

# **William Spyropoulos School**

## **Plan to Reopen for the 2020-2021 School Year**

The William Spyropoulos School of the Greek Orthodox Shrine Church of St. Nicholas is a parochial school located in Flushing, New York, District 26, that serves students enrolled in grades kindergarten through eight. Below please find our plan to reopen for the 2020-2021 academic school year. Our goal is to address every student's needs and provide equity for all in a nurturing, safe and healthy environment.

### **I. Reopening Procedures and Instruction**

#### **a. Arrival**

We will maintain an 8:40-2:40 instructional school day for all administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, staff and contractors to meet in-person with students five days a week. We will implement a staggered arrival and dismissal schedule. Upon arrival, temperature screenings of all adults and students will take place using a no touch thermometer. Adults who have a fever of 100 degrees or above will not be allowed to enter the building. Students who have a fever of 100 degrees or above or other signs of illness will be isolated, and a parent or guardian will be informed to come and pick him/her up. Students in grades K-1 will arrive and enter from the front entrance on 196<sup>th</sup> Street between 7:45 and 8 AM. Students in grades 2 and 3 will arrive and enter from the same entrance from 8:00 to 8:15 AM and students in grades 4 and 5 will arrive and enter from the same entrance from 8:15 to 8:30 AM. Junior high school students will arrive and enter from the rear entrance on 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 8:00 to 8:30 AM. Students who enter through the 196<sup>th</sup> Street entrance will proceed directly to their homerooms using the front staircase. Students who enter through the 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue entrance will proceed directly to their homerooms using the rear staircase. Students who will arrive by school bus will be met by a teacher and escorted into

the school building following social distancing guidelines. All students and adults will be required to come into school wearing face coverings.

b. In-person Instruction

To fulfill the social distancing requirements of the *New York State Department of Health*, students will be sitting at desks with transparent, three-sided plastic desk guards at a distance from each other, in rows, and facing the same direction. Classroom furniture will be placed in a manner that reinforces social distancing and makes optimal use of the classroom space. Rugs will be removed from early childhood classrooms. Students will have their own supplies that will be stored in their desks, and no items will be shared. Movement will be limited.

Students in grades K-5 will be self-contained. They will remain in their classrooms and in their homeroom cohorts for most instruction with the same teacher. Teachers of special subjects will be rotating and meeting their students in their homeroom classrooms. Music Class will be purely music appreciation for the time being; no singing or musical instruments. For Art Class, students will use their own supplies. For Computer Science, students will be using individual Chromebooks that will be sanitized after each use. Weather permitting, Physical Education will be conducted mostly outdoors, following social distancing rules. In inclement weather, Physical Education will be conducted in the gymnasium following social distancing rules. Equipment use will be limited and, if used, will be sanitized after use.

Grades 6-8 are departmentalized. Students will remain in their classrooms and in their homeroom cohorts for all subjects while cluster teachers are rotating and meeting their students in their homeroom classrooms, except where grouping is necessary to accommodate students on a Regents track. Those students will be placed in smaller cohorts and moved in a staggered way, following the rules of social distancing and face coverings. In addition, extra

time will be allotted between the periods to reduce congestion and to ensure the safe movement of each group. Teachers will monitor the hallways between these periods. Again, Physical Education, weather permitting, will be conducted mostly outdoors, following social distancing rules.

c. Students with IEPs

Provisions have been made so that the providers of students with special needs can accommodate those students when push-in accommodations are required. In addition, a room has been designated when a separate location to support the needs of our students with IEPs is required.

d. Events

There will be no field trips, assemblies, or other non-essential gatherings for the entire length of time that Covid-19 remains a threat. Parent teacher conferences will be conducted via telephone or remotely, if necessary.

e. Synchronous Online Instruction

For students who are vulnerable or do not feel safe/comfortable with in-person instruction, remote learning will be available for synchronous instruction. Students will be able to log into their homeroom classrooms virtually through the Google Classroom platform and will be able to follow the live instruction and daily schedule of their class via Google Meet. Through Google Classroom, students will be receiving and submitting the same assignments and assessments as their classmates who are receiving in-person instruction. Regardless of the instructional method, equity and access for all students is a priority, including our students with special needs.

f. Attendance

Attendance will be taken by the homeroom teacher regardless of the instructional setting. Attendance will be monitored on a daily basis to identify any spikes in illness so that proper measures can be taken, if necessary, and to ensure that all students are participating in learning regardless of the method of instruction.

g. Dismissal

Students will be dismissed on a staggered schedule. Kindergarten classes will be dismissed through the main lobby from 2:30-2:40. Bus children will be dismissed at 2:40 through the main lobby and will be called down bus by bus following social distancing and face covering rules. Grades 1-5 will be called down one grade at a time and will be dismissed through the main lobby starting at 2:50 in five minute intervals. First grade will be dismissed at 2:50 and elementary school dismissal will end with fifth grade at 3:10. To avoid congestion, parents will be asked not to congregate in the courtyard and to pick up their children at each class's designated time. Grades 6-8 will be escorted by their teachers and dismissed one grade at a time in five minute intervals using the rear staircase and exit. Grade 8 will be dismissed at 2:45, grade 7 will be dismissed at 2:50 and grade 6 will be dismissed at 2:55 following social distancing and face covering rules.

h. Lunch

There will be three lunch sessions and each lunch session will take place in two large areas, the cafeteria and community hall, where each student will be seated at least six feet apart. Tables, chairs and other frequently touched objects will be cleaned and disinfected between each lunch period. Students will either bring bagged lunch from home or will have preordered and prepaid school lunch that will be individually boxed and placed on a counter for quick pick up. Markings on the floors will provide physical distancing guides in the food service areas. Teachers on lunch duty will be monitoring the students and making sure that social distancing guidelines are being followed.

## **II. Changes to Space Utilization and/or Alterations**

- a. Space expansion and repurposing of unused/underutilized building spaces
  1. Alterations to the configuration of four smaller existing classrooms will be made by removing existing partition walls between the four existing classrooms to create two larger classrooms that could accommodate more students
  2. The community hall will serve as an additional cafeteria so that social distancing guidelines can be easily met during lunch periods
  3. The school will utilize the library and large community rooms on the fourth floor as additional classrooms
- b. Ventilation Alterations
  1. Higher efficiency filters (MERV 13) to the ventilation system will be installed
  2. The fresh air ventilation rate will be increased to help maintain a healthy air quality by opening windows and doors whenever safe and possible
- c. Student Desk Alterations
  1. All desks will have a three-sided transparent, plastic desk guard that does not adversely affect air flow, heating, cooling or ventilation, or otherwise present a health or safety risk

## **III. Transportation**

Our students are eligible for New York City public school bus service and the students who come from Long Island use the bus service provided by their districts. Our school will monitor the situation with buses to make sure that all the guidelines for social distancing, frequent cleaning and face coverings are followed. Teachers on duty will be meeting the students at arrival and escorting them back on the bus at dismissal. A small percentage of our students uses bus service making social distancing on the bus very feasible.

#### **IV. Personal Protective Equipment and Face Coverings**

Students, administrators, teachers and all staff members will be required to wear face coverings at all times when social distancing is not possible. Students can remove their masks while eating and during instruction where social distancing rules will be met and protective guards will be in place. The school will allow each individual to use his/her own face covering but will provide appropriate face coverings to any student, administrator, teacher or staff member without one. Additionally, our school will have a supply of masks, gloves, gowns and face shields.

#### **V. Social Emotional Well-being**

The social emotional well-being of our students is a priority, especially now during these very challenging times. Our motto has always been, *to create an outstanding environment where children learn and grow happily and successfully*. We take great pride in our very nurturing and caring environment and school climate. Through professional development, our teachers have recently been trained in identifying and addressing the social emotional needs of our students. They have been very effective in talking with and supporting their students throughout the Covid-19 crisis, and they will continue to do so during the reopening of our school in the fall to help them with the transition into the school setting. In order to assist and support our students with the transition and with the new academic school year, we have made sure to place each student in a class with at least one close friend. Furthermore, extensive school meetings between administrators and faculty are planned and will take place before the start of the new year to address the mental, social and emotional needs of our students and ways to support them. We will all work together to create activities that will help students release their stress and have fun without jeopardizing their safety. Outdoor activities, while social distancing, will be promoted and encouraged.

In addition, a school counselor and parish clergy are available to meet the social and emotional needs of our students and provide comfort and support. As a religious school, our students feel very close to their spiritual

fathers who can be a great source of strength and security. This also applies to our faculty and staff whose social emotional well-being is also very important, and we will make every effort to accommodate their needs and provide them with the resources necessary.

## **VI. Protocols to Track Health Conditions at School**

In an effort to promote healthy behaviors and a safe environment and to reduce the possibility of the spread of Covid-19, non-essential visitors will be limited. Whoever enters the building will have his/her temperature checked and may be asked to complete a symptoms checklist. While in the building, all visitors must wear facial coverings and practice social distancing.

If a teacher or a student should become symptomatic upon arrival or while in school, the school nurse will be notified and provided with the appropriate PPE to assess risk and to determine the appropriate medical action that needs to be taken. The symptomatic individual will be placed in the isolation room (Room 211) with a designated adult who will again be provided with appropriate PPE. Arrangements for pick up and safe transportation of the sick individual will be made. The sick individual can only come back to school with medical clearance.

If an individual within the school community tests positive for Covid-19, we will immediately notify state and local health authorities and will follow the guidance given by them.

In order to protect our school community, students and staff who have traveled or will travel to hot spots, where the number of cases of Covid-19 is high, will be asked to quarantine. Students in quarantine will participate in on-line instruction during the quarantine period.

## **VII. Cleaning, Disinfecting and Other Safe Practices**

There will be daily cleaning and disinfecting of the entire school building every evening by the maintenance crew. Frequently touched surfaces in communal spaces such as restrooms, cafeterias and stairwells will be

cleaned on a schedule throughout the day and a log-in record will be kept to monitor adherence to the schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection. Teachers will be using disinfecting wipes to clean frequently touched surfaces such as desks, chairs and doorknobs in their classrooms. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed throughout the building in classrooms and in high traffic areas. Water fountains will not be accessible to students or staff members; however, bottled water will be available. Teachers will be training students and reinforcing the importance of good hygiene, proper use of face coverings and the importance of hand washing. Signage will be posted throughout the building, in the lobby, in hallways, stairwells, restrooms and cafeterias to ensure social distancing and to designate travel in specific direction.

Large quantities of supplies such as disinfectant, soap, hand sanitizers, and paper towels have been ordered and are kept in storage safely away from the students.

#### **VIII. Safety Drills**

All safety drills, including fire drills and lockdowns, will be conducted and modified so that social distancing rules are followed.

#### **IX. Communication**

Communication has been and will continue to be constant with families regarding school opening procedures and policies through letters, emails, and the school's website. Parents will continue to be updated with new and developing information on Covid-19. Resources will also be available and will be provided to parents to help support their children during the current crisis. Additionally, daily announcements will be made by administration through the PA system to remind students to follow practices that will keep them healthy and safe at school and at home.

The Covid-19 situation will be constantly monitored and evaluated, and if we need to close due to an uptick in the number of cases in New York State, New York City, or in our school we are prepared to fully transition into remote instruction following the academic school schedule for each class using the



Google Classroom platform. Students will have daily live Meets for each subject, and assignments and assessments will be given regularly. Teachers will be monitoring their students and addressing the academic and emotional needs of each and every one of them.