

MidHudson Valley Early Education Center School Re-Opening Plan

Submitted: 7/31/2020

Agency Name: MidHudson Valley Early Education Center
(dba MidHudson Regional Early Education Center)

BEDS Code: 800000082983

Administrative Address: 115 Delafield Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Program Site Address:

Martha Lawrence Preschool 23 Spackenkill Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
Hyde Park Preschool 4246 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, NY 12538
Panichi Center Preschool 15 Hastings Drive, Beacon, NY 12508

Program(s) provided at this site:

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

Contact Person: Margaret Slomin, SDA, Program Administrator

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Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted:

Midhusdonregional.org/early-education-center

INTRODUCTION

This plan was developed to conform to the guidance provided by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in their July, 2020, document entitled: *Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools – Reopening Guidance*. **This plan will be revised and updated as needed to adjust to changing public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 virus and all of the new requirements and regulations which may emerge over time.** We solicited input and involvement from the families we serve and our staff during the original drafting of our re-opening

plan. We will rely on continued input from all stakeholders as we move forward implementing this plan and as we contemplate any additions or modifications.

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

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

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

1. Communication/Family and Community Engagement
2. Health and Safety
3. Facilities
4. Nutrition
5. Transportation
6. Social Emotional Well-Being
7. School Schedules
8. Budget and Fiscal
9. Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
10. Technology and Connectivity
11. Teaching and Learning
12. Special Education
13. Staffing

Any suggestions, concerns and/or questions about our plan should be directed to the contact person identified at the beginning of this document.



A. COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To help formulate our reopening plan, MHVEEC has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care providers, and community groups. Engagement efforts included phone surveys, virtual forums/meetings and one-on-one conversations. MHVEEC has a Reopening Committee that includes discipline coordinators, site directors, school nurse and program administrators.

As part of its planning for the reopening of schools and the new academic year, MHVEEC has developed a plan for communicating all necessary information to staff, students, parents/guardians, visitors and vendors. MHVEEC will use the following communication modes to disperse information to families in our school community: posting on website, email, postal mail, phone communication and SeeSaw which is a platform for student/family engagement.

Appropriate signage that adheres to NYSED, United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and New York Department of Health (NY DOH) guidance will be displayed at all our school locations. Training opportunities for staff and families to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements and options related to school operations will be provided prior to the start of school and throughout the pandemic. Communications, signage and trainings will include NYSED, CDC, NY DOH guidelines on hand hygiene, proper face coverings, social distancing and respiratory hygiene. In addition, hand hygiene, face coverings, social distancing and respiratory hygiene will be incorporated into classroom curriculum through activities, songs, social stories, etc. Communications will be provided to families in their primary language. Written communication will be adapted and made accessible to needs of individuals with low vision or vision loss and those who are deaf or hard of hearing within our school community.

B. HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

The health and safety of the children and adults in our school is of primary importance. MHVEEC's Reopening plan include health and safety protocols and support the health and safety of all adults and students, during Covid-19 pandemic by implementing

practices reflecting the guidelines from NYS DOH, NYSED, CDC and NYS executive orders appropriate for the urgent community needs relevant for individual's safety. Margaret Slomin, Program Administrator is the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator for MHVEEC and is responsible for continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.

MVEEC will provide information in prevention strategies to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. All staff and parents will receive information on awareness of symptoms, preventative requirements for in-person school and procedures to follow if staff or students present any symptoms of illness. MHVEEC's school nurse has developed a healthcare plan that incorporates the procedures to follow for screening, recognizing signs and symptoms of illness and the procedures to follow if staff or children become ill while at school. All MHVEEC staff will be trained in these procedures.

COVID-19 Symptoms

To ensure employees and our school community comply with communicated requirements, MHVEEC will:

- Display appropriate signage throughout all buildings. All staff will have an email module and required acknowledgement describing on site building practices for safety.
- Establish a communication plan for employees, visitors, and parents/guardians with a consistent means to provide updated information. This will be accomplished through communication via program website, email, web-based platforms, print copy mailings, voice and/or video message.
- Maintain a continuous log of every person, including staff, students, and visitors, who may have close contact with other individuals at one of our schools; excluding deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means.
- If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, MHVEEC will immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.

Prior to Opening

As part of school reopening plan MHVEEC has considered the number of students and staff that will be in classrooms at each of our locations to ensure that we are able to meet social distancing requirements that ensures each student and staff will receive not less than 6 ft. of separation from others. Additional consideration in each classroom were considered for space utilization and teaching materials. Students will be in pre-



assigned cohorts in their assigned classroom to limit potential exposure. The cohorts will be kept self-contained to the maximum extent possible.

Classrooms

- Occupancy in each classroom will be specific and determined based off of the overall square footage of the space.
- Each student, teacher and support staff will receive not less than 6 ft. of separation from others.
- Additional considerations will be taken to account for space utilized for classrooms and teaching material.
- Overall class sizes will be managed to accommodate all safety parameters.
- Students will be encouraged to wear face coverings. Teachers and support staff will be required to wear a proper face covering.
- Where possible, therapists will travel to the classroom to provide instruction.
- Items in the classroom will be restricted to those required for instruction limiting movement of students in communal places.

Signs and Messages

Signs will be posted in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, classrooms, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures_ and describe how to “*Stop the Spread*” of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face cover.

Health Check and Screening – recognizing signs and symptoms of illness

Daily Health Screening

- Prior to entering all MHVEEC locations, individuals must complete a medical screening questionnaire. This Dutchess County checklist is accessible through the MHVEEC website and on the SeeSaw Platform sent to all families. Before September, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) form will be signed by families and kept on file as an acknowledgement that they need to monitor their child’s health symptoms and review questions on the checklist prior to coming to school each day.
- Staff will be required to monitor their own temperatures prior to arrival on campus. Upon arrival, staff will take their temperature and sign the daily documentation. Anyone whose symptoms response changes from a NO to YES during the day, must contact their supervisor immediately and await further instruction.
- Students, staff and visitors will be screened for temperature at arrival.
 - Parents are encouraged to monitor for temperatures and symptoms prior to sending their student on a bus, however students will be screened at arrival for temperatures.



- Visitors, vendors and contractors will have their temperatures taken upon arrival.
- All staff must sign in and out of each building **each** time they enter and exit the building.
- Students will be signed in and accounted for as without fever/symptoms and able to attend school through attendance roll.
- For multiple individuals entering the building simultaneously, they will be required to stand at the marked locations on the floor, maintaining social distance until they can be signed in and screened.
- Only after all individuals have been accounted for, cleared through the medical screening and wearing proper face coverings, will access to the building be granted.

Should a person fail the medical screening, specific procedures should be followed.

Healthy Hygiene Practices- hand hygiene, social distancing, respiratory hygiene

MHVVEEC has signage through all its location instructing staff and students in correct hand and respiratory hygiene. Proper hygiene, following visual cues for physical distancing and practicing wearing face masks will be incorporated into daily curriculum to teach children how to make this part of their everyday class routines.

Personal Hygiene

Hand washing - Students and staff must practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Hand hygiene includes:

- Signage encouraging hand washing and correct techniques;
 - Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method. This can be accomplished by singing or humming the “Happy Birthday” song twice;
 - Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
 - Use of paper towels or touch-free paper towel dispensers where feasible (hand dryers are not recommended as they can aerolize germs);
 - Use of no-touch/foot pedal trash can where feasible;
 - Extra time in the schedule to encourage frequent hand washing.
- Students and staff should wash hands as follows
 - Upon entering the building and classrooms;
 - After sharing objects or surfaces;
 - Before and after snacks and lunch;
 - After using the bathroom;



- After helping a student with toileting;
- After sneezing, wiping, or blowing nose or coughing into hands;
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled;
- When handwashing is not available use a hand sanitizer;
- Hand Sanitizer - At times when hand washing is not available students and staff may use a hand sanitizer. In order for the sanitizer to be effective it must contain a minimum of 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol. It should be noted the sanitizers are flammable and students must be monitored and supervised when using these. Using hand sanitizers should include:
 - Signage should be placed near sanitizer dispensers indicating soiled hands should be washed with soap and water;
 - Placement of sanitizer dispensers should be located near entrances and throughout common areas.

Social Distancing

- All individuals on MHVEEC premises must maintain social distancing and face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Proper social distancing is defined as a six (6) foot separation between individuals. When social distancing is practiced, such as in an isolated office or large meeting space, the individuals may remove their face covering. However, in common areas, such as breakrooms, hallways or bathrooms, the face covering must be worn.
- Ensure six (6) foot distance between personnel, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance. Any time personnel are less than six (6) feet apart from one another, personnel must wear acceptable face coverings.
- Tightly confined spaces will be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings. If an area is occupied by more than one person, keep occupancy under 50% of maximum capacity.
- Social distance separation will be marked by using tape or signs that denote six (6) feet of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g., clock in/out stations, health screening stations, reception areas).
- In-person gatherings will be limited as much as possible and we will use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings, such as meetings, will be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.
- Designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries will be established, limiting contact to the extent possible.

Medical/Vulnerable High Risk Populations

MHVEEC has policy for vulnerable populations, including students and those that are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness. Necessary accommodations to schedules



and modifications for social distancing and PPE equipment to minimize COVID-19 exposure risk will be made to greatest extent possible.

PPE and Face Masks

- Face coverings must be worn when individuals cannot maintain appropriate social distancing when in school facilities.
- Face coverings are required for staff when working with children
- As per NYDOH guidance, acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g. homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana) and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose.
- Face masks for children are recommended and encouraged. Face coverings will not be used by children under the age of 2, or for anyone who is unable to medically tolerate such covering, included students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health.
- MHVEEC has purchased PPE to support staff and students and will supply protective equipment as needed to be able to practice safety protocols.
- Masks will be provided for staff and students who do not bring them to school.
- Face shields and clear masks will be available for staff and students as needed.

Management of Illness

MHVEEC's school nurse will be contacted when staff or students present with symptoms of illness. If a school nurse is not available, ill students and staff will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider. Staff will contact MidHudson Regional Hospital (MHRH) Employee Health Department if they are ill. If students are ill, parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to come pick up the child.

In order to return to school, a note from the physician is necessary to return to school stating the child is not contagious.

If a diagnosis of COVID-19 is positive, the NYS DOH guidelines will be followed. High Risk children will be managed cautiously and observed more closely.

Any positive cases in the building, parents will be notified by a generic school note with specific information from DOH and CDC management to follow. (e.g. observe for symptoms, and prevention strategies or testing advice.)

Suspect or Confirmed COVID Cases

- *Emergency Response* – School nurse will be contacted if students and staff present with symptoms of illness. Children will be sent to a dedicated isolation area with a staff member should they exhibit any of the criteria for isolation. They will be safely monitored until the designated parent or guardian arrive to pick up.



Staff who exhibit symptoms will immediately be isolated and report their condition to MHRH Employee Health for instruction and adherence to the protocol. The staff protocol for immediate isolation for staff is in a separate area from children. The school nurse (a registered Professional Nurse, RN) will be available to assess individuals as chronic conditions such as asthma and allergies or chronic gastrointestinal conditions may present the same symptoms as COVID-19 but are neither contagious nor pose a public health threat. Proper PPE will be required anytime a nurse may be in contact with a potential COVID-19 patient

- *Isolation* - Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may also be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet. If they cannot be isolated in a separate room from others, facemasks (e.g., cloth or surgical mask) will be provided to the student if the ill person can tolerate wearing it and does not have difficulty breathing, to prevent the possible transmission of the virus to others while waiting for transportation home. Students should be escorted from the isolation area to the parent/guardian. The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center; Other considerations include:
 - Closing off areas used by a sick person and not using these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred;
 - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
 - Waiting at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible;
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
 - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected it can be reopened for use.
 - Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- *Notification* - the NYS and local health departments will be notified immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an

individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff and visitors.

Return to School after Illness

MHVVEC has established protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. This protocol includes:

1. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation
2. Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result
3. Symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation

MHVVEC will refer to DOH's "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure" regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

MHVVEC requires that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. The discharge of an individual from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

- In accordance with guidance for quarantine at home after close contact, the classroom or office where the COVID-19-positive individual was based will typically need to close temporarily as students or staff quarantine.
- Additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also quarantine at home.
- Closing of schools could be a regional decision.

Contact Tracing

Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified.

To ensure MHVVEC and its employees comply with contact tracing and disinfection requirements, MHVVEC will do the following:

- Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and notifying Public Health, in the event of a positive case. In the case of an employee testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting your building or



facility if someone is sick. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and copier machines.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.

Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection

School Closure

Closure Considerations

When a person has been identified (confirmed) or suspected to be COVID-19 positive; MHVEEC will work with local department of health. The process could include:

- Having school administrators collaborate and coordinate with local health officials to make school closure and large event cancellation decisions.
- Establish a plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students, if necessary, based on public health guidance and in coordination with the local DOH. Establishing a decision-making tree at the MHVEEC level.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education
- Implement as needed short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
 - Closing off areas used by ill person(s) and locking off area(s), signage can also be used to ensure no one enters the area. If possible, wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Do not use the area(s) until cleaning and disinfection has taken place.
 - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill person(s), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
 - Communicating as soon as possible with staff, parents, and students.
- Using DOH guidance/procedures for when someone tests positive.

- In consultation with the local DOH, a school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and period of time (prior to re-opening) based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local DOH.

Safety Drills

Safety drills; fire drills, shelter-in-place drills, lock down drills will occur on regularly scheduled times but will be modified to accommodate the requirement of social distancing.

Cleaning and Disinfection

MHVVEEC will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including “Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,” and the “STOP THE SPREAD” poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs will be maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Students, faculty, and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information will be provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home. MHVVEEC will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer will be made.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities will occur, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning and disinfection will be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed. MHVVEEC will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms which will be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

Disinfectants must be products that meet EPA criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2 the virus that causes COVID-19, and be appropriate for the surface.

Visitor and Vendor Practices

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses, except for the safety and well-being of students. Parents/guardians will report to the front office or designated area and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child. Essential visitors to facilities and parent/guardian visitors will be required to wear face coverings and will have restricted access to our school buildings.



Visitors

- All visitors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when a six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained.
- All visitors check in at front office for temperature screening and to fill out the COVID-19 CHECK-IN SCREENING.
- No visitor should enter a building unless necessary. All meetings should be held outside or via virtual meetings when possible.
- All visitors must sign in and out at the main entrance of each building stating their destination at that building for contact tracing. All visitors should be accompanied by a staff member.
- Should a visitor become ill while on campus, they must alert the staff member they are visiting to report the issue and then immediately seek medical attention.

Vendor

- All vendors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained.

All vendors must report to the front office for temperature screening and to fill out the COVID-19 CHECK-IN SCREENING

C. FACILITIES

- MHVEEC classrooms meet the space requirement per child to accommodate for social distancing to occur within the classrooms. All MHVEEC locations are NYS OCFS licensed facilities and have up to date building and fire inspections. For additional safety measures to promote social distancing, physical barriers have been provided in classroom to assist in therapy sessions and when there is need for isolation within classroom. To reduce bi-directional foot traffic, MHVEEC will use tape and/or signs with arrows, and post signage/distance markers denoting 6 ft. distance in commonly used areas and areas where lines are form or people congregate. Signage is posted to designate appropriate entrance and exits. Outdoor classrooms are being created to provide maximum opportunities to be outside and engage in socially distanced learning.
- Fire drills will be conducted as typically scheduled per NY OCFS/NY SED regulation but will be modified to accommodate social distancing by reducing the number of classes that participate in each drill to alleviate congestion at exits of building. Shelter-in –place drills will occur in classrooms and children will remain in their assigned cohort.
- Schedules will be staggered for arrival and dismissal. Building traffic patterns, transportation schedules and schedules allowing volume management are being



offered. Schedules have been developed for class bathroom and outside time to support classroom cohorts and accommodate social distancing in common areas.

- Sinks are available at all sites and classrooms and portable handwashing stations are being reviewed for purchase as an alternative. Schedules are developed for safe bathroom use and approved Sani wipes are available as a final alternative. Hand sanitizers have been installed at adult level in compliance with fire codes at designated locations at each facility.
- Drinking fountains have been closed down and are not in use. Water is available on site in water bottles and disposable cups for children who forget to bring drinks.
- MHVEEC will ensure sufficient ventilation and fresh air to all spaces of occupancy. Frequent maintenance and inspection of the systems have been established to ensure maximum performance of all ventilation systems
- All classrooms have had air conditioning filters checked and cleaned by facilities.
- Windows are able to open in all our locations with appropriate safety measures. Classroom staff are instructed on airflow, air exchange and ventilation. Doors are opened when appropriately safe and monitored.

D. NUTRITION

MHVEEC has children bring their own snack and lunch to program. MHVEEC does not participate in School Food Authority (SFA), however, there is food on site available that is provided by MHVEEC if a child forgets to bring food from home. Meals will be eaten in the classroom with classroom cohort. There is also a supply of food on site as required by NYS OCFS in case of lock down emergency.

MHVEEC will continue to follow established policy that gloves are worn by staff when handling food. Changes to food policy will be that students will sit in social distance of 6 ft. in their seats while eating snack/lunch unless a physical barrier is provided. Table surfaces will be wiped down prior to/after eating. Children and staff will wash hands prior to/after eating. There is no group snack sent in by families and sharing of food between children will be discouraged. MHVEEC has procedures in place for children with known food allergies which includes OCFS allergy plan. In addition to typical protocols, children with allergies will be given sufficient space to eat the food that they bring in from home during meals at school.

E. TRANSPORTATION

NOTE: Transportation for students enrolled in 4410 provided by county transportation company. MHVEEC, however, are involved in the embarking and disembarking of students.

MHVEEC has children that arrive to school via bus and parent transportation. MHVEEC will have procedures in place for arrival and dismissal that will promote social distances to the maximum extent possible. Arrival times for car riders and buses will be staggered. Car riders will enter building from a different door than bus riders.

Bus transportation: MHVEEC will work in cooperation with the county bus provider's established protocols for bus seating that meets social distancing requirements. When possible, students shall be loaded in sequential route order. First student on the bus sits in the back, when going to school, last student off sits in the back when going home from school. Children will be taken off the bus by bus driver and released to program staff who will walk the child while holding their hand to their designated area for temperature screening and then to their classroom. Program staff will wash their hand prior to/after holding hands with each child's hand during arrival/dismissal. Children will wash hands upon arrival into the classroom.

Car transportation: Families will be notified prior to the start of school of the procedures for arrival/dismissal. Families will wait in their cars and notify classroom staff by text message that they are in the school parking lot. Classroom staff will meet the child at their car and child will be escorted to their classroom by that staff person. Program staff will wash their hand prior to/after holding hands with each child's hand during arrival/dismissal. Children will wash hands upon arrival into the classroom.

Classroom start times for various programs within MHVEEC will have varying start times to reduce congestion at arrival/dismissal, in order to accommodate extra time needed to meet social distancing protocols.

F. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

As we enter the new school year, teachers will be encouraged to spend time building relationships, supporting students with the transition back to school, and teaching social distancing etiquette at developmentally appropriate levels.

In planning for our re-entry in September, MHVEEC has formed teams to examine the guidance provided by the Department of Health and NYSED for our re-entry in the Fall. Our work is grounded in our beliefs the most equitable opportunities for educational success relies upon the comprehensive support for students and families. This is provided in our schools with our professionals and the systems of support we have built. These supports include academics as well as the social and emotional well-being of our

students. We are committed to prioritizing social emotional well-being, therefore creating the mental, social and emotional space to foster development and learning.

MHVEEC follows the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model of multi-tiered supports for children and families

Behavior Analysts and School Psychologists are available to work with individual families as needed and have viewed and updated these plans to support families while in hybrid and remote learning models to extent possible. MHVEEC staff have been given community resources and have access to parent resources to share with families if needed.

Classroom Special Education teachers are case managers and work on social emotional development and will make referrals to Behavior Analyst, School psychologist, Special Education supervisor as needed. Communication with child's CPSE chairperson will occur if necessary, to amend the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

G. SCHOOL SCHEDULES

In our Reopening plan, we address in the Communication section how information on school schedules will be communicated to our school community. A comprehensive chart will be sent home to parents and be posted on our website.

In making our plan, the in-person model will have staggered class times to reduce congestion at arrival/dismissal time. Staff are allowed to also have staggered schedules to meet the needs of our program. Each MHVEEC classroom will be limited to 15 children maximum in each class, with most class sizes averaging 8-12 children. Classes will remain in their own cohort throughout the day. Each classroom cohort will practice social distancing which will include assigned group schedules for outside time and within the classroom. Related services will occur in classroom or during outdoor classroom times. Group locations such as gym and bathroom will be scheduled and disinfected after each use

In the event of infection spread in the community, we will be in discussion with local and state public health authorities and follow their directives if need arises to change to a hybrid/blended or remote schedule. We will have the staff and instructional programming ready to meet those needs and those will be communicated to families, school districts and county ahead of time. Staggered arrival/dismissal times will remain the same, as the goal for the hybrid/model is to reduce the number of children in cohorts, in order to decrease the chance of spread of infection.



MHVEEC's hybrid model would have children set into two groups sorting according to their last name. Children would be in school for 2 days/week and receive remote instruction 3 days/week. The schedule would look as follows:

- Group A (last name A-M) In person M, T and remote W, Th, F
- Group B (last name N-Z) In person Th, F and remote M, T, W

In the case that we are directed by state and local authorities to go to full remote model, we are prepared with staff and an instructional programming plan to provide this model to all our families

H. BUDGET AND FISCAL

MHVEEC will continue to meet existing federal, state and county reporting requirements. Additionally, the content of data submissions, such as attendance data, will remain consistent with past practice, except where modified by law, regulation or executive order.

I. ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

In September, MHVEEC classroom teachers will take daily attendance whether school opens in-person, hybrid, or remote. Attendance policies will be communicated with families prior to the start of the school year or if the instructional mode changes during the year. This communication will occur in a variety of means as covered in the Communication section of this plan. Teachers record daily attendance and therapist record their session notes as record of therapy in the McGuiness EnterClaims/Claims school management system.

MHVEEC will work to develop and sustain positive relationships with families that will promote attendance and participation in school. We will communicate clearly to families the expectations for participating, based on the model of instruction, and ask for feedback as to how we can support families in order to have their child participate in daily lessons. We will work with families on scheduling times and work with them to find out if they are in need of materials at home that we can provide, such as crayons, paper, etc. We will survey families to see what technology and devices they have available. MHVEEC will provide information about community resources that may assist and support family needs. When families are having difficulties participating in remote learning, the classroom teacher will call families to see how our staff can best support their child's learning. MHVEEC will work with families to provide alternate methods such as mailings or dropping off/have families pick up packets for weekly learning. Other methods of intervention plans may include scheduled parent phone call with clinical support staff, home visits, instructional modifications and/or engage community partners for additional support. Outreach to families will be in their primary language.

Attendance and participation in daily classroom activities and in related service therapies will be monitored and MHVEEC staff will report to our Special Education Supervisor if a family is having difficulties for a prolonged period of time. At that point, the child's CPSE chairperson will be contacted to see if a program review may be necessary to assist family.

J. TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Prior to the start of school in September, MHVEEC will reach out to families in the initial Welcome packet and in classroom teacher outreach, in order to assess the ongoing needs of our families for technology and connectivity. Throughout the school year, we will continue to assess and update through family survey, interviews, school outreach, the technology needs of families. This information will be used in case of the implementation of a hybrid/blended or remote model of learning. MHVEEC will keep a program list of students that will require instructional packets to be mailed. Each classroom will keep a working spreadsheet of technology that is available for the families in their class, so as to be aware of how to best support and provide remote instruction.

MHVEEC has available technology to provide services on site and off site for professional staff. MHVEEC has procured, manages and/or maintains hardware, software, licenses, learning management systems, etc. to support and improve virtual instruction and student engagement.

In the event students do not have sufficient access to devices and/or high-speed internet, MHVEEC will provide the students with alternate methods to access materials and instruction, i.e. pick up materials at school, drop off materials to students' homes, etc. MHVEEC will assist families in working with each child's school district, to the extent possible pending each district's practices and procedures, in order to assist families in obtaining devices and internet access who do not have sufficient access. MHVEEC's Special Education Supervisor will work with school district CPSE chairpersons on an individual basis for each family in need of technology support.

MHVEEC will also schedule opportunities to connect with families, in order to educate them on how to use the technologies and connect to the instructional activities. MHVEEC has specific staff assigned as technology support for staff and provides trainings for staff and families. The assigned technology support staff also works with MHRH IT department as needs arise. MHVEEC has purchased and utilizes digital tools and platforms that have security measures to protect data privacy of families.

MHVEEC will provide students with access to learning materials and resources in multiple formats, wherever possible. Further, MHVEEC supports teachers and therapists through professional development and coaching on pedagogical methods

that enable students to participate in multiple ways, so that they can demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models through the use of both synchronous and asynchronous technologies.

K. TEACHING AND LEARNING

MHVVEEC has a Continuity of Learning plan should state or local conditions warrant moving to/from in-person, blended and/or all remote instruction. Instruction, regardless of the modality, in-person, blended or remote, will remain aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards. All students will have opportunities for regular and substantive contact with qualified instructional personnel, regardless of the delivery method. All instruction in our school will be designed so that whether it is delivered in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model due to a local or state school closure, there are clear, comprehensive, and accessible learning opportunities for all students. Such opportunities will be aligned with state standards. Our teaching and instructional plan outlines routine, scheduled times for students to interact and seek feedback and support from their teachers.

Equity for all students, whether through in-person, hybrid or remote learning, is as always paramount.

In-person Instruction

Upon reopening, the number of students in each of our classrooms will meet the guidance regarding proper social distancing. All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. Our schools will minimize the movement of students. To the extent possible, students will remain in small cohorts if/when leaving the classroom, such as for scheduled outside time or any necessary transition, so as to reduce their exposure to additional students. The need for a positive learning environment will be created by providing a reassuring and encouraging dialogue between staff, families and children. Establishing a predictable routine, as well as the use of positive words, music and song, visual supports and social stories will help to reassure the young children in our care, as they re-enter school.

In person instruction will focus on each child's IEP goals. Activities will address each child's individual learning styles and needs. Teacher and assigned therapists will work together to formulate instructional activities to maximize learning and foster development of skills. Each child will have times to work not only with the classroom teacher, but the assigned related services therapists as well, based on the mandate of frequency for the child's IEP. Group instruction and activities (e.g. Circle, learning groups) will occur only in small, assigned cohorts, in order to reduce exposure to other students.



Communal toys will be limited and if ever shared, will occur only within the assigned cohort. Work within learning centers will occur, however only with the children within the assigned cohort and with social distancing applied. Outdoor curriculum topics will be incorporated into the learning outcomes, giving each cohort of children ample time to explore outdoor learning activities. Instruction regarding hand washing, use of masks and social distancing will be provided each day through teacher modeling, direct instruction, use of social stories and visual supports.

As children return to in person learning, a significant focus for teacher, therapist and staff will be in addressing each child's social-emotional and behavioral needs. Consistent use of social stories, music and songs, visual supports and strategies will occur within each classroom setting. When necessary, assistance from program Behavioral Analyst and School Psychologists will be sought. The Special Education Supervisor will be informed of individual needs when necessary.

Ongoing assessment of child's progress will occur through data collection, progress monitoring, written daily logs (for related service therapists), anecdotal narratives, photo collection of a child's work (if permission is obtained) and collected work added to a child's portfolio.

During in person learning, additional activities will be assigned on Seesaw. Through these activities, parents can work with their child on specific activities addressing different learning outcomes. For those families who do not have access due to technology or connectivity difficulties, activities can be provided via email or hard copy.

Teachers and therapists will communicate weekly with families through phone, email or video conference, in order to update the family on skill development and progress. This is opportunity for the teachers and therapists to provide suggestions for families. Families can always access teachers and related service therapists through email or telephone, in order to communicate any questions or concerns they may have. When necessary, translation will be provided in the family's home language.

Hybrid/blended Instructions and Remote instruction

Given the possibility that communities may experience spikes in COVID-19 cases at any point during the school year, which may prompt short or long-term school closures, MHVEEC has developed a hybrid/blended learning model and schedule that can continue as is in a fully remote environment

Instruction will focus on each child's individual goals, as stated on their IEP. All instruction will be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. Remote lessons will be scheduled with the family and other teachers and therapists, so there are no scheduling conflicts for related services or teacher instruction. Teachers and therapists will work together to formulate activities individualized for each child, which will be



tailored to the child's individual needs and learning styles, addressing the goals set forth on the child's IEP.

All teachers and therapists will be instructed to structure their therapy sessions to include family members in the activities, giving suggestions and ideas as to how to foster their child's development for the learning domains. During remote sessions, teaching and therapy sessions will be similar as in-person teaching. Lessons will be designed so that there is not only teacher directed instruction but active participation from the student and family, to maintain engagement. Teachers and therapists will include familiar school routines, will plan a number of activities for each session and will demonstrate flexibility and child centered responses, so as to keep the child interested and motivated. Remote learning sessions will focus on active learning activities, taking into account the individual needs and cultural differences of the children. When applicable if preschool music videos and/or games are incorporated in a lesson, there must be assurances that there is a specific and intended educational and/or therapeutic goal, and that the child and family member are active participants during the video or game.

Asynchronous learning opportunities will be provided via the student engagement platform, *Seesaw*. Asynchronous learning activities will address group instruction activities (e.g. Circle Time activities), as well as activities that will address each child's individual goals. Translation will be provided in the family's home language when necessary.

Ongoing assessment of child's progress will occur through data collection, progress monitoring, written daily logs (for related service therapists), anecdotal narratives, photo/video collection of a child's work provided by the family and collected work added to a child's portfolio. Narratives, photo and video collection, as well as saved hard copies can be provided by the family through *Seesaw*.

For those families unable to access asynchronous and synchronous learning activities due to technology and connectivity issues, families will be informed prior to start of school in September, that they can speak to their child's classroom teacher via phone, who will forward all information to the program Special Education Supervisor, as well as the school district CPSE chairperson. This information will be provided to each family in their home language. Arrangements will be made for weekly hard copy activities to be mailed or delivered to families. Again, these activities will be individualized based on the child's IEP goals, as well as each child's learning needs. Teachers and therapists will communicate with families via telephone to provide information or explanation of activities, as well as give suggestions in addressing goals. This information will be communicated to families in their home language. Families will be asked to return activities to be kept in child's portfolio, to assist in ongoing assessment of progress.

L. SPECIAL EDUCATION

MHVEEC ensures that all student in our program with an IEP will continue to have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs. In consideration of the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and staff, our plan is designed to enable transitioning between in-person, remote, and hybrid learning environments to ensure the provision of FAPE consistent with the changing health and safety conditions that exist. For the 2020-21 school year, MHVEEC prioritizes in-person services to the greatest extent possible for needs of our preschool students and will move to hybrid model or remote model based on health conditions in the local areas as directed by Dutchess County and NYS, or if requested by a parent.

MHVEEC utilizes *The Creative Curriculum* which incorporates the NYS Learning Standards. MHVEEC also has a contract with the SeeSaw, which is a platform for student (and family) engagement. Seesaw allows teachers to post both group and student specific interactive activities. The student and their families can engage with the activities in a secure setting on a variety of devices (i.e. computer, tablet, smart phones). Once activities are completed, families can respond and provide teachers and therapists with completed activities. Teachers/therapists can comment on the activities and keep them as part of the child's portfolio for ongoing assessment.

MHVEEC also maintains a contract with WebEx, a secure platform for audio/visual telehealth sessions with families. Activities presented during hybrid and remote learning settings will include screen time, with children and family members engaged as active participants, and activities that present opportunities for incidental learning for children and their families.

All teachers and therapists will be instructed to structure their therapy sessions to include family members in the activities, giving suggestions and ideas as to how to foster their child's development for the learning domains. During remote sessions, teaching and therapy sessions will be similar as in-person teaching. Lessons will be designed so that there is not only teacher directed instruction but active participation from the student and family, to maintain engagement. Teachers and therapists will include familiar school routines, will plan a number of activities for each session and will demonstrate flexibility and child centered responses, so as to keep the child interested and motivated. Remote learning sessions will focus on active learning activities, taking into account the individual needs and cultural differences of the children. When applicable if screen time activities are incorporated in a lesson, there must be assurances that there is a specific and intended educational and/or therapeutic goal, and that the child and family member are active participants during that activity.

MHVEEC is committed to providing meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. Further, we will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and other family members to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process in all modes of instruction.

MHVEEC works collaboratively with families and their respective committees on preschool special education (CPSE) to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs) under the direction of our Special Education Supervisor.

MHVEEC will monitor the progress of students, regardless of the service delivery model, and use that information to evaluate the effectiveness of the student's special education services and inform parents of their child's progress on a regular basis. At the beginning of the school year, IEP goals will be reviewed and discussed with families.

For all modes of instruction, whether in-person, hybrid or remote, there will be ongoing assessment of child's progress towards their IEP goals. This will occur through data collection, progress monitoring, written daily logs (for related service therapists), anecdotal narratives, photo/video collection of a child's work (if permission is obtained) and collected work added to a child's portfolio. For asynchronous learning activities, narratives, photo and video collection, as well as saved hard copies can be provided by the family through SeeSaw.

MHVEEC will maintain records to document the implementation of each IEP. The documentation will include, but will not be limited to: narrative records of how the student is adjusting to live, hybrid, and remote instruction during 2020-21, a record of what instruction and services were provided, a record of formative, summative, and standardized assessments and their results as well as progress monitoring documentation, and a record of school-family collaboration.

MHVEEC will provide related services in all models of instruction. Related services will be provided in the classroom cohorts or in outdoor class settings to the maximum extent possible. Consideration will be made to maintain consistent staff in all models of instruction to the maximum extent possible. If families request a change in service delivery in remote model, MHVEEC Special Education Supervisor will be notified and the child's CPSE chairperson will be informed of request.



M. STAFFING

MHVEEC employs staff who hold valid certification/license for their respective job assignment. MHVEEC office administrative staff utilizes NYS Teach and Office of Professional License website to monitor and maintain staff certifications and license.

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

If needed due to long term absence, substitute teacher will be provided as per NYSED requirements.

N. Key References

- **State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools (July 16, 2020)**
- **State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools (July 13, 2020)**
- **Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health (July 13, 2020)**