Maria Montessori Academy plan to open school in the fall during COVID-19 pandemic

July 2020
Maria Montessori Academy Parents and Families,

We have been working throughout the summer to prepare for a successful and safe 2020-2021 school year. Currently we are planning on opening August 17th. All students will be attending school, five days a week for the entire day, except on Wednesday. Wednesday is our early out day. Our goal is to keep school “in person” through a shared commitment from students, teachers, families, and staff by preventing the spread of COVID-19. We have developed procedures and protocols to mitigate the risk and spreading of the virus.

The following guidelines are what the school will do to provide protection for our employees, students, and community:

- Everyone entering the school building will be required to wear a face covering unless eating.

- Physical distancing will be observed wherever possible.

- Proper handwashing will be taught, and students will be required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer any time they enter and exit the school and rooms within the school.

- Student entry and exit location will be separated to ensure fewer students in one location. Start and release times will be staggered to cut down on the number of students at one entry/exit location.

- Traffic patterns in the building will be one way and students will be instructed to physical distance as they walk.

- Staff will watch students for illness/symptoms and contact families immediately if students exhibit symptoms.

- Students with symptoms will remain in isolation in the health office until parents can pick up them up.

- A distance learning plan will be developed for students if the health department requires minimal students in the building or school closure.
Parents play a critical role in helping to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through participation in the following procedures and protocols:

- Check your child every morning for symptoms of the virus and if they have any please keep them home.
- Talk to your child before school starts to prepare them for the changes that will occur in the school and reinforce that the changes are to protect them and keep them healthy.
- Send your child to school with a face covering and encourage them to wear the face covering at all times.
- Recognize you can choose face to face school or online options.
- If you choose to have your child attend school online instead of face-to-face we do ask that you give a week’s notice by filling out the link here: https://forms.gle/kFcytxtGC9gjn3ZT8
- We ask that if they are returning to face-to-face instruction you call the school and give them a week’s notice to prepare for your child’s return.

The information in this document provides additional information on how Maria Montessori Academy will mitigate the spread of the COVID-19. The following areas are “The MMA Way” areas that illustrate the protocols that are being put in place to create a safer environment for the students. Please take the time to read through the entire document and discuss all aspects with your children so they are reading for the school year.

We look forward to serving the students of Maria Montessori Academy and are grateful for your enrollment in our school. We will do all we can to make the school year as productive and comfortable for your children.

Thank you,

Micah K. Hirokawa M.Ed., Director
Maria Montessori Academy
The following information will provide you additional details regarding Maria Montessori Academy “The MMA Way” approach to operating schools while COVID-19 exists in the community. “The MMA Way” approach areas are hygiene etiquette, stay home when sick, face coverings, physical distancing and clean and disinfect.

Please be aware that there is no such thing as a “COVID-free zone” in our classrooms or school. At Maria Montessori Academy (MMA) we are implementing procedures to not only prevent the spread of the virus but to also provide the best education for our students.

Please assist us with this process by learning “The MMA Way” and encouraging your children to follow all protocols and procedures.
Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer

- Hand washing stations are located in all classrooms.
- All areas used for entering and exiting the building will have a hand sanitizer station.
- Students and staff will handwash or use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit the school building.
- Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer before entering the classroom after using the bathroom.
- Students will wash the hands before leaving the bathroom.
- Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer before eating lunch in the classroom.

Respiratory etiquette

- Students will be taught respiratory hygiene such as coughing and sneezing into the arm, staying home when sick, monitoring temperatures.
• Student will wash hands or use hand sanitizer after using a tissue.

**Physical Contact Limitations**

• Students and staff will limit their physical contact and do an alternative way to show appreciation for each other such as air high fives, elbow bumps, or a friendly wave.
• Teachers will use a plexiglass barrier when providing small group instruction
• Students are encouraged to use a personal water bottle.

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**Stay Home When Sick**

**Check for Symptoms Daily Before School**

• Parents will be asked to check their students before leaving their home each day for symptoms of COVID-19.
• Parents are encouraged to get a thermometer for their home and check their child’s temperature every morning before leaving the house.
• If the parent does not have access to a thermometer and they are concerned their child may have a fever they can come to school and an office assistant will come to the car to check the child’s temperature.
• If you feel sick stay home and seek medical care if necessary.
• Staff and students should stay home from school if they have any of the following COVID-19 symptoms:

![Symptoms of Coronavirus](https://www.bigstock.com/348816685)
Accommodating high-risk students and staff

Staff and parents who consider themselves as high-risk, will be asked to voluntarily complete a form with health information that will be shared with the health department to help facilitate contact tracing. Employees will work with their immediate supervisor if there is a concern about risk. High-risk students also will be given the option to do at home distance learning.

Monitor during the school day for symptoms and Health Office

Staff will monitor students throughout the day for symptoms of COVID. If a child exhibits any symptoms, they will be sent to the health office to have their temperature checked. If a child does have a temperature or any symptoms of COVID, parents will be called and students will be sent home. Student will stay in isolation in the health office until the parent arrives. All privacy laws, FERRPA laws, will be followed by all staff members.
Face Covering Etiquette

- All who enter school property, adults and children, are required to wear face coverings.
- Individuals will be checked for face coverings at the school entrances to ensure coverings are being worn. A mask will be provided if the individual does not have a face covering to wear.
- Teachers will be provided with a face covering prior to the start of school year.
- Disposable face coverings will also be given to every teacher in case someone misplaces or soils the face covering.
- There will also be extra face coverings placed at the front office.

Visitors, non-regular staff and volunteers

Visitors and volunteers will be required to have a temperature check, complete a symptoms checklist and wear a mask upon entry into the school.
**Entering and Exiting the Building**

Students will enter the building at different locations to minimize the number of students that will enter at one time. The times for students to come to school may be staggered to reduce the number of students entering the building at one time.

**Classroom**

- Students will be given an assigned seat and will not share their seat with other students and will maintain distance from other students as much as possible.
- Students will not travel to other classrooms for specials unless the space is large enough to physical distance or they can go outside.
- Specialist will come to students’ room for their lessons.
- Desks will be spread apart as much as possible.
- Non-essential furniture and equipment will be moved out of the classroom to increase physical distancing.
- Markings will be placed on the floor to encourage physical distancing.

**Restrooms**

- The number of students in the restroom at a time will be minimized.
- Every other stall in the restrooms will be blocked off.
• The school will identify high traffic areas and apply floor markings to help maintain physical distancing.

**Recess**
Recess will be scheduled with staggered times assigned for use of the field for recess to minimize the number of students on the field at any given time. Physical distancing will be required as students walk to recess.

**Lunch**
Lunch will be held in the classrooms or designated eating areas. Physical distancing will be required. Any tables, counters, and door handles will be sanitized between each lunch period.

**Visitors**
All visitors will be required to follow physical distancing guidelines as identify by floor markings.

**Large Gatherings**
Virtual meetings will be held in the place of large gatherings. Small gatherings will take place in the gym where physical distancing can occur and the number of participants will be limited.
Cleaning Schedule

Custodial service will clean the building nightly and maintain proper cleaning and disinfecting as recommended by the health department. Classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria, and high traffic areas will be disinfected nightly making sure door handles, stair rails, and sink handles are cleaned. Teachers or other employees will clean desk tops, door handles, and sink handles in the middle of the day.

Lunch will be held in the classroom, students will eat at their assigned seat and the desk will be cleaned after eating. Gloves will be required for all staff handling lunches.

Shared Objects
Music will be switched to drama to help with slowing the spread of COVID due to singing and the sharing of instruments. Library books will be checked out and will
be sanitized and must sit in the book hospital for 3 to 5 days to provide an additional layer of protection. PE equipment will not be shared and will be disinfected after each use.

Students will go to recess but will not use the playground equipment. They will be on the field. Water fountains will be covered and not used. Students will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle. They will need to put their name on their water bottle.