on school grounds when possible, such as:

- Staggering schedules;
- Adjusting curriculum to accommodate health and safety protocols;
- Creating outdoor classroom spaces;
- Following social distancing protocols;
- Wearing masks inside school buildings except in situations listed above;
- Reconfiguring the use of office and classroom spaces;
- Configuring cohorts of students;
- Built-in time for staggered transitions and for health, hygiene, and cleaning protocols;
- Limiting visitors to the campuses;
- Implementing remote faculty meetings as much as possible;
- Remote administrative workforce, when possible;
- Coordination with the Saratoga Springs School District to ensure access to mandatory services including transportation, special education, and nursing.

### **Early Childhood:**

#### ***Days of the Week***

One of the defining features of WSSS is our small class size which will be leveraged to provide a full program to our students in Pre-K and Kindergarten classes in our Early Childhood Program at the Forest Kindergarten (mainly outdoors).

There are three Early Childhood programs this year with a variety of options for parents to choose from:

Mixed-Age Kindergarten class 1, 5 days/week

- ❖ Arrival 8:10am-8:20am
- ❖ Dismissal 12:20pm-12:30pm

Mixed-Age Kindergarten class 2, 5 days/week

- ❖ Arrival 8:20am-8:30am
- ❖ Dismissal 12:30pm-12:40pm

Pre-K Class, 2 or 3 days/ week

- ❖ Arrival 8:30am-9:00am
- ❖ Dismissal 12:20pm-12:30pm

Pre-Morning Care (5 days/week): 7:30am - 8:30am

After-care (5 days/week): 12:20pm/12:30pm until 3pm or 5pm

### ***Cohorts***

Cohorts are self-contained and organized to limit potential exposure to COVID-19. To the extent possible, the cohorts will not intermingle with one another. If the total number of enrolled Early Childhood students is below 20 students, the faculty may determine that the entire program is one cohort or that 2 small classes constitute a cohort.

Faculty and staff can move across cohorts with social distancing and health and hygiene protocols in place.

### ***Programs***

Our Early Childhood program is play-based, and pre-academic, laying the foundations for success in the Lower School through a rich, imaginative and story-filled environment that offers ample opportunities for small and large motor development, as well as social skill building through free play and gently guided circle activities.

The Early Childhood program is planning to hold all classes outdoors from the beginning of the school year through the Thanksgiving break and again from March through the end of the school year. During the winter months, a significant amount of time will be spent outdoors and each class will have its own indoor space to use where children can safely maintain appropriate social distance.

Students will be provided with their own sets of materials and NYSDOH sanitation and disinfection guidelines will be followed for any shared materials or surfaces. Additionally, nap materials will be assigned to specific students throughout the year and spaces will be sanitized daily.

Family-style meals will be on pause for the 2020-2021 school year with each child bringing their own lunch and water in a water bottle. Teachers will help to refill water bottles to ensure health and safety, and will fill disposable cups for students if necessary. Faculty will accompany children to the bathroom to ensure that hand washing protocols are followed.

For the 2020-2021 school year, we will provide the following:

- Increased outdoor time as stated above with additional outdoor eating spaces to allow for health and safety protocols to be followed;
- Indoor spaces that reflect our beautiful aesthetics and values, while also providing for toys and surfaces that are easier to disinfect;
- Revised drop-off and pick-up procedures to facilitate social distancing;
- Age-appropriate education and reminders about mask-wearing and health and hygiene protocols;
- Designated spaces to allow socially distanced mask breaks;
- Special attention to rhythm, warmth, and structure to support children during a time of increased anxiety and isolation.

## **Lower School:**

### ***Days of the Week***

One of the defining features of WSSS is our small class size which will be leveraged to provide a full program 5 days per week to our students in grades 1 - 7 located at the York Ave. campus.

Because of our small size, staggered drop-off and pick-up times can happen seamlessly without lengthy wait-times for parents who have children in several classes. We have designated separate entrances and exits per cohort to expedite the health assessment that will need to occur each morning and we have designated two doors available with temperature checks and health questionnaire check-points at each. Dismissal will occur per cohort and parents can expect to find their child with their teacher at the designated dismissal time and door. Faculty and staff will supervise to ensure social distancing occurs.

Arrival Times: 7:40am - 7:55am

Dismissal Times:

Grades 1/2 - 2:20pm  
Grades 3 & 4 - 2:25pm  
Grades 5/6 & 7 - 2:30pm

Grades 1-4 will use the side yard gate for arrival and dismissal.  
Grades 5-7 will use the front doors for arrival and dismissal.

### ***Cohorts***

We will balance our small class sizes with opportunities for students to expand their social circle in limited ways, keeping cohorts below 20 students. Each cohort will maintain distance from other cohorts including transitions in the building and recess times.

Cohorts are as follows:

Grades 1/2  
Grades 3 & 4  
Grades 5/6 & 7

Students in the same cohort, but different grades, may be combined for some skills classes and at recess to allow for socialization while still keeping their cohort circle small.

### ***Programs***

The Lower School plans to offer a full curriculum to its students with some modifications in place to prioritize the health and safety of students and faculty.

Following the NYSDOH guidelines, teachers will be able to cross cohorts with health and safety protocols in place. However, to minimize the need for teachers to cross cohorts, class teachers will be the primary instructor per class.

Singing, wind instruments, and cardio-exercises can only be performed with a 12 foot physical distancing in place per student. Therefore, these activities can only be performed while outdoors. Singing may be able to occur in individual classes indoors if the right ventilation and spacing can be employed. We will not be able to hold chorus in the middle grades or orchestra in the traditional format. Alternative music education will still occur and details, as well as schedules, will be sent out in September. Movement Education classes will still occur, but the program will look different to ensure health and safety protocols are in place and Eurythmy has been placed on hold for this year.

For the 2020-2021 school year, we will be ready with the following:

- Design curriculum that is best suited for in-person instruction and that which can more easily be offered remotely;
- Consider and develop necessary skills for remote learning as preparation for that possibility, ie. typing in 7th grade or developing skills for partner work in grades 3-7;
- Develop curriculum that can easily transition between in-person and remote instruction;
- Prepare for supplies to have on-hand at home to make a transition to remote learning easier;
- Develop supply lists for students to have their own sets of supplies to minimize shared materials;
- Create Google Classrooms and prepare for Zoom instruction to be ready and used when remote learning is implemented;
- Develop opportunities for sharing students' creative work both in-person and digitally to engage with the broader community;
- Develop both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities that transition well between teaching models;
- Develop activities that foster the social health of the class that can be sustained in a remote learning setting;
- Engage in activities to promote social-emotional wellbeing, confidence, and collaboration between students;
- Modify Movement (Physical Education) classes to include more games and activities that require no physical contact, focus on individual pursuits and social interactions that also support social distancing while limiting aerobic activity which would require a 12 foot social distance between individuals;
- Adapt our spaces to accommodate social distancing;
- Utilize the outdoor spaces as much as possible;
- Consider safety and social distancing in all lesson plans.

## **High School**

### ***Days of the Week***

One of the defining features of WSSS is our small class size which will be leveraged to provide a full program 5 days per week to our students in grades 8 - 12 located at the Regent St. campus.

Because of our small size, staggered drop-off and pick-up times can happen seamlessly without lengthy wait-time for parents who have children in several classes. We have designated separate entrances and exits per cohort to expedite the health assessment that will need to occur each morning and we have designated two doors available with temperature checks and health questionnaires at each. Dismissal will occur per cohort through the designated doors. Faculty and Staff will supervise to ensure social distancing occurs.

Cohort 1 (Grades 8, 9, & 10) will use the front entrance for arrival and dismissal.

Cohort 2 (Grades 11 & 12) will use the back door for arrival and dismissal.

Arrival Time: 8:05am - 8:20am. Students will gather in a designated area outside the building and be screened prior to moving into an assigned class space.

Dismissal Times:

All Grades staggered dismissal 2:30 - 2:40pm.

### ***Cohorts***

We will balance our small class sizes with opportunities for students to expand their social circle in limited ways, keeping cohorts below 20 students. Each cohort will maintain distance from other cohorts including transitions in the building and recess.

Cohorts are as follows:

Cohort 1: Grades 8, 9, 10

Cohort 2: Grades 11 & 12

### ***Programs***

The High School plans to offer a full curriculum to its students with some modifications in place to prioritize the health and safety of students and faculty.

Following the NYSDOH guidelines, teachers will be able to cross cohorts with health and safety protocols in place. However, to minimize movement throughout the building, cohorts will change classrooms as infrequently as possible while teachers will change classrooms, maintaining social distancing.

Singing, wind instruments, and cardio-exercises can only be performed with a 12 foot physical distancing in place per student. Therefore, these activities can only be performed while outdoors. Singing may be able to occur in individual classes indoors if the right ventilation and spacing can be employed. We will not be able to hold chorus or orchestra in the traditional format. Alternative music education will still occur and details, as well as schedules, will be sent out in September. Movement Education classes will still occur, but the program will look different to ensure health and safety protocols are in place and Eurhythmy has been placed on hold for this year.

For the 2020-2021 school year, we will be ready with the following:

- Be prepared to transition to remote-learning if required.
- Ensure all students have the necessary equipment for remote-learning
- Remote learning will be ready for implementation as needed
- Prepare for supplies to have on-hand at home to make a transition to remote learning easier
- Create the possibility for teachers to teach remotely into a classroom if the teacher cannot enter the classroom
- Create Google Classrooms and prepare for Zoom instruction to be ready and used when remote learning is implemented;
- Develop opportunities for sharing students' creative work both in-person and digitally to engage with the broader community;
- Develop activities that foster the social health of the class that can be sustained in a remote learning setting;
- Engage in activities to promote social-emotional wellbeing, confidence, and collaboration between students;
- Modify Movement (Physical Education) classes to include more games and activities that require no physical contact, focus on individual pursuits and social interactions that also support social distancing while limiting aerobic activity which would require a 12 foot social distance between individuals;
- Adapt our spaces to accommodate social distancing;
- Utilize the outdoor spaces as much as possible;
- Consider safety and social distancing in all lesson plans.

## **Remote Learning**

Our remote learning plan will take effect when remote learning is required by state guidelines or our own metrics. In this scenario, WSSS takes into account what is developmentally appropriate in terms of screen use for each age group, balancing the needs of academic learning, social interaction, and physical and emotional wellbeing. In Early Childhood and the youngest grades, less frequent and shorter intervals of screen time will be implemented. Beginning in third grade, instruction time will gradually increase to allow time for lessons, discussion, and sharing; but at no time exceeds four hours of synchronous learning.

### ***Early Childhood***

We recognize that remote learning is challenging for young children. We will support the families and engage with the children via Zoom or by phone. The suggested weekly rhythm is as follows:

- Live streaming of Circle Time on Monday, Wednesday and Friday;
- Audio recorded stories sent on Tuesday;
- Video of rhythmic work on Thursday (poetry, finger games, etc.);

- Activities posted on Google Classroom with a theme-of-the-week for asynchronous learning;
- Individual check-in with the student and family at least once per week.

### ***Lower School***

In the Lower School, remote learning varies according to grade level. For the wellbeing of the students, we attempt to retain a familiar rhythm to the day.

The following chart offers a sample schedule that will be used during remote learning:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Remote Morning</b>	<b>Remote Afternoon</b>
1/2	9:00am - 10:00am Main Lesson Snack break 11:00am - 11:45am Small Group Skills Class	1:00pm - 4:00pm Asynchronous projects, social meet-ups, video and audio recorded lessons, individual check-in, office hours
3	9:00am - 10:00am Main Lesson Snack break 11:00am - 11:45am Skills Class	1:30pm - 2:30pm Specialty Class of the Day 2:30pm - 4:00pm Individual Check-in/Office Hours
4	9:00am - 10:30am Main Lesson Snack break 11:00am - 11:45am Skills Class	1:30pm - 2:30pm Specialty Class of the Day 2:30pm - 4:00pm Individual Check-in/Office Hours

5/6	8:30am - 10:00am Main Lesson Snack break 10:30am - 11:30am Skills Class	1:30pm - 2:30pm Specialty Class of the Day 2:30pm - 4:00pm Individual Check-in/Office Hours
7	8:30am - 10:00am Main Lesson Snack break 10:30am - 11:30am Skills Class	1:30pm - 2:30pm Specialty Class of the Day 2:30pm - 4:00pm Individual Check-in/Office Hours

### **High School**

The High School remote learning schedule for grades 8-12, is very similar to the model used during Spring 2020 and maintains a familiar rhythm to the day for the wellbeing of the students.

The following chart offers a sample schedule that will be used during remote learning which may be updated prior to the start of the school year based upon feedback from students and faculty:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Classes</b>
8:20-9:20am	Main Lesson
9:30-10:10am	Period 1
10:15-10:30am	Snack/Break
10:35-11:15 am	Period 2
11:20-12:00	Movement/ Outdoors
12:00-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:35-1:20pm	Music education
1:25-2:05 pm	Study Hall/ Office Hours

2:10-2:50 pm	Math/ Study Hall
--------------	------------------

**Hybrid Learning:**

At WSSS, we recognize that there may be times throughout the school year where a student needs to remain home for an extended period of time due to quarantine protocols, health risk, or illness. In order to accommodate these circumstances where the student is otherwise healthy, but must stay at home, we will make accommodations to ensure continuous education for each student to the extent possible. We also recognize that every scenario will be unique and there will be opportunity for each family to participate in creating the plan that will work best for all parties involved; student, parents/legal guardians, and faculty. In hybrid learning, the emphasis is on the continuity of education for the students who are quarantined as well as offering a sense of belonging to their class community and synchronous continuation of learning.

Students who are ill or are home for 1-3 days will coordinate with their teachers upon return to school. Unexcused absences, such as vacation days, will be treated according to WSSS policy. Hybrid learning will accommodate students who must remain home for 1-2 weeks as related to COVID-19 health and safety protocols, quarantine, or similar medical reasons.

***Early Childhood***

Early Childhood students will have the opportunity to engage in at-home activities prepared by their teachers as care packages of materials. The student’s teacher will be available for conversations and consultations with the family through social zoom experiences or phone calls, or other supportive venues, as agreed upon between teacher and parents/legal guardians. It is our hope that these activities and social interactions will help foster a sense of connection with school and support the emotional wellbeing of the student if they must stay at home while class is in session.

***Lower School and High School***

Lower school and high school students will be expected to participate in their learning experiences to the best of their ability in a hybrid model if learning must take place at home. The best model and mode of delivery will be looked at on an individual basis and parents/legal guardians, students, and teachers will come to an agreement that allows for a continuous educational experience.

Hybrid models may also include time where a faculty member needs to be quarantined, but is otherwise healthy, or when a faculty member is part of a vulnerable population. In such circumstances, the faculty member may teach remotely via Zoom and be streamed into the

classroom on a screen with a supervising adult ensuring social distancing. Parents/legal guardians will be notified if we need to engage in this scenario.

The following possibilities will be offered to all students/families in grades 1-12:

- Live-stream classes;
- Assignments given through the Google Classroom, email, or by phone (as needed);
- Recorded video or audio content;
- Packets that may include supplies, books, or other take-home materials;
- Teacher support through Zoom, email, or phone to clarify assignments, answer questions, etc.;
- Modifying the in-class assignments for a more practical at-home experience;
- Offering feedback, assessments, and grades in alignment with already established grade level assessments.

Students and Parents/Legal Guardians are expected to:

- Complete assignments that can be turned in digitally or upon return to class (depending on the assignment and grade level);
- Ask clarifying questions;
- Notify their teachers of any technological issues or a need to modify their learning plan.

### ***Athletics and Extracurricular Activities***

The possibility of offering WSSS extracurricular activities will be guided by the NYSDOH guidelines for health and hygiene, as well as cleaning and disinfection protocols; and common sense preventative measures. The use of our facilities for after school activities will be limited to help maintain health and safety directives. Clubs or afterschool activities will be limited this school year and will follow all safety guidelines from NYSDOH. Virtual clubs may be a possibility. At the time of this writing, interscholastic sports are prohibited for all NYS schools.

### ***Before Care and Aftercare***

WSSS is running one before care program at our Early Childhood campus. The children will go through the check in procedure described above upon arrival. They will wash their hands and then will remain outside until the school day begins.

WSSS is planning to run two aftercare programs this year. One Early Childhood program (ages 3-6) and one Lower School (Grades 1-6). Each program will have less than 20 students. The students will follow social distancing and mask guidelines that are consistent with the school day. Students will bring their own snack and they will eat following the same guidelines as the school day, following handwashing procedures and social distancing. Both programs will be

based outdoors. For Early Childhood a rest period will take place inside and the children's sleeping mats will be at least six feet apart. Cleaning protocols will apply.

## Festivals and Assemblies

Community and social relationships are a cornerstone of Waldorf Education. Our assemblies, festivals, and community events foster the spirit of WSSS, bringing us together in joyful celebration. During remote learning in the spring of 2020, we were able to offer a selection of community events to mark the significant transitions at the end of the school year including; a Drive-In Graduation ceremony, a year-end virtual Stepping-Up celebration, Junior project presentations; Senior projects; Senior monologues; 8th grade graduation; 6th grade parent presentations and video-skits; a Town Hall meeting; and an Open-Mic virtual event.

During the 2020-2021 school year, large gatherings will not be possible to meet state requirements for appropriate social distancing. Instead, some events will be held remotely, while others will be in-person where NYSDOH guidelines can be met. Field trips and class trips will be considered on a case by case basis and must follow all NYS DOH guidelines.

The following list outlines the location of festivals and events throughout the year:

### Fundraising and Community Events:

Events	School is In-Person	School is Remote
Rose Ceremony	In-person, socially distanced, less than 50 people, outside	Virtual Event
Michaelmas	Celebrated with each individual cohort outside	Cancelled
Halloween	Celebrated with each individual cohort outside	Cancelled
Lantern Walks	Celebrated with each individual cohort outside	Cancelled
Fall Assembly	Remote Event recorded during the school day and shared with the community at a set time.	Remote Event recorded at home and shared with the community at a set time.
Explorer's Challenge	Celebrated with grade 7	Individual Challenge led Remotely
Spiral Garden	Celebrated outside at the	TBD

Pre-K - Grade 8	Forest Kindergarten with each individual cohort, socially distanced	
Angel Room	Cancelled	Cancelled
Shepherd's Play	Outside if possible	Virtual
Love-n-Luck Assembly	Cancelled	Cancelled
Middle Grades Music Event	Virtual Individual Class Sharing	Virtual Individual Class Sharing
Spring Assembly	Remote Event recorded during the school day and shared with the community at a set time.	Remote Event recorded at home and shared with the community at a set time.
Farm Trip	TBD	TBD
May Day	Outdoor Cohort Sharing	Cancelled
Pentathlon	TBD	TBD
Medieval Games	TBD	TBD
Spring Rose	In-person, socially distanced, less than 50 people, outside	Virtual
Graduation	TBD	Virtual
Stepping-Up	TBD	Virtual

Event	School is In-Person	School is Remote
Forest Kindergarten 10 year Anniversary	Socially distanced, outdoor, walk and picnic	Cancelled
Trivia Night	Virtual	Virtual
Donor's Reception	Virtual	Virtual
Silent and Live Auction	Virtual	Virtual
Drive-Through Holiday Faire	TBD	TBD

## **Special Education**

Educators across the country in a wide array of fields, have noted that students with special education needs or learning differences need extra attention, support, and prioritization in the coming year following remote learning and especially if we must return to remote learning.

### ***Structure of our Learning Support Program***

WSSS is fortunate to have a strong relationship with the Saratoga Springs City School District's Department of Pupil Services & Special Education as provided through NYSED, and we rely heavily upon their support for our students. Parents can apply for evaluation through the Saratoga District and WSSS provides space within our schedule and our buildings for support services to occur. Our administrator works closely with the city appointed providers to create a schedule that works for all students on our campuses who receive special education services.

In pre-K through grade 7, class teachers offer additional support for families and students in social, emotional, and academic support as needed. In grades 8-12, the student advisor offers this support and additionally helps provide a bridge between students and teachers for additional attention in academic areas, as needed. One-on-one time with teachers is offered in each department as schedules allow and need arises.

### ***Special Education Across the Learning Scenarios for 2020-2021***

During the 2020-2021 school year, WSSS is committed to providing the best possible scenario for students in need of academic support. While we are dependent upon the funds and services available to our students through NYSED and the Saratoga Springs City School District, we will continue to advocate for these services whether we are in-person, in a version of hybrid learning, or remote learning. Additionally, class teachers and HS advisors will continue to collaborate with students and families to create the best possible scenarios given our resources in each situation.

### ***Screenings, Assessments, and Grades***

WSSS conducts regular evaluation and lesson embedded assessments of students to present to parents and legal guardians during parent teacher conferences, year-end reports, or any other time where it is warranted. Grades 7-12 also receive mid-year reports and direct feedback from their teachers on a regular basis. Students are assessed in their Kindergarten year for first grade readiness, as well as in 2nd grade, 6th grade, and 9th grade to track their development and academic progress. During the 2020-2021 school year, we will continue with these assessments which help us to continue to track, remediate gaps in student achievement, and flag any students who may need further follow-up, Academic Intervention Services, or evaluation. When necessary, faculty make the recommendation for students to get tested

through the Saratoga Springs City School District Department of Pupil Services and Special Education and parents make this request as they see fit. Academic Intervention Services are then provided by the Saratoga Springs City School District when needed.

We also recognize that formal assessments may be stressful to some students and we generally work with these assessments through gentle evaluation of work the students would otherwise complete for their teachers as well as student observation. During the coming year, we will be especially sensitive to this as the effects of returning to school and potentially shifting between in-person and remote learning can create additional stress for students. The wellbeing of our students is of paramount importance as we establish a strong foundation for academic success.

At WSSS, regular feedback to students, parent/legal guardian conferences, and written narratives allow students to develop and progress in a supportive environment. Beginning in middle school, students receive test scores to further inform the feedback loop and in grades 8-12, students receive letter grades per course, as well as a written narrative describing their successes and challenges. These thorough feedback methods provide continuous communication between teacher expectations and student performance throughout the school year.

During the 2020-2021 school year, grading and evaluation of students will remain clear and consistent as in-person, hybrid, and remote learning models are employed. Embedded, formative assessments will continue to guide our instruction plans. Individual student accommodations will continue to be made, taking into consideration the various learning styles of our students. As stated above in the Social Emotional Well-Being section, educators within each branch of the school take time during their weekly faculty meetings to collaborate on best practices and approaches to meet the needs of our students. Additionally, faculty will take into consideration the possibility of learning loss over the Spring 2020 remote learning model and will employ embedded assessments of students to remediate as needed and bring everyone to grade level as quickly and responsibly as possible.

### ***School Procedures & Faculty/Staff Professional Development***

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

- Beginning the school year slowly, with ample time to re-orient students to the new routines, give them time to unpack and process the previous six months, and focus on rebuilding the social fabric of the classroom;
- Professional development for teachers in how to work with children 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 childrens' needs during this time;

- Professional development for teachers around identifying signs of depression, anxiety, and trauma in children of different ages, and how to appropriately refer those students for follow up.

## **Section 4: Facilities**

### ***Utilization of Space***

WSSS is fortunate to have four campuses with yard space. We are also familiar with outdoor classes such as at the Forest Kindergarten and we plan to incorporate elements of this model throughout our programs to maximize outdoor education, air ventilation, and social distancing.

Each class in the Early Childhood Department, Lower School, and High School will utilize Outdoor Classroom space to conduct classes as weather permits. Semi-permanent classroom spaces are being created on our campuses including rain and shade coverings, as well as heat sources for colder fall or spring mornings. Our Outdoor Classroom Committee is ensuring that any new space meets the Saratoga Springs building codes and NYSED's Office of Facilities Approval, as warranted.

Every space inside our buildings has been measured to ensure we meet the NYSDOH guidelines for physical distancing and all desks will be facing one direction. Students will not share workstations, desks, tables, or other surfaces without cleaning and disinfecting between use. Some spaces will be repurposed, and upgrades are being made such as the addition of sinks and infirmary spaces with minor adjustments. Our large windows and high ceilings allow for adequate ventilation to occur with opened windows, and we will have air filtration systems in use on all campuses. Right of way traffic within the buildings will be clearly marked and small spaces that tend to become more congested (such as the front offices) will have clear signage to help maintain social distance of 6 feet while waiting to enter such spaces. Capacity of these smaller spaces will be limited to 50% and face masks will be worn by all individuals. Schedules will be staggered to minimize congestion in the hallways and staircases.

There are no automatic doors in use at WSSS, however, we will keep doors open to the extent possible to reduce the need to touch door handles for all doors that are not fire rated. Frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces will be employed throughout the day.

Plastic dividers will not be necessary on our campuses because we have adjusted our schedules to reduce the need for queue lines or overcrowded spaces and our restrooms will be single use for the 2020/2021 school year. However, we will install plastic dividers at our front office desks to comply with Building Code Section 2606. Alcohol based hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed in compliance with the 2020 Fire Code of New York State (FCNYS) Section 5705.5.

### ***Additional Space***

WSSS does not intend to expand our physical space at this time. We are employing the use of temporary tents and overhead membrane structures and will be sure to comply with all local building codes and FCNYS codes for such installations. We are also looking into the possibility of utilizing existing outdoor space in our local parks and are currently in conversation with those agencies.

### ***Safety Drills***

WSSS maintains an internal guide for conducting emergency Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills as required by Education Law entitled “Best Practices for Conducting Emergency Safety Drills.” This guide will be reviewed and updated before the start of the 2020-2021 school year to take into account social distancing requirements by, for instance, indicating that students and faculty are to maintain a distance of six feet when they gather on the sidewalks outside for evacuation during our Fire Safety Drill, and by reviewing where each class should gather in order to preserve maximum distance.

### ***Ventilation & Plumbing***

As mentioned above, our school has very good air circulation already in most areas, due to high ceilings and large windows. In areas with more limited air circulation, we will open doors and windows as we are able, and provide air purifiers in high-risk rooms such as the nurse’s office. We have added three new sinks with foot pedals at the Lower School. The other buildings have an adequate number of sinks.

## **Section 5: Transportation**

WSSS does not provide transportation to and from school or use contract transportation for its students. WSSS will encourage all parents/guardians to drive their own child/children to school and all students who ride the public school bus will follow the guidelines of that school district including wearing masks. WSSS will remind students to comply with the regulations for public school bus transportation.

WSSS has a bus that is used for transporting our students to our different campuses and to different locations for PE classes. This year the bus will be used much less because we will not combine cohorts and because PE classes will comply with social distancing limitations.

WSSS will follow all NYSDOH guidelines including:

- The bus will be cleaned and disinfected after every trip;
- Hand sanitizer will not be used or made available on the bus;

- When the outside temperature is above 45 degrees, the windows will be opened to provide air flow;
- A sneeze guard will be installed by the driver's seat with material approved by the Department of Transportation;
- The sneeze guard will be disinfected every day.

Students will:

- Maintain social distancing of six feet when entering, exiting and sitting on the bus unless they are members of the same household;
- Wash hands before and after they ride the bus;
- Wear acceptable face coverings at all times on the school bus;
- Be reminded to follow all bus rules including not eating or drinking on the bus;
- Be provided with a mask if needed.

Driver and other supervising adults will:

- Wear a face mask and other PPE as recommended by NYSDOH;
- Be trained in the proper use of PPE and to look for signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
- Undergo a health questionnaire and temperature check prior to operating the vehicle;
- Wear gloves if they need to be in physical contact with a student;
- Follow hand hygiene protocols before entering the bus and upon leaving;
- Follow all respiratory hygiene instructions while on the bus;
- Provide students with hand sanitizer upon leaving the bus.

## **Section 6: Technology and Connectivity**

### ***Access to Technology***

WSSS is surveying its families and faculty to determine access to the internet and technology in the event that remote learning becomes necessary. Last spring, we worked with faculty and families to make sure they had the access they needed and made accommodations or assistance to families who needed internet connections or laptops. Faculty and families will be surveyed in August as situations may have changed.

Additionally, WSSS will purchase tablets for students in grades 1-4 and tablets with keyboards for students in grades 5-7. The school owns a number of Google Chromebooks that can be borrowed by families and students in the Early Childhood Program or High School.

We will accommodate students who lose access to technology during a period of remote learning, or whose families prefer less screen time, with alternative methods of instruction and assessment of work. This may include phone conversations between teacher and

student/family, parent proctored written tests, and written or artistic work to be collected at a specified date.

### ***Platforms and Security***

During the spring, our upper classes shifted quickly to using Google Classroom and Zoom calls for instruction, while our younger students moved gradually into Zoom meetings and instruction. Following news articles that questioned Zoom's security, we put together a research team of faculty and parents to evaluate Zoom's effectiveness at security. In light of the bad press, Zoom increased its security features and our research team found that Zoom was as secure as any other video-conferencing platform while incorporating features, such as breakout rooms, that are helpful for class instruction. Many of our students and families are now familiar with both Google Classroom and Zoom.

This fall, each class from pre-K through grade 12 will be connected to a Google Classroom. This platform will only be used in the event of remote learning or to keep students connected through hybrid learning. Setting it up at the beginning of the school year will allow us to transition smoothly into remote learning if necessary.

Zoom video calls will be the primary platform for instruction for students in grades 1-12 in the event of remote learning, as determined by grade level. In the Early Childhood department, Zoom calls will be available to help keep classes connected and for artistic and social activities. Parents and legal guardians can opt out of Zoom calls if they prefer less screen time for their children, but the classes will be offered nevertheless.

WSSS has chosen to provide tablets to students in grades 1-7 that have parental control capabilities to ensure a safe online learning environment as these children navigate using devices on their own, many for the first time. For younger children, we know that parents will be a direct part of their online learning experience. For the students in grades 8-12, we know many have their own devices which they use during in-person instruction and we will continue to provide them with information about internet safety.

We have also put together a team to explore further ways of ensuring data security. This past year, we moved to BigSis, a new data platform which has heightened security features to keep student records. If we find that further security measures are necessary, we will update our families as this information becomes available.

### ***Education for Families and Faculty***

Many families, students, and teachers learned to use Google Classroom and Zoom during our spring remote learning. We will provide tech support to those families not familiar with Zoom or Google Classroom in the first weeks of school to make sure everyone is comfortable navigating

these platforms. Any faculty or staff who need updates or maintenance of their skills with using these platforms will have an opportunity for tech support during the August workdays. Additionally, we will host a training for families in utilizing parental controls and their benefits for internet safety during September.

Professional development in the pedagogical aspects of screen use for children in remote learning will be available for faculty through assigned articles, opportunities to attend NYS AIS-sponsored seminars, and time during our faculty meetings to look at best practices for remote learning.

### ***Libraries***

The Lower School and High School maintain a collection of books and resources for students' academic lessons and pleasure reading. These resources are available for students to check-out. Additionally, we rely heavily upon our local public library to provide additional resources for students and families. Teachers and administrative staff play a large role in fostering digital fluency skills, offering resources, and troubleshooting to make accessing and utilizing digital resources and technology a user friendly, and safe, experience.

## **Section 7: Staffing & Human Resources**

### ***COVID-19 specific HR Considerations***

WSSS is updating its 2020-2021 Faculty Handbook with a COVID-19-specific addendum covering all points of HR policy as they relate specifically to the pandemic. Copies will be made available through the Business Office at the school.

### ***Conclusion***

WSSS is currently well-positioned to return to an in-person scenario in the fall. Our buildings and outdoor spaces lend themselves to hygienic airflow; our small class sizes make the spatial aspect of social distancing relatively easy for us to implement; our flexible arts-based curriculum provides a solid foundation for student and faculty wellness. We will maintain updated copies of this document on our school website and online parent portal, and we will be vigilant in our efforts to keep our community safe and healthy.

Respectfully Submitted by Abigail Reid, Administrator & Astrea Ravenstar, Faculty Chair

In consultation with Members of the WSSS COVID-19 Task Force:

Wendy Mayes-Beasley, MD (parent)  
Indhira Blackwood (parent)  
Laura Blunt, RN (school nurse)  
Rich Frank (Board President)  
Astrea Ravenstar (Collegium Chair)  
Abigail Reid (Administrator)  
Romina Tollerutti, MD (parent)

## Updates

August 16:

page 15, Under ***Who Must Wear Mask and When***- The first sentence now reads “All persons in the school buildings or on school grounds must wear masks as a general rule.” Originally it read “All persons in the school buildings or on school grounds who are not able to maintain a social distance of 6 feet must wear masks as a general rule.”

Page 16, Deleted first bullet point that read “Classroom instruction when social distancing can occur;”

Page 16, Under ***Mask Types***- deleted “bandanas”

Sept. 10

Page 14, Under ***Return to School*** deleted the following:

If a person is evaluated by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) and determined not to have COVID-19 they can return to school when:

- A person must be afebrile (without fever) for 24 hours *without fever reducing medication*;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have 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 all of the following are met:
  - It has been at least 14 days since the individual first had symptoms; AND
  - 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;
- Additionally, WSSS employees will return to work following the NYSDOH "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure" guidelines.

Now reads:

Our Return to School Guidelines have been replaced with the following:

If a student or staff member has informed the school through our morning health screen that they have any COVID- 19 symptoms, in order to return to school in accordance with NYSDOH,

- they must contact their primary care physician;
- they must provide a medical clearance note from their health care provider, and a documented negative COVID- 19 test;
- they must have resolution of symptoms- including fever free for 24 hours *without the use of medication*;
- If COVID positive a release from isolation is required from the Saratoga County Department of Health.

In addition, if one person in your household is ill with any COVID symptom we ask that [all] student[s] remain at home until the symptomatic person is medically cleared. (see above guidelines)