



July 24, 2020

Re-Opening plan for East Aurora Montessori School for In-Person Instruction and potential distance learning During the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency

As Director/Principle of East Aurora Montessori School, I have read all guidance for return to In-person instruction. I will document each of the procedures that will be followed by administration, staff, students and families to adhere to the requirements suggested to meet the safety standards. A contingency plan is in place for distance learning should this become necessary during the school year.

East Aurora Montessori, Inc. conducts pre-school and Kindergarten preparatory instruction and is listed as a non-public school with the NYSED. Our intention is to re-open East Aurora Montessori School with meticulous attention to the protocols determined to keep our staff, children and community safe.

As the head of school, I will be responsible for establishing policies for the safety of students, faculty and staff and maintaining the protocols and procedures. We have collaborated with parents, teachers, and community members- including health care professionals to establish appropriate protocols for our school. These follow the NYS Department of Health and NYSED guidelines

***Face Coverings:** Face coverings will be required of all teachers and students while inside the school. Parents will be asked to supply appropriately fitting masks for their children, however, a supply of child-size masks will be available at school if masks are not supplied, or

if they become soiled or unable to use. Teachers will also be asked to supply their own masks, however, a supply of adult size masks that meet the PPE requirements are available at school. As of July 20, 2020, we have at least a six-month supply of PPE in stock at the school. The only time the children will not be required to wear a mask is when they are eating **or** drinking, which will take place in a specified area of the classroom for one person at a time, and this area is set apart from the rest of the classroom by at least 12Ft. Masks will not be mandatory for children when outside or in large open air spaces.

***Social Distancing, Spacing and Shared Objects:** The school space has been reconfigured to adhere to the guidelines of maintaining appropriate social distancing. The entry hall has coat hooks that are staggered to allow for space between student's belongings. We have several 8Ft. hexagonal tables that have only two chairs at opposite ends. Various other areas of the classroom are designated for individual or small group work with adequate space between children. The class size will be at 50% capacity consisting of 8-10 children, having siblings (Montessori is a multiage classroom) attend the same sessions to also accommodate drop off and pick up procedures.

We have split the usual classes into morning and afternoon attendance to be able to maintain the small group size and the integrity of instruction. Children in the class stay together with their group and the same teachers each day. . There will be two teachers and an assistant in the classroom so the group can be carefully monitored, distanced and areas sanitized as needed

Each child will receive an individually labeled vinyl pencil cases(which can be easily sanitized) which contain all crayons, pencils, markers, glue sticks, erasers the children will need at school. There will be no shared materials. These will be stored in their individual cubbies. Scissors will be distributed as needed and sanitized after each use. We have replaced the cloth work rugs with vinyl mats which can be easily sanitized.

We have repurposed an additional area for instruction, by converting a covered porch area to be used for outdoor instruction, art projects, and story time for a few children at a time. As the weather permits, we also have a large outdoor area that is fenced in that can be utilized for instruction as well as recreation.

***Transportation, Screening:** There are no school busses that service East Aurora Montessori. Parents drop off their children by pulling into a one way round a bout, where a teacher goes to the car, takes the temperature of the child using a touch free thermometer. A child with a fever of 100.0 or greater will not be allowed to enter the school.

Each family must also fill out a form on line or in person, attesting to the travel, exposure, health conditions of their child and immediate family members. Staff will also be required to fill these out and have a temperature check upon arrival.

In the event that a child becomes sick after arrival at school, there is a resource room that is not being used for instruction , where the child can be isolated and monitored by a staff member until a parent can pick up the child. We will support all contact tracing initiatives and established protocols for the safe return to school.

The child must be wearing a mask to enter the school. No parents/guardians are allowed inside the school. The outside doors are locked after arrival. If a child will be arriving late, they must call the school to have a teacher meet them at the door. Families receiving speech, OT, or PT services will have to make arrangements for these services at their homes, since no adults other than Montessori staff are allowed in the building.

Food Services: There is no food service provided at school. The small group (6) of K+ children bring their lunch from home and have a socially distanced, partitioned space to eat. The pre-school children only attend between 2.5-3 hours per day. The children will each bring their own-labeled water bottle. Pre packaged snacks will be provided by the school to insure there is no cross contamination from anyone's home. There is designated snack table for one person at a time to have snack. A teacher or assistant will clean the area in between uses.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfecting: The children will take off their outside shoes and leave them in the entry hall. A teacher will dispense hand sanitizer as they enter the classroom to put on their inside shoes, which stay at school. Given the age of our pre-school children, one on one instruction for hand washing is given to each child by a staff member. We have hand-washing posters displayed throughout the school, including a Super-hero poster to remind them to fight off germs.

We have several songs the kids will learn to remind them to wash their hands properly and for the appropriate length of time.

We will maintain logs detailing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of the surfaces, materials, and areas of the classroom and bathroom. In addition to cleaning as needed during the class session, there will be a thorough cleaning between classes and at the end of the day. Every Friday, the school has a professional cleaning service come in to clean. I purchased cleaning products approved for use against Covid-19 and approved for use in the classroom setting as are all hand sanitizer and cleaning products. Given the young age of the children, hand sanitizer will only be dispensed by an adult.

Extra curricular or before or after school care: East Aurora Montessori does not have any extracurricular or before or after school care.

Communication: East Aurora Montessori has frequent communication with parents throughout the school year. We publish monthly newsletters and have a designated FB page for family members. We also have a website: www.eamontessori.com where updates, posters and protocols can be found. Parents can reach staff anytime by email at: cbaran1027@aol.com. Since the Covid -19 outbreak began, we have maintained frequent communication and updates on protocols and information and community education and resources for families. We will continue to do this.

The importance of in-person instruction: East Aurora Montessori is a small private school that provides, toddler, pre-school and Kindergarten preparatory instruction for 2-6 year olds. It is essential to try to conduct in-person instruction given the young age of the children. Learning to socialize, follow rules, beginning academics, trusting adults outside their home, are all crucial skills that set them up for future academic and social success. I have been teaching at East Aurora Montessori for the past 30 years, and I hope to continue this for many more years. We are in a unique position to establish small class sizes and have adequate staff to make sure all safety measures are followed.

When all schools were mandated to close last March, we adapted a distance-learning program through SeeSaw. This program was successful for a small number of our children who were older or who had stay at home parents who could facilitate their participation. In the event that we need to close again, I have purchased an additional year's membership for our school to be able to connect remotely through See Saw. It is very different than our Montessori instruction, and it is my sincere hope that we will only need to use it to supplement in person instruction, or only need to use it for a limited period of time. We strongly believe that limiting screen time in this age group in important to their development.

Please contact me with any questions: cbaran1027@aol.com or (716) 652-5092 or (716) 903-7073.

Christine Baranello

***EAST AURORA MONTESSORI
46 GREY STREET
EAST AURORA, NY 14052
(716)652-5092***