



Ashwood Waldorf School
2020-2021 Reopening Plan
Updated August 24, 2020

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Start of classes, grade school and early childhood: Tuesday, September 8, 2020

Last day of school: Friday, June 11, 2021

Introduction

Our primary goal in this document is to lay out policies to protect the health and safety of our students, parents, staff, and local community, while continuing to provide a balanced and rigorous education, integrating academics with the arts, nature, and social values. Now more than ever, it is essential that in an atmosphere that encourages respect for oneself, others and the environment, we build a foundation for lifelong learning and adaptability, fostering inner strength, healthy and balanced habits, and preparing children to thrive in a changing world.

We are fortunate to be surrounded by the natural beauty of midcoast Maine which allows Ashwood's students to learn and play, both inside the classroom and out-of-doors. Our school program, abundant outdoor resources, and small classroom sizes allow for many unique educational opportunities. Our students will spend their days both outdoors, exploring Ashwood's 32-acre campus and, indoors, participating in small groups within spacious classrooms. This will allow for social distancing in an emotionally balanced, comfortable, and beautiful environment.

However, we will depend on the district for their guidance in assessing how the status of coronavirus in our area impacts school decisions. We will rely on data such as the rate of influenza-like illnesses and COVID-like cases in the area; the trajectory of documented cases and newly hospitalized patients; availability of testing and treatment; and local hospital capacity.

In forming the reopening plan, it has been of utmost importance to develop strategies that can be revised and adapted depending on the level of viral transmission in the school and in the community and done in close communication with local and state public health authorities. We know that our plan will need to shift as conditions, experience, and scientific knowledge suggests. Therefore, this plan is a living plan that will transform, as appropriate in the coming weeks and months ahead. Parents will receive email notification of updated policies and procedures.

Acknowledgements & Approach

Ashwood Waldorf School will be guided by applicable law, Executive Orders, and state and federal public health guidelines for the reopening of schools. The policies and protocols contained within this document have been developed with the understanding that we may need to react quickly to changing conditions. This is a working document and may be updated due to evolving guidance and refinement to procedures. Ashwood will modify restrictions throughout the school year to respond effectively to changes in public health data.

In creating this plan, the Ashwood Reopening Task Force followed the recommendations and suggestions of the [Maine CDC](#), incorporating the plan as set forth by the Five Town CSD/MSAD 28. In addition, the task force researched, reviewed, and integrated the plans of other local independent schools and Maine Waldorf schools.

The fall 2020 school reopening plan has been approved by both the Ashwood faculty and board in consultation with members of our parent community. This document has been reviewed by Ashwood's school physician Dan Einstein, MD.

Training & Orientation

Faculty

The faculty will receive training in order to stay up to date with the latest health and safety guidelines.

Parents

Parents are required to attend a virtual all school meeting on **Wednesday, August 19, 6:30 p.m.** to receive an introduction to this document. All parents must either attend the session or watch the recording.

Grade School Students

The first two days of school for grade school students will be **Welcome Back Days**. Tuesday, September 8, is a half day, and Wednesday, September 9, is a full school day. Both days will include time for adjusting to being back on campus, practicing new procedures, making health and safety posters, and beginning lessons.

Buildings & Grounds

Indoor and Outdoor Classrooms

- Classroom desktops will be sanitized by teachers or students at the end of every class period if students are changing classes.
- High touch surfaces, such as door handles, office phones, shared keyboards, toilet handles, and faucets and other surfaces will be regularly sanitized.
- All areas of indoor and outdoor classrooms and buildings will have specified staff members responsible for the cleaning and disinfection of that area on a designated schedule.

Outdoor Play and Learning Spaces

Students will wash or sanitize their hands before and after using outdoor play and learning spaces.

Additional Early Childhood Program Steps

- Toys will be sanitized at the end of each day.
- Toys that cannot easily be regularly sanitized will be removed from circulation.

Ventilation

We will maximize the ventilation in the school building and in each room as much as possible. Teachers will air out indoor spaces between classes.

Signs

Signs will be posted in indoor and outdoor spaces to remind students and staff about hygiene procedures.

Parents & Visitors on Campus

- We are unable to invite parents, community volunteers, or guest speakers into indoor classrooms.
- Parents and other family members will not be allowed to enter the school unless it is an emergency.
- Parents, community volunteers, or guest speakers will be allowed in outside settings, following the 6-foot physical distancing rule.

Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival at School

Before entering the building, all students will be required to put on a face covering. Upon entering the building, students will also be required to wash or sanitize their hands.

Morning Drop Off

- Drop-off traffic will flow single file and be indicated by cones in the parking lot.
- Staff members will greet cars and parents will remain in the vehicle.
- Parents may park in indicated spaces in the lower and EC parking lots and walk their child to a designated area where an Ashwood teacher will greet them.
- All students (grade school and EC) arriving after 8:30 a.m., must be **accompanied by a parent** to the **outside door** of the school office. From there, administrative staff will direct parent and child to their class's location.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Student pick up will take place at two designated areas alongside the parking lot. Cars will follow the same traffic pattern as in the morning and students will be brought/sent to cars by their teachers.
- Students will wait for parents in designated areas on the campus.

Please note: Due to health and safety precautions, playground spaces will not be open after dismissal.

Recess

We will start the year with the expectation that students do not need to wear face coverings on the playground as long as they remain 6 feet apart. At the start of the school year the entire playground will be open to students, although teachers may set up specific areas of play for specific grade levels. While on the playground, if students are playing in a way that might bring them in closer contact with their friends, they will be required to wear face coverings.

Learning Models

Grade School

Ashwood has created three schooling models with the intention to implement Model 1 in the fall of 2020, given the current state of coronavirus in our community. The model selected at any point in time will be dependent on local health conditions.

Model 1: In-person Learning. New safety requirements in place as articulated in this plan.

Model 2: Hybrid Learning. This model will offer both in-person and remote instruction.

Model 3: Remote Learning. This model will only be used in the event of state mandated future campus closure due to COVID-19. State guidelines will be followed. Using direct observations from last spring's closure and parental feedback from two surveys that Ashwood sent to our entire parent body, Ashwood teachers will provide remote learning, based on grade level and seasonally appropriate activities.

Early Childhood

Should the campus be closed, the Early Childhood program will pause.

Safety Measures That Will Be In Place At School

For everyone's good, we will need to implement and adhere to strict safety protocols and come together as a community in order to successfully keep our school open in the fall. What may be desired by an individual may not be best for the common good, and we are asking that everyone act according to the best interest of the common good.

Most of us are now quite familiar with the critical health and safety practices that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. These include rigorous hygiene and handwashing, use of face coverings, physical distancing, reducing interactions between groups, staying home when sick, protecting those most vulnerable to the disease, and expanding testing and tracing capabilities, among others.

However, what can often get lost in the long list of practices is that it is not one mitigation strategy, but a combination of all these strategies taken together that will substantially reduce the risk of transmission. In other words, establishing a culture of health and safety in our school that focuses on regularly enforcing these important practices is more important than any one measure.

The following safety protocols will be in place at Ashwood as follows:

1. Daily Health Screening

All students, under the supervision of a family member or designated adult, will conduct a brief daily health check before the students are dropped off at school. The daily health check (see appendix A) will determine whether students attend school that day.

All staff will also conduct the daily health check before coming to work.

Students and staff who answer “Yes” to any question on the screening should stay home. Any student or staff showing symptoms must notify the school and stay home.

At drop-off, and before a student gets out of the car, each family will be asked: “Have you conducted the health check?” If the answer is “no,” staff will give the family the health check (see Appendix A) and they may complete the health check in the car before the student gets out of the car.

2. Quarantine

Household members who travel outside of Maine will follow the state quarantine requirements at the time of their travel. At this time, the requirement is that children 18 and younger do not need to test if their parent(s) with whom they traveled receive a negative COVID-19 test. If no COVID test happens, a 14-day quarantine is required. Check this link for current guidelines: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/faqs>

3. Face Coverings

All students and staff are required to wear a clean face covering that covers their nose and mouth while **inside the building**, with the following exceptions:

- While eating snack and lunch
- As needed, teachers will offer safe alternatives to students who need a break from wearing a face covering.
- When adults are in their own office or classroom, by themselves
- Students who are able to remain at least 6 feet **outdoors** do not need to wear face coverings.

Face coverings should not have ventilators or other holes and must otherwise comply with school appropriate graphics (see [Parent Handbook](#)).

[From the CDC](#): Make sure face coverings

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- completely cover the nose and mouth
- are secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape (cloth masks)

Face shields may be an option only for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear face coverings. Exceptions will be made for those for whom

it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or health or safety factors. Medical documentation will be necessary for this.

Face shields may be an option for staff who cannot wear a face covering due to medical or other health reasons. Medical documentation will be necessary for this as well.

Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears and are only an option for people with medical documentation that they cannot wear a face covering.

4. Physical Distancing

Staff will remain 6 feet from other adults and students to the extent possible. When not feasible, staff will minimize the time they are within 6 feet of a student.

- Staff desks will be 6 feet away from student desks.
- Students will ideally stay 6 feet apart. When space is limited, such as in a classroom or hallway, a minimum of 3 feet will be maintained (used in combination with a face covering.)
- Students will stay 6 feet apart while eating.
- We will limit occupancy of bathrooms, staff rooms and similar shared spaces to allow 6-foot distancing.
- We will mark places where students congregate or wait in line with decals indicating where to stand to allow for 6-foot distancing.
- The grade school and early childhood programs are housed in separate buildings and on different areas of the campus. These two groups of students will have minimal contact with each other during the school day.

5. Hand Hygiene

Students and staff will wash or sanitize hands in the following situations:

- Upon entering the school
- Before and after eating
- Before and after removing or putting on a face covering
- After using the restroom
- Before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment

There are sinks in every classroom for hand washing. Hand sanitizer will be available in the classrooms as well as in situations that prevent washing with soap and water.

6. Limit Sharing of Materials

- We will limit sharing of art supplies and other high-touch equipment as much as possible. Whenever feasible, we will have a separate set of supplies for each student.
- We will limit sharing of clothing, books, and games.
- We will clean and disinfect shared supplies and equipment between students.

7. Size of Gatherings

Groups in any one area, room, or classroom must not exceed the governor's gathering size limits for indoor and outdoor spaces.

8. Movement in Building:

Hallways will be marked to direct the flow of traffic and support social distancing.

Outside and inside spaces will be marked to indicate proper spacing where lines may form (front entrance, office, teacher desk, bathrooms)

9. Lockers

We will continue using lockers as storage areas for students' belongings as necessary. We will stagger access to lockers throughout the school day to sustain social distancing of at least 3' in those areas.

10. Meetings Between Students & Staff

There will be times during the day when individual students, or small groups, will need to meet with staff members. In these situations, if students cannot be in a space with the adult that allows 6 feet of separation, we plan to provide plexiglass barriers in order to safely conduct these private conversations.

11. Classroom Set-up:

We will use the following strategies in the classroom to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Space student's desks a minimum of 3 feet apart and more if we are able.
- Students will sit facing the same direction when feasible.
- We will remove soft furniture and rugs.
- Each room will have a hand sanitizer station that students will use entering and exiting.
- Tables and desks will be sanitized consistently as students use them.

APPENDIX A: Daily Health Check

This is one of the main safety features of our return to in-person learning in our district, the daily health check. It is critical that all members of our school community conduct this health check every morning before entering the building. To help insure this happens, we are requiring every individual student and staff member to verbally report the results of this daily health check to a staff member upon arrival.

Each student (or parent on behalf of student) and staff member should go through this daily health check before coming to school/work in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- *Do I feel unwell today?*
- *Do I have a cough or sore throat?*
- *Has my temperature been taken today?*
- *Do I feel feverish?*
- *Do I or have I had shortness of breath?*
- *Do or have I had a loss of taste or smell?*

Additionally, parents should answer the following question each day before their child comes to school:

- *Does the child have a temperature of 99.5° F or more?*
- *Has the child been around anyone exhibiting above symptoms within the past 14 days?*
- *Has the child been living with anyone who is sick or quarantined?*
- *Has anyone in your household returned from travel within the past 14 days from a state on the governor's travel advisory list or a country on the CDC travel advisory list?*
- *Has anyone in the child's household NOT followed the Maine CDC guidelines for being out of state in the last 14 days?*

If the answer is YES to any of these, then you need to stay home and check in with your doctor.

APPENDIX B: Health Protocols

Protocol 1: If a staff member or student is at school presenting symptoms

Staff will isolate the individual from all other members of the school community and notify parents/staff member's contact to have the individual sent home. They will be advised to contact their primary care physician. The school office will have two separate locations - one where individuals can be seen for medications, etc. and one where anyone presenting COVID-like symptoms can be seen and isolated. Staff will don appropriate PPE.

If a case is confirmed to be COVID-19 and the person was in the building, administration will coordinate with local health officials and assess the risk to others. Administration will communicate with staff, parents and students to keep the school community updated with information. Areas in the building used by the infected individual will be closed off for at least 24 hours prior to cleaning and disinfecting the areas.

Protocol 2: Return to School Strategy

After a person has been out of school for a suspected COVID related absence, a time-based return-to-school strategy will be determined based on discussions with the person's doctor, the Maine CDC if applicable, and on the person's health status. Decisions about return-to-school for persons with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 will be made in the context of local circumstances (community transmission, resource needs, etc.). Below is a general guideline that may be used by health officials:

Symptomatic persons with confirmed COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 can return to school after:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);
- **AND**, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Asymptomatic persons with confirmed COVID-19 can return to school after:

- At least 10 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and the person remains asymptomatic.

Asymptomatic persons who have had close contact with a person with COVID-19 without appropriate PPE can return to school after self-quarantining for 14 days. This involves staying home and limiting interactions with others. If the person develops symptoms such as cough, fever or shortness of breath, they need to contact their healthcare provider for guidance on what to do. Of note, if this person is tested for COVID-19 during the 14 day quarantine period, a negative test result would not change or decrease the time a person is monitored, but a positive test would move the person into one of the above categories, based on whether they are still asymptomatic or have developed symptoms. A "close contact" is defined as "any individual who has been closer than 6' for more than 15 minutes."