Safeguarding Our Community

Resuming On-Campus Education ~ 2020-21 School Year

July 25, 2020
Contents

Message from Head of School

Our Strategy

Hygiene Practices & Infection Control

Health & Safety

Facilities

Teaching & Learning

Social/Emotional Well-being

Communication with the Maplebrook Community

Other Considerations
We are very much looking forward to welcoming our students back in September. This has been a period in which it has never been more important that we live according to our core values, while being flexible, resilient and innovative, all while keeping the health and well-being of our entire community in the forefront of our minds.

Here you will find our current plans for a return to campus this September. In drawing up our plans, we hope we have managed to anticipate and address potential concerns. While we cannot eliminate risk, we have taken care to mitigate risk and plan for multiple contingencies as well as revisit decisions over time and as things change.

The situation is still unfolding and we are, therefore, continuing to keep up on the latest guidance from the New York State Department of Health, the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health and the CDC. It is important to note that this initial reopening plan is subject to changes as new information emerges relative to COVID-19 and changes in state and federal guidelines and mandates evolve.

All of us at Maplebrook are committed to safeguarding the community. Together, we hope to stay safe in mind, body and spirit.

Wishing you the very best,

Jennifer L. Scully
Our Strategy

The well-being of our school community is at the heart of everything we do. We are focused on ensuring that our students integrate back into Maplebrook school life and lessons in the safest way possible.

We are following the New York State guidelines for reopening schools, the mandates from the New York State Department of Health, local and state governmental regulations and advice from NAIS, NYSAIS, SORIS, NYSED and information from United Educators. Our pandemic strategy will allow us to continue offering excellence in all that we do at Maplebrook.

We are confident we can screen daily as a precaution. We can track and trace students and staff who show symptoms and may have been infected. We have provided a dedicated care facility that provides comfortable, well-supported areas for those requiring isolation.
We have invested in appropriate medical equipment for our community, as well as enhancing our robust hygiene practices.

Staff have been and continue to be trained in infection control procedures and the school has been risk assessed by the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health.

We have implemented the appropriate physical distancing measures and enforce them throughout the school.

We provide students at Maplebrook School the highest level of education and social/emotional support. We continue to be flexible and adapt to the emerging needs of our community.

We are committed to transparent and timely communication and engagement with the whole Maplebrook School community about plans and actions and their potential impacts.
Daily Health Screenings: Regular screening for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help to quickly identify signs of illness and help reduce exposure. Students, faculty, and staff will be required to engage in daily symptom screening. We will continue to consult with local public health officials to seek guidance regarding emerging recommendations related to daily screenings.

Personal Hygiene: We have enhanced our hand sanitizing stations throughout campus and will ensure the availability of appropriate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant wipes, and tissues) and strategically place supplies in areas where they may be frequently used.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): The Health Office has a stockpile of PPE and continues to order supplies as needed to support a safe return for students and staff on campus.

Wearing Face Coverings: In adherence to CDC recommendations, face coverings will be required in all communal spaces. Students are asked to bring their own face coverings from home. Face coverings should be changed daily and will be laundered regularly.

Maintaining Physical Distance: We intend to provide on-going education to students on the most up-to-date health and safety protocols. Faculty model these behaviors themselves and modify student behaviors if they are not complying. We will expect everyone in the community to abide by these and other health and safety guidelines, just as we expect them to follow other health and safety rules and expectations.

Minimizing the Handling of School Materials & Electronics: We continue to inventory and ensure that we have adequate supplies to minimize sharing of school materials such as books, computers, etc. Protocols for cleaning and sanitation have been developed for those items that must be shared. Students are required to bring their own laptops to avoid using community computers.
**Health and Safety Protocol, and Procedures:** Our Health and Safety Task Force, in close collaboration with our local hospital, the New York State Department of Health, and local public health officials, have developed extensive health and safety protocols and procedures that are guided by the latest developments in state and federal health and safety mandates, as well as by best practices in public health. These health and safety protocols include, but are not limited to:

- wearing face coverings
- social distancing
- density controls
- circulation flow
- hygiene practices
- cleaning and sanitation
- daily health screening
- isolation and quarantine

Students, faculty, and staff have and will continue to receive extensive education and training to ensure understanding of such procedures and protocols, as well as the importance of compliance.

**Symptomatic Community Members:** Boarding students who are experiencing any COVID symptoms will be directed to report to the Health Office to be evaluated by the nursing staff. Nursing staff will isolate and take necessary steps to assist the ill student and contact/transport to the local hospital as needed. Students who test negative will receive care and support from nursing to address their presenting symptoms and be permitted to resume daily activities when able. Students who test positive will be transitioned home if they live close enough to have family collect them or to the isolation dormitory, where they will remain in supported and supervised isolation for an additional 10 days or the duration recommended by the DCDBCH.

Employees who are experiencing COVID symptoms will be asked to remain at home and to contact the School Health Office to report symptoms and to seek further guidance. They will be advised to contact their healthcare provider to obtain testing, asked to share test results with the Health Office and to follow return to campus protocols based on test results.
Confirmed Case on Campus: If a boarding student tests positive for COVID-19, we will be able to provide safe and comfortable on-campus isolation accommodations and nursing coverage. We will also allow and encourage parents or an authorized family member to pick up the student to isolate in the care of their parents/family.

When a day student or employee tests positive, they will be asked to isolate at home. They will be provided with detailed guidance regarding at-home isolation, quarantine, and return-to-campus protocols.

Contact Tracing: When a positive case is identified on campus, our nursing staff, in concert with the DCDBCH, will engage in contract tracing efforts to identify additional cases and contacts and then require such cases and contacts to isolate and quarantine, respectively.

Isolation and Quarantine Accommodations: We will have separate on-campus accommodations for boarding students who require isolation and quarantine. All students in isolation and quarantine will be provided with access to distance learning, as well as academic accommodations and social/emotional supports, as necessary.

Additionally, day students and employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 will be required to notify the School Health Office, and to follow CDC recommended precautions. Nursing staff will work with the DCDBCH to determine the next steps. Day students will be asked to quarantine at home and will be supported to engage in distance learning. Employees will be asked to quarantine at home and to work remotely, if able.

Students Requiring Hospitalization: Any student requiring hospitalization will be transported to Sharon Hospital for further care. A faculty or staff member will stay with the student until a parent, guardian, or appointed family member arrives.
Facilities

**Instructional Spaces:** Maplebrook School traditionally boasts small class sizes and we have assessed the capacity of each instructional space while complying with physical distancing recommendations. In-person classes will adhere to physical distancing regulations with classroom setup. All faculty and students who meet in person will adhere to physical distancing guidelines as well as wear face coverings. Faculty and students have been and will continue to be trained on the proper use of face coverings as well as physical-distancing rules. This training will be reinforced throughout the year. Housekeeping will ensure that sanitation products are stocked. All instructional spaces will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of each school day. When physical distancing is not feasible for the learning experience, it will move to a distance-learning environment.

**Dining Services:** We are working to ensure that the dining experience at Maplebrook is safe and healthy. Sit-down meals will remain and staggered meal times will be enforced to ensure physical distancing. Planning for the dining hall includes: reduction of dining hall capacity and new traffic flow, menu and serving modifications, such as grab-and-go meals and disposables, and sanitization of dining surfaces between seatings.

**Cleaning and Sanitization of Facilities:** Our housekeeping staff is prepared to meet the expanded cleaning and sanitization demands associated with COVID. Housekeeping staff will increase the disinfection during during the school day and establish enhanced schedules for routine environmental cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces and shared equipment using EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2. The maintenance crew will assist when in these cleaning endeavors.

**Dormitory Structure:** Dorms are arranged into smaller areas such as wings of no more than 10 students. Students in a wing will also share a bathroom with appropriate distancing and on a staggered schedule. This small group approach to residential life will reduce large group contact and facilitate contact tracing if necessary. Day students will similarly be assigned to smaller areas and be assigned together to shared spaces on campus. Access to dorms and individual rooms will be restricted to students who live in those spaces. Families are asked to bring an open mind, to understand that flexibility will be key, and to work with us as we adapt to changing conditions throughout the year.

**Signage:** Throughout the campus, visual reminders about PPE, physical distancing and who is allowed into what areas has been displayed.
Maplebrook School will offer a hybrid educational model for the 2020-21 school year that provides an on-campus experience (boarding and day) and a robust learning program (online) for students delayed or restricted by travel. We are committed to providing all of our students with the best possible academic program complete with all the proper supports.

**Scheduling and Instruction:** All Maplebrook courses will be designed in a distance-learning format. This will allow faculty and students to switch seamlessly between in-person, online, and hybrid environments. This format will also serve to accommodate students in many different time zones. Google Suites is the platform with which faculty are familiar. For hybrid learning situations, distance learning may mean from another space on campus or from home. In addition, faculty will be encouraged to make use of outdoor spaces for teaching classes whenever possible to comply with physical distancing guidelines. Maplebrook School provides faculty with professional development and training to ensure that they are well equipped to teach their courses in a hybrid or distance-learning environment.

**Faculty/Staff:** In the event that a faculty/staff member is unable to teach on-site due to COVID related complications (pre-existing conditions, exposure to COVID positive case, symptomatic, or positive test), accommodations will be made to either support the faculty to work remotely or to ensure that their classes and other responsibilities are optimally covered to prevent disruption to student learning/experience.

**Student Supports:** Students will be regularly monitored to determine if extra support is needed. Speech & language services, tutoring and study halls will be held in person observing physical distancing guidelines. Other ways of offering academic support, such as skills development, will be offered at different times for students. This includes independent living skills and executive functioning instruction.

**Supporting Students and Community Members Particularly Vulnerable to COVID-19:** We will ask students and community members to identify any possible health conditions that could create special vulnerabilities during this time of heightened health concerns. Please see this Center for Disease Control information to better understand these health situations. While all possible care will be taken to protect the privacy of this information, it will need to be shared on a limited, need-to-know basis in order to create accommodations.
**Mental Health Supports:** The COVID-19 pandemic is causing an increased amount of stress, fear, and anxiety for many people. To ensure our students are supported throughout the upcoming year, we will be providing additional mental health resources and support, including the addition of a full-time school counselor, enhanced health and wellness education, a social-emotional learning curriculum, and mentoring services through our Responsibility Increases Self-Esteem (RISE) Program. Maplebrook School will continue to provide students with access to mental health care and will coordinate care with additional long-term therapists, when necessary.

**Boarding School Life:** Boarding School Life will prioritize student and faculty safety while engaging all community members in memorable and positive experiences. Our goals are to foster a close community with faculty modelling safe and healthy behavior for everyone. Most activities this year will be held on campus grounds whenever possible. We know that our connected community is an essential part of the Maplebrook experience. We are confident that even with the procedures in place we will be able to provide an exciting, enjoyable and valuable educational and social experience for all students.

**Departures from Campus:** Any boarding student who needs to leave campus must request permission through the Head of School, who will assess the request for both necessity and risk in conjunction with the Health Office. If boarding students return home, they will be subject to additional screening and possibly quarantine. In addition, all school-related off-campus trips will be minimized in order to reduce the risk of exposure. These policies will be reviewed on a regular basis, taking into account the prevalence of COVID-19 in our surrounding communities, and at the travel destination.

**Athletics:** We are hopeful that interscholastic athletics will be possible during the coming school year; however, our participation will be guided by public health guidelines as well as health and safety protocols. We will offer a wide range of activities and opportunities for all of our students to stay active and even cultivate new interests through intramural activities, as well as a wide range of outdoor activities. We will look to utilize our extensive campus and expand our opportunities to engage in physically distanced activities.
Communication with the Maplebrook Community

We are committed to transparent and timely communication and engagement with the entire school community about Maplebrook School’s plans and actions and their potential impacts.

Family members and students may be especially anxious about the possible impact of COVID-19. Our communications seek to reassure that our developed contingency plans to address the range of potential issues that could arise – from excluding individuals from campus to alternative learning, or simply considering how absences might impact grades or academic progress are solid. We will continue to communicate important information about any changes or potential changes in school operations through weekly video calls and emails.
Other Considerations

Provisions for Closure: A plan to close campus will be communicated if any of the following occur:

1. There is a campus outbreak whereby there are too many students or staff to continue operating safely in person.
2. A spike in local cases means that it is no longer safe for students to remain on campus.
3. The Governor instructs schools to cease operations because of a change in state health requirements or cases reported exceed the acceptable percentage.

Opening Campus: In order to achieve our educational goals, the community as a whole, faculty, staff, administration, students, parents, and families, depends on the shared commitment to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The following protocols will be in place as students return to campus:

1. All students are expected to limit their risk of exposure in the 14 days before they return to MBS. This includes wearing a face covering in public spaces, practicing physical distancing outside the home, and adhering to excellent hand hygiene.
2. Students arriving from outside the USA or from states with travel restrictions will be required to adhere to CDC and NYS travel guidelines, including a 14 day quarantine if required. MBS will offer a designated campus housing option for students who need this provision. Boarding students will return to campus on a staggered basis. We will communicate specific dates as the schedule is finalized.
3. Prior to returning to campus, within 7 days, students may wish to be tested and report a negative result to the health office.

Visitors to Campus: In order to keep our community as safe and healthy as possible in the midst of COVID-19, we are currently restricting student’s visitors to campus. If health conditions allow a change to this policy, we will inform students and their families. Protocols and procedures for essential delivery personnel and contractors, as well as for other essential visitors to campus are in place to minimize risk of exposure to our campus community. All others will be on an invitation only basis and must abide by all safety protocols put in place.

We are committed to our students and families. As always, we work with all of our students and families to meet their needs and deliver on our mission.
Special thanks to the following people who contributed to the planning and construction of this document:

Nancy Lenhert, RN, BSN, CLC, Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health

Ann Crowley, RN, BSN, Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health

Jim Hutchison, Director, Sharon Hospital

Marie Fox, LPN  Maplebrook School

Maplebrook School Administrative Task Force on School Safety

Maplebrook School
5142 Route 22
Amenia, NY 12501

(845) 373-9511

www.maplebrookschool.org