



## **TTS Reboot: Vision and Plans for the 2020-2021 School Year**

**Micro-communities or Pods:** Each floor of the schoolhouse will be divided into two smaller classrooms (pods) with one shared and well-monitored bathroom. Each pod will have 8-10 children of mixed ages and genders, a Montessori credentialed Lead Teacher, and an EEC certified teacher acting in the essential role of Montessori Assistant Teacher. The placement of children in each pod will be determined by the following factors, in order of priority, to the best of our ability:

1. Minimizing transmission
  - a. grouping together siblings
  - b. parent-teachers and their children
  - c. program type/length of day
  - d. Extra-ordinary risk levels.
2. Balancing diversity and core Montessori principles in considering
  - a. Age
  - b. Gender
  - c. Race/ethnicity
3. Ensuring that each pod has equal access to all aspects of the program
  - a. Safety training that is developmentally appropriate, positive and fear-free
  - b. Consistent scheduling as a foundation for smooth transitions
  - c. Equal access to new resources (woodland play space, new materials, special events)

Our co-teaching model will continue to be a core strength for our faculty. Each floor's two pods will collaborate and share materials, curriculum changes, updates, and innovation. The supports offered children depend on cohesive and creative teams of professionals working together to provide an optimal prepared environment. Minimizing transmission will be addressed in our in-depth week of training and orientation before the arrival of students.

Interactions amongst pods will be addressed through Grace and Courtesy lessons. Each micro-community will be trained to slowly and positively internalize the need for separation and collaboration where health, hygiene, and safety are concerned. This will begin with our drop-off protocols and carry throughout the day as we practice these new skills and set safety ground rules, the key focus of our first few weeks back.

**Snacks and Meals:** We will be eating in smaller groups and observing 6-foot social distance protocols. Snack will no longer be self-serve but instead will be healthy, organic, individual servings of foods. Some will be commercially packaged, and the teacher will prepare some. Additional tables have will to ensure more distance during working and eating, and each will be equipped with a Plexi divider while allowing them near enough to each other so they can interact socially. Children will be required to bring their lunches in paper lunch bags to minimize the number of items that travel between environments.

### **Indoor Safety**

In the schoolhouse, children will observe a 3-6 foot separation (3 being our minimum goal, six being ideal). Toward this end, we have made the following adjustments:

- Each child will have an assigned table and chair. These will be changed regularly to allow for variety in children's interactions.
- Each child will have an under-chair wooden crate with their own set of high-touch materials (colored pencils, markers, water bottle, whiteboard, playdough, tissues, apron, and work mat). Items will be sanitized weekly, replenished, and evolve with the curriculum.
- Soft-touch surfaces that cannot be easily disinfected have been removed (except carpets cleaned and sanitized daily).
- We will follow CDC and EEC recommendations for disinfection to the best of our ability:
  - Learning materials before/after use and between students
  - Disinfection of frequently touched surfaces at multiple points throughout the day
  - Professional cleaning twice a week and in the instance of suspected COVID-19 exposure
  - **Increased ventilation** each classroom will be equipped with circulation fans (drawing in fresh air and expelling indoor air), and each floor will have an Ultra HEPA filter air purification unit that cleans the air 4 times per hour. We have also installed two whole house high-power extractor fans in the attic to create consistent fresh airflow throughout the space.
  - Instruction and regular monitoring/practice of hand-washing (or the use of hand sanitizer stations accessible throughout the building when soap/water is not available
  - Use of Force of Nature in sanitizing shoes and personal items upon entry/reentry
- There will be no guests, tours, parent visits, professional observations, services, or instructors without a written plan and approval process.

### **Outdoor Safety**

There are three opportunities for outdoor learning at TTS. These will be scheduled to allow each pod a variety of experiences with reduced population and mask-free play and exercise. Since some of our activities are no longer safe to offer, we have made many creative improvements.

- Our established playspace:
  - Basketball hoops and balls
  - Mini bike boardwalk and tricycles
  - Individual sensory/water tables
  - Musical fence installation
  - Individual bubbles, chalk, biodegradable water balloons, etc.
- The Grove, our new woodland playspace:
  - Hammock
  - Slack and training line
  - Suspended rope tunnel
  - Play deck and bridges
  - Spool tables and log seats
  - Loose parts (ramps, balls, sandbags)
  - Climbing-hold mini-course
- Steele Farm Conservation Land and our meadow and paths
  - Proximity to the schoolhouse
  - Perfect for nature walks, materials collection
  - Observation of animals and birds
  - Lessons in stewardship, meditation

- Opportunity for supervised, open-ended exploration

All playground equipment will be disinfected between groups using Force of Nature and Sanitizing wipes. Individual activities will be sanitized between uses/small groups (balls, bikes, water/sensory play, bouncy toys, building materials, and loose parts).

Pods will be in separate areas. Caring for animals will be limited to one pod per day, in smaller groups. Children will visit the Greenhouse for handwashing, disinfecting, and a fresh mask before returning indoors.

### **Drop off and Pick up Protocols**

We have established a system for entry and departure from TTS that addresses many points of safety relative to the pandemic. It takes into account the vulnerability of our faculty members and their families, our students and their families, and the greater good of our whole community. It works well because we do, and requires the trust and commitment of all. These processes will benefit from everyone's patience and positive modeling in the presence of children.

Outlined below are the new protocols for drop off and transfer of materials/clothing/etc.

- Arrive with everyone present masked. Having the same person drop off and pick up each day is strongly preferred whenever possible. Masks are not negotiable. Masks are the primary barrier to infection and are required at TTS.
- Morning Carline will be scheduled this year, with approximately 20-minute arrival intervals for each pod. Arrival outside these assigned intervals require approval and may require families to wait until after others' arrival times to drop off late.
- Long term changes to assigned drop off times will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Temperature checks are not required by EEC but are strongly recommended by CDC and AAP. For everyone's safety, we will administer temperature checks upon the arrival of all teachers and students. Readings above 100 degrees will result in immediate dismissal and absence for the 24 hours following a regular reading.
- Anyone arriving on campus will be asked a full panel of screening questions, the answers to which will be recorded in our private tracking system. Employees and students that do not feel well or exhibit any COVID-19 related symptoms will be immediately isolated and sent home. In many cases, you will be asked to seek medical advice from a licensed physician before returning to campus.
- Regarding students, in particular, we will "err on the side of caution" and immediately isolate any children who seem ill and ask that parents come pick them up within a reasonable time period, as well as any siblings.
- After the car side screening, children will be escorted to the Greenhouse for hand-washing, choosing a fresh cloth mask, temp check, and the disinfection of shoes and belongings.
- PLEASE DO NOT SEND BACKPACKS OR ANY UNNECESSARY BELONGINGS to TTS. Any belongings that need to be dropped off will be accepted in at morning drop off only. Items will not be accepted at any other time or during pick up.
- Extra clothing, toileting supplies, food, or medication can be delivered in a ziplock bag that will be sanitized and kept to store your child's belongings.
- Teachers will not be unbuckling car seats and can only touch the exterior of your vehicle. Please be ready to help your child out of their seat.
- Your child will leave their home mask in your car and enter the Greenhouse without one. Please plan to have one for them in your car at all times.

Outlined below are the new protocols for pick-up, arranged by the length of day program in which your child is enrolled:

- Half-day students:
  - **Pick-up is at 12:30 sharp.** Please call the schoolhouse in the event that you are late and follow any special instructions.
  - Children will be washing hands and going through the disinfection process before entering your vehicle, so please plan to leave extra time for the departure process.
  - Teachers will not be able to buckle children into car seats, so we ask that you be at the ready and masked when they arrive car side.
  - Clothing and belongings leaving school will be disinfected.
  - Your child will arrive car side without a mask. Please plan to have one for them in your car at all times.
  
- Full-day students:
  - **Pick-up is at 3:00 sharp.** Please call the schoolhouse in the event that you are late and follow any special instructions.
  - Children will be washing hands and going through the disinfection process before entering your vehicle, so please plan to leave extra time for the departure process.
  - Teachers will not be able to buckle children into car seats, so we ask that you be at the ready and masked when they arrive car side.
  - Clothing and belongings leaving school will be disinfected.
  - Your child will arrive car side without a mask. Please plan to have one for them in your car at all times.
  
- Extended day students:
  - **Please call the schoolhouse (978-929-9922) when you are ten minutes out,** keeping in mind driving safety. Do not call or text a faculty member, even if you know their mobile number.
  - Children will be washing hands and going through the disinfection process before entering your vehicle, so please plan to leave extra time for the departure process.
  - Teachers will not be able to buckle children into car seats, so we ask that you be at the ready and masked when they arrive car side.
  - Clothing and belongings leaving school will be disinfected.
  - Your child will arrive car side without a mask. Please plan to have one for them in your car at all times.

### **Illness and COVID-19 Protocol at TTS**

When a child, staff member or a member of their household exhibits any of the possible COVID-19 symptoms, we require the following:

- 24 Hours of fever-free temperature checks, documented in 6-hour increments.
- A note from the doctor verifying diagnosis and that the person is safe to return to school **OR** evidence of a negative test for COVID-19

When a child, staff member or a member of their household tests positive or has a presumed positive diagnosis of COVID-19, we require the following:

- 14 Day quarantine for the individual and any relatives attending TTS, as well as other members of the pod.
- Re-entry for the infected person: a note from the doctor verifying diagnosis and that the person is safe to return to school **AND** evidence of a negative test for COVID-19
- Re-entry for other members of the pod: completion of the quarantine period or evidence of a negative test for COVID-19, no sooner than 48 hours after exposure and no longer than 48 hours before reentry.
- Closure of the school for deep sanitizing for 24-48 hours, depending on the conditions of closure and availability of our cleaning service.
- Contact tracing and identification of infection to all members of the community, including all the other pods. This information allows everyone to make an informed choice about attendance. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and respect individual privacy.

Here are some additional safety conditions we require of our families with individual safety in mind, as well as the greater good. These are the result of scientific recommendations and are not negotiable.

- Individuals who use a nebulizer treatment will need to do so at home, as studies have shown these activities can contribute to the release of COVID into the air.
- If a child presents with a cough and has asthma or tends to have allergies/runny nose, we require a note from their pediatrician or allergy specialist that they are negative for COVID-19/infectious disease. This will be added to our files.

### **What If TTS Has to Close?**

1. In the event of a confirmed or presumed case of COVID-19:
  - a. Everyone will be notified
  - b. The affected pod(s) will be closed and follow the relevant protocols outlined above.
  - c. The building will close for 24-48 hours to be professionally sanitized
  - d. We will resume our regular operations and protocols after cleaning
  - e. Families affected by the closure will be given home learning plans for the duration of their quarantine.
  - f. There will be no tuition change or discount under these circumstances.
2. In the event of a state-mandated closure of TTS within a given month, for less than four consecutive weeks:
  - a. We will offer a home-learning plan, daily morning circle, storytime, and remote activity/lesson.
  - b. We will offer a weekly parent support meeting and individual coaching upon request.
  - c. There will be no tuition change or discount under these circumstances.
  - d. We will resume activities immediately following permission to reopen by the state.
3. In the event of a state-mandated closure of TTS for more than four consecutive weeks:
  - a. We will offer a home-learning plan, daily morning circle, storytime, and remote activity/lesson accessed by Zoom. This will be based on a whole-school model as well as smaller pod meetings.
  - b. We will offer small group gatherings for social-emotional learning twice a week, accessed by Zoom and facilitated by your child's teachers.

- c. We will offer a weekly parent support meeting and individual coaching upon request.
- d. Tuition will be reduced to 25% on the fifth week of closure for the duration of the remaining closure.
- e. We will resume activities immediately following permission to reopen by the state.

## **FAQ's**

### **What exactly will happen if someone at TTS tests positive for COVID-19?**

As a community, we have an obligation to notify our local health authorities and the Entire school community of a COVID-19 diagnosis. We will use the contact tracing guidelines provided by the CDC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to notify any families of students who may have been in contact with the infected individual as soon as possible. We are fortunate that we have a small, intimate community. We will be using a new Montessori centered schoolwide communication platform called Transparent Classroom to share urgent announcements and plans.

### **Are there special considerations for items students will or will not be allowed to bring to school?**

The more items your child has to deal with, the more need for disinfection. The students will continue to change into their "indoor" shoes. We will provide these, sanitize them daily and launder them weekly. We are currently asking all students to leave backpacks, toys, stuffed animals, and other items that their classmates are likely to touch at home. Besides extra clothing or medications/essential items being sent in ziplock bags, your child should arrive with a paper bag lunch and their outdoor clothing ONLY.

### **My child has been at home for several months with just our family. I am a little concerned about his/her transition back to a full school day in September. What kind of support is TTS planning for the children's transitions?**

Your child's social and emotional well being is second only to their physical health and safety. We understand that everyone, adults and children alike, have struggled during this time. We are fully aware that many students have had little contact with people other than their immediate families and may have issues with separation and anxiety when school begins. How this manifests and how we will partner on this process will be discussed during our Orientation Meetings in August. Our faculty will be presenting lessons on core topics ranging from working with friends and sharing feelings related to this situation to wearing a face mask and noticing and processing the changes in their routine.

### **If a vaccine becomes available, but I don't want my child to have it, what are my options?**

Our school policy remains the same for all immunizations, including COVID-19. Everyone is highly encouraged to get all recommended vaccines from your pediatrician on whatever plan/time schedule is deemed appropriate. We will direct you to your pediatrician for the best information regarding your child's health and request documentation of any obstacles to the path to vaccination.

### **If my child gets an antibody test and is determined that she/he has had the virus, can we opt out of the temperature checks or attend after a call for quarantine?**

No, both of these protocols will be required until the CDC does more research on the accuracy and shelf-life of these tests and no attendance strategies

will be based on antibody tests at this time.

**If a child at school is diagnosed with COVID, will my family be able to know who the child is so I will know if my child is at risk?**

HIPPA law does not permit disclosure of this information. Having said that, contact tracing will be conducted and you will be notified if your child has been exposed. Contact tracing is not actually the job of TTS, rather that of the health department who would guide us through this process. Please refer to the section of the Vision and Plans for 2020-2021 for details.

**If TTS is forced to close in-person, on campus learning and shift only to distance learning for a period of time, will you refund any tuition to reflect on the loss of expected service?**

Our school is a small private school and targets a break even budget each year, providing the highest quality Montessori environment, professionals, and practices possible. Please see our COVID-19 Response Fiscal Impact and Relief Plan for full details on the costs of the pandemic and continued sustainability of TTS.

## **Our Shared Commitment**

In order to keep our community as healthy and safe as possible, we ask each family and faculty member to dedicate themselves to the following on behalf of their entire household, at home, at work, and outside the home:

1. Commit to modeling, teaching and maintaining social distancing.
2. Commit to modeling, teaching and maintaining hand-washing and sanitizing.
3. Commit to modeling, teaching and maintaining mask-wearing consistently, on school grounds and in all public places.
4. Minimizing close contact with any people outside the home.
5. Avoiding groups and gatherings larger than 10 people (and following commitments 1-4 during any group activity).
6. Immediate reporting to TTS Administration of any potential exposure to communicable illness, especially others with any of the array of COVID-19 symptoms.
7. Reporting any travel outside of Massachusetts.

In addition, I understand that:

1. TTS is operating under advice and council of the CDC, AAP, EEC, and our local board of health. We have implemented our protocols in good faith to protect all of the members of our school community. We promise to use our resources in all aspects of training and physical plant to enforce health and safety protocols and minimize the possibility of transmission of the virus.
2. TTS cannot guarantee that members of our school community will not contract COVID-19, and does not imply that directly or indirectly.
3. The success of our Vision and Plans for the 2020-2021 School Year is dependent on a mutual commitment to the requirements of this document. All of our dedication is required, and I pledge to uphold the standards outlined in this document.
4. ***I must read, understand and agree to the COVID-19 Waiver agreement for my child to attend TTS.***



## The Taylor School

### Assumption of the Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact and aerosols and their residues created by individuals. As a result, federal, state, and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend following very specific protocols enacted at TTS for the safety of the school community and the greater good.

The Taylor School (TTS) has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, TTS cannot guarantee that you or your child(ren) will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending TTS could possibly increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that the possibility of exposure to or infection exists. Such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at TTS may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, TTS employees, program participants, and their families.

I voluntarily agree to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility for my child's participation in TTS programming. On my behalf, and on behalf of my children, I hereby release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless TTS, its employees, agents, and representatives, of and from all liabilities, claims, actions, damages, costs or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating thereto.

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Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

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Print Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

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Name of TTS Participant(s)

Date

# The Taylor School

## COVID-19 Response Fiscal Impact and Relief Plan

In the interest of full transparency and facilitating the cooperative and collaborative partnership between TTS, our faculty, and families, we would like to share this Fiscal impact and Relief Plan. It contains details about our sustainability and explains the need for a one year, monthly Health and Safety Fee of \$120 per month per family for 2020-2021. This has been a challenging process, as we want to keep Montessori education as affordable as possible (we are still on par with local daycare). Ultimately, we have a responsibility to all of you to remain vibrant and viable.

This fee will be collected through TADS, in addition to tuition, and is meant to defray the reopening cost. This money will go exclusively to maintaining the environment that families have come to trust, at a standard that ensures safety to the greatest extent possible.

In our planning for reopening and sustainability, we have prioritized two core values: the health of our community and continued excellence in teaching and learning. To address these, we have targeted two areas: significant capital improvements to meet/exceed regulations and additional professional staff and resources to maintain the integrity of early childhood teaching and learning at The Taylor School. Short of sharing confidential Human Resources information, here is the breakdown of pandemic related expenses for "TTS Reboot":

Detail	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greenhouse (for disinfecting and isolation)</li> <li>● Hand washing and sanitizing stations throughout the building and grounds (portable sinks and touch-free units)</li> <li>● Additional "Grove" woodland play space and equipment</li> <li>● Safety enhancements and supplies:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Full supply of multiple, daily adult and children's masks</li> <li>○ Room dividers, Plexi table dividers, traffic control gates</li> <li>○ Essential Montessori materials (for equity amongst pods)</li> <li>○ Sanitizing appliances</li> <li>○ Faculty PPE</li> <li>○ Individual sets of high touch materials for each child</li> <li>○ Containers and crates to isolate children's belongings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	26,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Additional Professional Services               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One Montessori Credentialed Position</li> <li>○ Two EEC Certified Positions</li> <li>○ Legal and Medical Consultants</li> <li>○ COVID-19 control training</li> <li>○ Doubled and enhanced professional cleaning services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	96,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consumables               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gloves</li> <li>○ Paper towels for cleaning</li> <li>○ Paper towels for handwashing</li> <li>○ Paper goods for snacks and meals</li> <li>○ Prepared food upcharge</li> <li>○ Sanitizer ampules</li> <li>○ Cleaning Supplies (other than Force of Nature)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8400
<b>Total</b>	130,600

As many know, the funds from PPP and EIDL (Paycheck Protection Program and Emergency Income Disaster Loans) amounted to very little. This information is public through the Small Business Administration (and an interesting study on aid distribution). Ours covered our financial commitments to our faculty and their contracts, with barely enough "extra" to keep the building, utilities, and monitored public water supply running and ready for this school year. None of the above expenses were covered by either of these loans. (Please note that these are loans, and the school will absorb the repayment plans above and beyond this Fiscal Impact and Relief Plan.)

The Health and Safety fee follows significant "austerity measures" that may not be obvious. Our teachers are not seeing raises, maintenance project funds, and plans converted to sustainability plans, along with the myriad small choices that impact our bottom line. We will not be able to have Music Together or swimming, for example, because both programs are sponsored or subsidized by TTS, and funds are just not available under the weight of preparedness.

Please feel free to reach out to clarify any questions. We look forward to entering this new and different Fall unified in our love and investment in this next generation.

Yours in peace and gratitude,

Marni, Anju, and The Taylor School Team