



**HEBREW ACADEMY FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN**

**SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN 2020 -2021**

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**HEBREW ACADEMY FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN, INC**

**SED SCHOOL RE-OPENING PLAN**

**SUBMITTED: 8/7/2020**

**Agency Name:** HEBREW ACADEMY FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN, INC.

**BEDS Code:** 332000227132

**Administrative Address:** 1318 60<sup>th</sup> Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219

**Program sites:**

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555 Remsen Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11236 - #331800226447

46 Grandview Avenue, Spring Valley, NY 10977 - #500402990041

321 Woodmere Boulevard, Woodmere, NY 11598 - #280215226406

**Programs provided:**

4410 Pre-school Special Education

Special Class

Special Class in an Integrated Setting

853 School Age Special Education

Related Services / SEIT / Multi-Disciplinary Evaluations

**Contact Person:** Bernard Kahn, CEO 718-686-5900

**Website where this plan will be posted:** [HASC.net](http://HASC.net)

## **Introduction and Background:**

The Hebrew Academy for Special Children has worked hard on developing a plan for reopening and operating during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Our plan meets the standards set forth in the guidance and reflects engagement with school stakeholders, administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers and the New York State Department of Education.

At the Hebrew Academy for Special Children (HASC), our primary commitment is to the students and the families that we serve. Our plan focuses on keeping our students and staff safe. In the Spring of 2020, we shifted from our traditional method of service delivery to one that was very different. We very quickly transitioned from a program that delivered on-site services to one that was completely remote. We are anxious to resume our traditional learning models but are aware that complete face to face services may not be possible at the present time. As we return to in-person instruction and therapy, we have developed the following plan to help us achieve high educational standards while keeping our students and staff in a safe and secure environment. Our reopening plan is based on guidance from the CDC, New York State Department of Health and the New York State Department of Education. We are aware that this plan may need to be revised based on updated information from the above listed agencies.

## **COVID-19 Safety Coordinators:**

Paula Davis, Chief School Administrator

Susan Slater, Director of Clinical and Educational Services

## **Task Force Members:**

Our task force members are our Program Directors at each site and their administrative teams. Included are: Lois Hofflin, Julie Ben-Zvi, Lillian McGovern, Naomi Goldzweig, Rivky Reich, Hennie Friedman, RN, Sharon Wagschal, RN, Debbie Katz, RN, Devorah Gruen, RN, NP, Nancy Hess, RN and Sarah Sherwinter, RN, Mimi Levy, RN, Eva Wanoununu, RN, Sondra Richman, RN.

## **School Re-Opening Plans**

### **Communication/ Family and Community Engagement**

HASC will provide regular and on-going communication between our school sites, families, staff and school districts via email, USPS mail, texts and phone communication. HASC utilizes an electronic communication system, (K-12 alert system) to quickly update staff and families with necessary information such as unplanned school closures. This system will now be used to update parents and staff regarding emergency notifications relating to COVID-19 health emergencies. HASC will notify families of new protocols in their preferred language. Our reopening plan will be posted on our website in addition to having hard copies available at each of our sites.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

At HASC, health and safety is a major focus in our reopening plan. Training will be provided to staff and students on how to follow COVID-19 protocol safely and correctly.

Any adult or child entering our buildings will be required to follow proper health regulations set forth by the Department of Health including proper hand washing, face coverings, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene.

Anyone entering the building will be screened. Our screeners will be trained to follow CDC, OSHA and DOH guidelines. Staff responsible for screening will be provided with appropriate PPE.

HASC will post signage throughout the buildings regarding health and safety precautions, proper hand washing and social distancing. HASC will provide in-service trainings regarding:

- OSHA safety
- Proper handwashing and use of hand sanitizer
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Social distancing

- Proper coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Wearing of face coverings
- Use and disposal of PPE
- Identification of staff or children who may be ill
- Classroom Capacity / Safety Practices

All students depending on their level of comprehension, will be trained in proper hand washing, coughing and sneezing etiquette, wearing of face coverings, and social distancing.

HASC will allow 50 square feet per child in a classroom to allow for social distancing. While face coverings are mandatory for staff and highly encouraged for children, there are times when wearing a face covering may not be feasible. For example, NYSED states that face coverings should not be placed on children where it would impair their health or cause distraction. Furthermore, many of our children have sensory issues, asthma or are medically fragile which would impede usage of face masks.

Students and staff will be permitted to take periodic masks breaks as long as they socially distance or go outside.

Teachers will engage in a hybrid model of instruction with most students attending in person and others participating remotely depending on family preference. Classroom staff will not be split between classrooms to the extent possible. If the number of students in a particular classroom exceeds the room's capacity for appropriate distancing, we will utilize other areas in the building such as sensory rooms, therapy rooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums and playgrounds. Classrooms will remain as their own group / cohort once they enter our facility. To limit the risk of infection, HASC will not sponsor any field trips or have any special congregate events. We are eliminating assemblies, cafeteria lunches and all large group activities. Whenever possible staff meetings and classroom team meetings will be conducted virtually. Upon opening, visitors will not be allowed in the building, only staff and students will be allowed to enter. All deliveries will be left outside. Essential visitors that must have access will be screened for temperature and symptoms and answer the mandatory questions prior to entry to the building.

## **Monitoring of Health Conditions**

Our facilities are being properly disinfected and appropriate signage is being posted throughout our buildings. Furthermore, we have ordered the proper amount of PPE for our students and staff.

In addition, school wide cleaning and disinfection will take place daily using products recommended by the CDC.

## **Screening**

Each child and staff member will have their temperature taken before they will be allowed to enter the building. Individuals who present with a temperature greater than 100 degrees will be denied entry into the school or sent directly to the isolation room until they are picked up. In addition, the daily questionnaire from the CDC will need to be completed either in person or by an email or note from a family member. The CDC questionnaire includes the question regarding any international travel or travel from a state with widespread transmission of COVID-19 as designated by the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days. Our policy is to not allow any visitors. In the event of an emergency, the visitor will be screened in the above manner and will be required to social distance and wear a face covering.

## **Testing Protocols**

Sick students and employees who test positive for COVID may not return to school/work until they have met the criteria set forth by the CDC and DOH. They will be advised to see their primary care physician for diagnostic testing if needed. Any student or staff who fails screening must go home immediately. Any student or staff member who develops symptoms during the day must be separated and sent home as soon as possible. An Isolation room will be available for staff or students who exhibit symptoms and are awaiting pickup. Emergency contacts will be called by the nurse. All areas of the building used by the individuals who became ill will be closed off until cleaned and disinfected. If an employee or student test positive for COVID-19 the nurse or Program Director will notify the Department of Health immediately. The school will inform those who had close contact with the sick person to stay at home and self- monitor for symptoms and follow CDC guidelines. The school will cooperate with all contact tracing efforts.

## **Testing Responsibility**

The nurses at each of the HASC sites will be responsible for helping staff, students and families find testing sites and following up with test results. In the event that large scale testing is required at a school, the nurses will reach out to the Dept. of Health or local health facilities to try to arrange for onsite testing.

## **Early Warning Signs**

In the event that several individuals at a site present with COVID-19 like symptoms, the nurse will contact the DOH or CDC for guidance on how to proceed. We will follow the metric signs established by state and local health departments that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

## **Containment**

### **School Health Offices**

The nurse at each site will be responsible for safely caring for students, faculty and staff if they develop symptoms of COVID 19 during the school day. The Executive Management Team and the Compliance Officer at HASC are responsible for ensuring continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's re-opening plan and possible closure plan. In addition, the Program Director at each site will be responsible for reporting any suspected or confirmed cases at their site to the Executive Management Team.

## **Isolation**

Staff members who do not pass the health assessment will be sent home. Should they be too ill to go home they will be placed in an isolation room and their emergency contacts will be notified. Any students and staff who become symptomatic while at school will be placed in isolation with a staff member. Nurses or designated isolation room staff members will wear PPE (gloves, masks, gowns) when treating suspected cases. Nurses will monitor types of illness and symptoms.

## **Collection**

Parent or guardian will be called to inform them that their child must be picked up immediately. Parents will wait for the child at the front door. The child will be accompanied by the nurse to meet his or her parent. When possible, the child will have a face covering. The parent will be instructed to take the child to see a health care provider.

## **Infected Individuals**

May return to work after remaining home and isolating and following DOH and CDC guidelines.

## **Exposed Individuals**

Individuals in school who are exposed to COVID virus will quarantine according to DOH guidelines. If they have not developed symptoms they will be discharged from quarantine and allowed to return to school in coordination with the local health department.

## **Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection**

All materials handled by an infected person will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, especially high touch areas. In addition, the rooms that were used will be deep cleaned using the electrostatic disinfectant sprayer.

## **Contact Tracing**

All staff will complete daily contact forms which will provide information regarding which staff and students had contact with other individuals. These forms will be shared with the DOH contact and tracing program when requested.

## **Communication**

All student families and staff will be notified of a positive COVID case in the school by email, phone, text or K-12 alert.

# Screening Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Site \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions regarding COVID-19 to the best of your knowledge**

**Y / N**

- Have you 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?
  
- Have you tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
  
- Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0° F in the past 14 days?
  
- Have you 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?

## **Vulnerable Populations**

Students who are at risk or are uncomfortable returning to an in person educational environment will have the option to continue with remote learning and teletherapy. In general, all families will have this option regardless of medical need. Employees who are at risk or have underlying conditions may be eligible for reasonable accommodations, to the extent possible. Face coverings will not be placed on anyone who has breathing issues or unable to remove the mask without assistance. Additional PPE such as face shields and N-95 masks will be available for use when deemed appropriate.

All staff will be provided with face masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer. In addition, nurses will be given protective outerwear and masks.

Face shields will be provided to nurses, teachers, therapists and other staff that request them.

Each classroom will be maintained as its own group / cohort. Adequate PPE will be available to all staff and students upon arrival. All staff must wear face coverings and children will be encouraged to wear masks. Should HASC deplete its inventory of PPE, and it cannot be replaced timely due to market shortages, HASC will be forced to immediately revert to a remote learning model until more PPE can be obtained. HASC will supply alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

## **Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection**

Staff will be trained in use, removal and washing of cloth face coverings. In addition, staff will be trained in protocols regarding disposal of PPE, use of gloves, hand sanitizer and hand washing. The building will be pre-cleaned prior to opening. Cleaning and disinfecting will occur daily on a continuous basis. Bathrooms and commonly touched areas will be cleaned throughout the day including all equipment, bathrooms, and commonly touched areas. In addition to daily cleaning of equipment and toys using CDC and NYSDOH recommended cleaning solutions, HASC will be purchasing electrostatic disinfectant sprayers to be used at the end of each day to sanitize the building. Toys used in school must be able to be sanitized. No toys from home will be allowed. Each child will have their own individual set of supplies and materials. Toys will be sanitized after school daily.

## **FACILITIES**

At the present there are no proposed changes to the existing buildings. Whenever possible we will install HEPA filters. Whenever possible, we will increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible while maintaining health and safety protocols. We do not plan on having any assemblies or any activities in which different groups/ cohorts are intermingled.

## **CHILD NUTRITION**

### **Meals and snacks in school**

All snacks and meals will be provided within each child's classroom. Tabletops will be cleaned and sanitized before as well as after meals. Students and staff will be required to wash their hands before and after eating. Students will be spaced at tables to promote social distancing to the best extent possible. There will be no sharing of food. Each student will receive an individual portion. Staff members assisting with meals will be required to wear gloves.

All Students will eat lunch in their classrooms with their cohort. Gloves will be changed between children. Allergy alerts will be posted inside each classroom and well as in the nurse's office (by first name, last initial).

### **Emergency Drills**

Fire drills and lockdown drills will be conducted as required by the fire department and the DOH using social distancing. They will be modified by using less classrooms at a time to prevent unnecessary exposure.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Parents will have the option to transport their own child to and from school if they so desire or if bus service from the county or Department of Education is not available. At the present time we have no guidance from our bus companies regarding the 2020-21 school year.

Consistent with state issued public transit protocols, individuals must wear face coverings on all school buses. HASC transportation at all sites is provided by bus companies under contract with the School districts or the Department of Education. School bus drivers and matrons should wear face coverings. They should be trained and provided with periodic refreshers on the proper use of PPE and signs and symptoms of COVID-19. They should perform a self-health assessment before they report to work.

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

Our teachers are trained to observe signs of mental, behavioral, and emotional issues that students may exhibit. HASC employs psychologists and social workers who will be available to address mental health and the emotional needs of students and staff. They will continue to provide support groups for parents and staff as necessary. Should the need arise for outside help, the Director of Psychological services will arrange for appropriate in-service training, make referrals or provide additional resources.

Our mental health professionals will provide professional training to staff on developing coping and resilience skills.

Our school age programs have teams that are trained in CPI or Handle with Care and are available to assist students in crisis.

## **SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

HASC has learned a great deal about distance learning in the Spring and Summer of 2020. Our school can ensure that learning will continue throughout the 2020-21 school year. We will prepare for in-person instruction and therapy as well as having our remote platforms (TEAMS) in place in order to provide remote learning. Hybrids of the two will be made available. Should the need arise we are prepared to transition overnight to a fully remote platform.

Choices include:

- Centerbased – in person
- Hybrid – part in person, part remote
- Remote model

If a staff member or a student is ill, they must stay home. If a staff member or a student arrives at school with signs or illness, a temperature of 100.4 or more or answers yes to any of the required questions they will not be allowed to stay in school.

## **ATTENDANCE / CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

HASC will continue to take daily attendance regardless of the instructional setting. In addition, therapy sessions will be logged in EasyTrac or CLAIMS.

HASC places a high priority on providing in-person instruction. Parents will be given a choice regarding the learning model that they prefer.

In the event that a child has frequent absences / poor attendance, teachers, social workers and the nurse will continuously reach out to the family to ensure their safety and to encourage them to participate in their child's educational program. Should the staff be unable to reach a family the local school district will be notified.

## **Technology and Connectivity**

HASC will ensure that all students and staff have access to devices should the need arise for remote learning or a hybrid model. HASC's Information and Technology Officer will continue to reach out to parents identified as having technology needs.

Devices were and will continue to be obtained from the Department of Education for those families who have no access or devices.

Our school will continue to use the TEAMS platform for remote services. In addition, teachers and therapists mail supplies and worksheets and lesson plans to parents (in addition to email). Families without connectivity will be reached via facetime when possible. Parents who do not have access will be given stamped envelopes in which they can submit student work samples or this can be done by taking photos and emailing or mailing to teachers and therapists. Teachers will follow-up via phone call to review work schedules, read stories, and address any problems children or families may be experiencing.

## **Teaching and Learning**

HASC plans on using three models for the 2020-21 school year.

- In-person centerbased instruction
- Hybrid
- Remote learning

All classes adhere to the NYS Learning Standards and the Common Core Curriculum. All children will receive educational and therapeutic services as mandated on their IEP.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN FOR IN PERSON LEARNING**

Students will have substantive interactions between teachers and students and therapists and students.

In our Preschools, students will be given opportunities to engage in:

- Circle time
- Free play
- Fine motor activities
- Gross motor activities
- Center time
- Reading readiness and language activities
- Story time
- Snack and lunch
- STEM activities
- Music and movement
- Outdoor play

These activities will be provided in a way that social distancing can be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

Our school age program will provide individualized lessons in reading, mathematics, writing, science and social studies. We use the following programs:

- Go Math
- PCI Math Curriculum
- PAF Reading Program
- Dolch Sight Word Program
- Environmental Sight Word Program
- ADL Skills
- Functional Life Skills
- Pre-Vocational Skills

Social distancing and proper hygiene signs will be posted in the hallways and classrooms, offices, bathrooms and common areas.

Staff and students will use multiple entrances for arrival and departure. Staff and children will walk in single file in the hallways and outside of the building. HASC plans on purchasing large thermo-scanning thermometers to ensure that any student or staff member with a fever is identified. Upon entering the classrooms all staff and students will either wash or sanitize their hands. Each child will have his/her own set of personal supplies and materials. No children will be allowed to bring in toys from home. All common toys that are used during the day will be set aside to be disinfected at the end of the day. Bags or containers will be labeled for each student with common classroom materials needed for each day and will be stored separately.

For students who require diapering, chucks will be placed on the changing mat. Changing mats will be cleaned and disinfected between students.

Contact logs will be maintained for each classroom for contact tracking and tracing. Each site will have an isolation room for students or staff displaying symptoms who are awaiting pick up.

The nurse will contact caregivers to pick up a child, immediately, if ill.

The nurse or designated staff will wait with the student who needs to be picked up.

Isolation room staff will wear masks, gloves and gowns while with students.

They will change PPE and follow disinfecting protocol once the child leaves the isolation room and the building.

All areas of the building that the child used will be cleaned and sanitized after he or she leaves the building.

Therapists will wear masks. Therapy should be done in the classroom as much as possible.

When therapy rooms are used, logs will be kept regarding which staff and students were in the same room.

Therapists should practice social distancing in common areas when picking up and returning students to their class.

Physical education and outdoor play will be limited to one class at a time.

### **Meetings**

Staff meetings, team meetings and case conferences will be held remotely using the TEAMS platform.

Parent / Teacher conferences will be held through phone calls, facetime or TEAMS depending on parental preference.

CSE/CPSE meetings will be held remotely.

### **Visitors**

Upon opening, visitors will not be allowed in the building. Only staff and students will be allowed to enter. All deliveries will be left outside. Essential visitors that must have access will be screened for temperature and symptoms and answer the mandatory questions prior to entry to the building. All visitors will be required to wear PPE.

### **Communication Plan**

HASC will communicate with parents and staff via:

- Website – HASC.net
- Email
- Mailings
- Phone calls
- Texts
- K-12 Alerts
- Remind System

Translation will be provided when required.

All of the above refers to in person instruction where students are physically present and receive in person services and instruction on site.

### **PLANS FOR IN HYBRID MODEL**

All of the information regarding in person instruction applies to our hybrid model as well.

Parents will be given the choice whether they want their child to attend every day or decide on a hybrid model with less children attending every day.

Children enrolled in the hybrid model will be given instruction from their classroom teachers utilizing the TEAMS platform from within their classroom.

Mandated therapy services will be provided in person as well as through TEAMS or FaceTime.

Students will attend centerbased school using alternating schedules based on parent choice, availability and bus routing.

### **REMOTE INSTRUCTION**

Complete remote instruction will take place if a parent does not want in person services. It will also take place should the school building be forced to close due to a COVID-19 outbreak at the school or an Executive Order.

All students will receive instruction using TEAMS.

Teachers will provide a combination of live classroom instruction as well as activities, work packets, pre-recorded lessons and personal one on one phone calls with students.

Therapeutic services will be provided using TEAMS or FaceTime in accordance with IEP mandates. Accommodations will be made for parent / guardian preferences.

### **Parent Communication and Learning**

Parents / guardians will be an integral part of each child's education. Parents will be frequently contacted by their child's teacher and therapists regarding their child's progress and any concerns they may have. Parents will have the opportunity to contact their child's teacher or therapist by email, telephone or a TEAMS meeting.

Translation will be provided for those whose preferred language is other than English.

Parents will be sent copies and contacted regarding their child's quarterly reports and annual reviews.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

School districts are required to provide "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability.

HASC will collaborate with the CPSE or CSE to ensure that our special education services are being provided in accordance with each child's IEP. HASC will continue, as always, doing quarterly reports and sharing them with parents and the school districts. As stated above, HASC will continuously communicate with parents/ guardians regarding their satisfaction with their child's services and any modification that they feel is needed.

## **CERTIFICATION, INCIDENTAL TEACHING, SUBSTITUTE TEACHING**

HASC will continue to ensure that each of its sites has a leader with a SAS or SBL certification. We will ensure that all therapists have a valid license in their professional field and our HR Department will continue to check on expiration dates. HASC, will to the best of its ability, attempt to ensure that all teachers have a valid and appropriate teaching certificate. We will continue to utilize incidental teaching / substitutes to address staff needs for the allowable days given by the Commissioners Regulation.