



ALCOTT SCHOOL

School Re-Opening Plan

Submitted: 7/31/2020

Agency Name: Alcott School

BEDS Code: 662001990044

Administrative Address: 27 Crane Road Scarsdale, NY 10583

Program Site Address: 535 Broadway Dobbs Ferry NY 10522
27 Crane Road Scarsdale, NY 10583

Program(s) provided at this site: Special Education, 4410: Special Class, Special Class in Integrated Setting, SEIT, MDE, Early Intervention Toddler Developmental Group, MDE, Related Services, and Montessori.

Contact Person (Name, Title): Marilyn Donnellan, MS, Ed., SBL
Director of Special Education

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Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted: www.alcottschool.org

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 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 must be as flexible and as responsive as possible to the needs of our students, families, 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
14. Student Teaching and Interns

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

COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The joint administration team at the Alcott School has collaborated and provided input towards the development of this plan. The Directors of Special Education, Operations, Montessori, and Compliance will continue to work collaboratively with the Health Care Consultant and staff nurses to monitor the plan and provide updates as needed. Communication with families has been via email and telephone conversations. Moving forward the Alcott School will be providing information on re-opening plans to the families through written communications sent in the program informational and medical form packets that are mailed to each family prior to the start of the school year. Specific guidance in regard to health and safety is included in the packets. The NY Forward Plan and this plan will be available at each site and at www.alcottschool.org Families are welcome to contact directors with specific questions. Contact information for staff to be contacted with questions and concerns is provided in the written information.

Staff is being trained on the re-opening plan and the new procedures. Training is being provided through meetings, written materials, online training, and webinars. Planned visitors will be provided with verbal instruction of the protocols needed to be followed prior to scheduled appointments.

Students will be made aware of the health and safety practices through everyday instruction and modeling from the classroom staff. Visual and verbal cues will be used as reminders of safe practices regarding:

- Hand hygiene: Proper hand washing will be explained and demonstrated to students and proper technique will be continually monitored and reinforced throughout the day. Hand washing will be frequent in accordance with the OCFS and school health and safety guidelines. Visual and verbal reminders will be used throughout the day.
- Face coverings: Students are not required to wear face coverings due to their young age. Staff will wear face coverings in the classrooms and in common areas where social distancing is not able to be maintained. Students will be instructed by staff on the appropriate use of face covering if they choose to wear it. Visual and verbal cues will be used throughout the day.
- Social distancing: Classroom staff will discuss and explain social distancing guidelines as appropriate to the children's developmental level of understanding. Classrooms will be configured to promote social distancing to the fullest extent possible. Visual and verbal cues will be used throughout the day.
- Respiratory Hygiene: teachers will discuss and explain, demonstrate and continually monitor appropriate respiratory hygiene practice to visual and verbal cues will be used throughout the day.

Alcott will provide the Alcott Community with guidance, resources and access to links for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) regarding the proper use of face coverings when social distancing is not possible. Signs will be posted at all entry areas as well as throughout the building. No adult will be permitted access to the building without a face covering.

Alcott will provide access to the department of health information which is available in languages other than English.

<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>

Communication with members of the school community with visual and/or hearing impairments will be managed accordingly with audio/visual strategies to ensure the dissemination of information is appropriate.

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 and local hospital capacity according to the local Department of Health.

The following protocols and procedures will be in place in all Alcott School Programs:

Screening

- Everyone entering the building must be screened as per NYS OCFS regulations and results recorded on the Child Care Program Tracker Form (OCFS 6039).
- This process will take place outside or in the entry way of the building and will include symptom monitoring via a daily health check as well as inquiries pertaining to any child, family member or staff person who has recently been exposed to or was present in areas of high transmission of COVID-19, or any other communicable disease.
- Parents and non-essential visitors will be prohibited from entering the building.
- Staff and visitors must sign in upon entering the building.
- The daily health check will include assessing for: temperature >100.0 or prolonged fever (more than 5 days) pallor, flushed appearance, discoloration of lips, mood or behavior changes, lethargy, breathing difficulty (shortness of breath), rapid breathing, chest pain, wheezing, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, redness of eyes, complaints of ear pain or discharge from ear, recent loss of taste and/or smell, abdominal pain, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, headache, muscle aches, skin rash/ change in skin color - especially fingers and toes, unusual spots, bruising or swelling, any reported illness and/or exposure to Covid-19 within last 14 days, any travel to areas designated as having high transmission rates. Student health check information will be recorded on the Child Care Attendance Sheet (LDSS-4443).
- All information gathered upon admitting assessment will be documented for the purpose of contact tracing.
- A child/staff member who is sick or displays symptoms of illness upon arrival will not be allowed to attend school. If a child, staff, or visitor becomes ill while in the building, they will remain in an isolated area/room until they can leave the building safely and limit exposure.
- They will be instructed to stay home and contact their healthcare provider for further evaluation. They will be unable to return to the program until the child or

staff member is symptom free for 72 hours without medication, or a doctor's note indicating that they are free from communicable disease is provided.

- Observation for signs and symptoms of illness will continue throughout the school day. Anyone with signs of illness will be immediately isolated in a designated area and promptly sent home.

Arrival and Dismissal

- Drop off and pick up times will be staggered. Parents and caregivers will not be permitted to escort their children in or out of the building. We are aware that some children may experience severe separation anxiety. Any exception to this policy will be made on a case by case basis.

Hygiene and Cleaning

- Upon entering the building all students and staff must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing protocols will be continued throughout the day.
- All staff will be required to wear facial coverings that will be provided to them in the event they do not have one.
- Gloves must be worn during screening, toileting, food servicing, contact with bodily fluids, cleaning and disinfecting, and interacting with anyone who displays signs and symptoms of illness.
- Hand sanitizers will be made available in all common areas and areas that do not have access to soap and water.
- All classrooms and items used within the classroom will be cleaned and disinfected as needed and at the end of the day with appropriate concentrations of disinfectants as outlined by the Office of Children and Family Services. Recording of the cleaning and disinfecting data will be indicated on the Cleaning and Disinfecting log (OCFS 6041).
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Non-essential items from home will not be allowed in school. (soft toys, dress up clothing, puppets.)
- A schedule for daily and evening enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of the buildings will be implemented. Only solutions approved by the Office of Children and Family Services will be used to clean and disinfect.

Social Distancing

- 6-foot social distancing will be practiced and enforced unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance in which case, acceptable

face coverings will be worn. For the most part, there is not an expectation that young children will maintain physical distance within their stable group.

- Classroom capacity will be limited to 15 children - excluding staff.
- In-person employee gatherings will be limited.
- Meetings will be held by video conferencing as often as possible.
- If a meeting is held in person, limiting capacity to 50%, and social distancing in a well-ventilated space will be ensured.
- Children and staff will remain as static as possible.
- All work and seating areas for both students and staff will be set up at least 6 feet when possible.
- Shared workspaces will be limited will be disinfected between users.

COVID-19 Exposure

If a sick child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, develops symptoms specific to COVID-19 and is suspected of having COVID-19, or is suspected of having CLOSE contact* with an individual who has Covid-19, they will be directed to stay at home under quarantine. They will further be instructed to contact their healthcare provider for more specific instructions. *Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes, caring for someone at home with COVID-19, physical contact, shared eating or drinking utensils, being sneezed or coughed upon, or having had respiratory droplets sprayed upon them from someone with COVID-19.

If Covid-19 is diagnosed or suspected, all directives from The Office of Children and Family Services, The Westchester Department of Health, The NYS Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control in dealing with an active or suspected case of Covid-19 will be implemented. This will include immediate notification to The Westchester Department of Health, contacting all persons with possible exposure and waiting for an initial inspection and evaluation by a representative from The Westchester Department of Health to determine the status of the school post exposure. If there is a partial exposure, only areas occupied by the sick individual -- classroom, office, bathroom, common areas, etc. will be closed. Windows and outside doors will be opened to increase ventilation in these areas. We will wait 24 hours before deep cleaning and disinfecting to allow all respiratory droplets to settle. Deep cleaning and disinfecting of contaminated areas will be done as per Office of Children and Family Services and The Westchester Department of Health Guidelines. After deep cleaning and disinfecting, we will await instructions from the Westchester Department of Health as to when we can reopen the areas in question.

Signs will be posted throughout the building as reminders of COVID-19 Protocols

Please be advised that COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving health situation. Alcott School is committed to consistently monitoring, updating, and implementing the most current mandates issued by the Office of Children and Family Services, The Westchester Department of Health, the New York State Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control. We will always defer to directives that lean most toward the side of caution. All measures are implemented to insure and maintain the most extreme levels of safety and health of our children, families and staff.

Health & Safety guideline communication

Staff, parents, and frequent visitors of our sites will receive written information via program handbooks, newsletters, email, website, and One Call now. These methods of communication are to ensure the Alcott Community is aware of the requirements need to be followed to keep our community safe and become everyday practice.

Prior to entering any Alcott School locations, individuals must complete a medical screening and questionnaire as described in the health & safety protocol. Childcare employees, volunteers, parents, and essential visitors will be required to complete a Health Attestation (OCFS 6040) This signed attestation acknowledges self-screening requirements and responsibility to report any symptoms.

Staff should complete this screening prior to arriving at work and throughout the day. Anyone whose symptoms response changes from a NO to YES during the day, must contact their supervisor immediately and await further instruction.

Students 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 will have their temperatures taken upon arrival.

Staff will receive training on the health and safety practices regarding all infection control procedures such as hand washing, face coverings, social distancing, respiratory hygiene, COVID-19 screening, cleaning and disinfecting, and appropriate use of personal protective equipment.

Alcott School will provide all families and staff with information on COVID-19 protocols and individual decisions on work and participation in school programs will be discussed on a case by case basis. Some staff will be working remotely due to personal high-risk circumstances.

Safety Drills

Fire Drills, Shelter in Place, Lock Down, and Lock Out drills will continue as per OCFS regulations. Social distancing will fully be practiced when possible with young children.

Alcott School's Compliance Officer will provide oversight and work collaboratively with a COVID-19 Health & Safety team composed of staff at each site. A designated administrator at each site will serve as the point of contact and team members will be available to assist families and staff. The COVID-19 Coordination Team is led by :

Marian Bellas, Compliance Officer 914-474-4404, All sites

Health related considerations prior to reopening:

Grace Ann Magro RN, Health Care Consultant 914-693-7677 is a resource person at Alcott School community for all health-related concerns. Alcott School's plans for re-opening with COVID-19 health and safety practices in place has been reported in the guidelines earlier in this document and in the NY Forward Plan available at both sites and on www.alcottschool.org. Each location has a nurse's office and a space nearby has been designated as an isolation room. Dobbs Ferry: office right next to Nurse's office; Crane Road: the enclosed space outside of the nurse's office.

The PPE used by nursing staff will be disposable and properly covered disposal receptacles will be used. Thermometers used at all locations are contactless.

Alcott will supply PPE for staff. PPE is presently in the buildings and more has been ordered. A weekly inventory system has been put in place to maintain adequate PPE supply. Building managers are responsible for maintaining the inventory.

FACILITIES

Office space is being reconfigured to allow for social distancing in the workplace. Barriers, partition, clear dividers are being used to provide protective workstations. Office modifications are being made in compliance with applicable codes and regulations. The school's emergency procedures are in place and will be conducted with social distancing to the fullest extent possible with our preschool students.

Efforts to reduce building capacity include reduced class sizes, remote work for staff, shift work, staggered arrival and dismissal times for students and staff.

Ventilation in buildings is a priority. Buildings with central air units will use appropriate filter in the units. Classrooms and offices will keep window ventilation a priority as appropriate and accordance with OCFS regulations. Doors cannot be left open for safety reasons.

Bathrooms at each location will provide hand washing stations and hand sanitizer is available through our buildings for when hand washing is not possible.

NUTRITION: Lunch/Snack

Staff will wear gloves at lunch/snack time. Children and staff will wash hands before and after every lunch/snack. There will be no family style serving; all children will be served individual portions. No sharing of food or beverages will be allowed. Children will sit in

designated seats for lunch/snack within their classroom. Lunch/snack policy will be communicated to families in the parent handbook. Translation will be provided as needed.

TRANSPORTATION

NOTE: Transportation for students with disabilities enrolled in 4410 and/or 853 programs are provided by the school district. School programs, however, are involved in the embarking and disembarking of students.

Alcott School has implemented staggered arrival and dismissal times. Multiple entrances and exits will be utilized during these times. A visual screening and temperature check will be conducted for all children upon arrival before entering the building. Students will wash hands upon arrival, before dismissal and throughout the day. Visual markers will be placed in common areas to assist with lining up, transitions and to promote social distancing. Social distancing may lengthen arrival and dismissal times. Schedules will be adjusted accordingly.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Alcott school has developed and implemented a PBIS plan (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) as well as a behavior management plan. Family engagement is included in PBIS planning and implementation. Qualified professionals continuously review and revise these plans in order to meet the students' needs. Procedures are revised by Alcott School's directors, program coordinators, psychologist and social worker.

In order to promote ongoing social/emotional wellness, Alcott School will conduct professional trainings, staff orientations, parent orientations, ongoing implementation of PBIS, offer parent support groups and have regular administrative meetings. Referrals for behavioral and emotional supports will be provided by the psychologist, social worker or the child's physician as needed. Communication to families will be conducted through parent orientation, parent-teacher conferences as well as ongoing written and verbal communication.

BUDGET AND FISCAL

Alcott School's internal budgeting and expense reporting has been adjusted and expanded to forecast, track and account for COVID-19 related expenses. Staff salaries, benefits, etc. have been reduced to ensure social distancing and allow for additional expenses to be incurred. Lease and janitorial costs have been renegotiated for the coming school year. Alcott School has currently applied for government funding to use as an additional revenue source to meet the added expenses related to COVID-19 related costs.

Alcott has applied for government funding in the form of a loan to utilize if the tuition reimbursement is insufficient to meet the additional costs of providing services during the COVID-19 emergency.

To confirm high levels of enrollment, program directors and coordinators have been speaking to school districts and families, explaining the high level of compliance with all governing agencies to ensure the safety and security of the students.

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Daily written attendance for both staff and children will be documented. In order to facilitate participation in remote learning, teachers, therapists and program coordinators all have ongoing communication via emails or phone calls with families. When needed, Alcott staff members will be utilized as translators. If students are not participating in remote learning and cannot be reached, the school district will be notified. Staff members are periodically reminded of their responsibility as mandated reporters and to contact the Department of Social Services if they suspect child abuse or neglect.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Alcott School will contact parents via email to determine access to devices. If parents do not respond to email, they will be contacted via telephone. Alcott School will maintain a list of students who do not have access to technology. The appropriate school district will be notified if a family does not have access to technology so that the school district may provide technology to the family. Alcott School will address issues for staff members who may not have access to technology on a case by case basis.

Staff have been and will continue to be trained in effective practices for remote learning. Training will be ongoing throughout the year as needed via workshops, sharing of tutorials, and one-to-one supervision with department coordinators. Information Technology (IT) support will be provided for staff members who are experiencing IT issues and challenges through Alcott's IT resources, as well as through peer and supervisor assistance. Families who are experiencing IT issues and challenges will be referred to their school district for assistance if Alcott staff are not able to assist them through the course of regular interaction.

The effectiveness of digital tools and platforms will be assessed via ongoing oversight from program directors, department coordinators and parental feedback.

Google classroom will be available to all enrolled students, at all times, to promote equitable access and flexibility for students and families during remote instruction and learning.

Alcott School has internal and external network and website management that ensures the safety and security of our digital systems. The internal server is updated daily and utilizes strong firewall and anti-virus protections.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Alcott School will provide Google Classroom and Teletherapy as their remote learning platform to all families if in person instruction is not feasible. Instruction will remain

aligned with NYS learning standards for preschoolers. All students will have opportunities for regular and substantive contact with qualified instructional personnel regardless of the delivery method. Communication to families will be conducted through parent-teacher conferences as well as ongoing written and verbal communication via email or phone. Translation will be provided as needed.

Alcott School will continue to provide developmentally appropriate instruction for preschool children with an emphasis on social/emotional learning. Routines will be established and remain as consistent as possible to facilitate the children's readjustment to in-person instruction. Program coordinators and staff will have regular teacher and team meetings. This will promote sharing of information about individual needs and each student's response to in person or remote learning.

In order to enhance social distancing, Alcott School will modify center time and lunch/snack time to include a small group of children at each center/table. Toys and materials will be frequently washed and changed throughout the day. There will be no family style serving; all children will be served individual portions. No sharing of food or beverages will be allowed.

Families will be encouraged to engage in functional and developmentally appropriate activities with their child. This can be done via conference calls, written communication or video conferencing. Developmentally appropriate activities will also be posted on the child's Google Classroom. Only essential adults and children will be allowed in the building.

In order to facilitate high quality remote instruction, staff will be trained in Alcott School's remote platform. The individual child's program will be modified as needed to meet the child/family's needs and parent involvement will be encouraged. All programs will be developmentally appropriate and culturally diverse.

Alcott will provide in-person instruction with class size, hours and staff ratios as per the child's IEP. Alcott School will provide remote learning via Google Classroom and teletherapy when directed to do so.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Alcott School will provide in person instruction for all students unless directed to switch to remote learning by NYSED. All students will receive FAPE regardless of service delivery method as per their IEP. Modifications to in person learning will be implemented in order to promote the safety of all staff and students while continuing to provide developmentally appropriate education for preschool children. Alcott School will be available for any written/verbal communication with our CPSE/CSE colleagues to ensure continuity of instruction. Written and verbal communication will be translated for families in their preferred language as needed.

Ongoing progress monitoring of IEP goals will occur through data collection, recorded observations, parent report and clinical judgment. Classroom teams (teachers and

therapists) will remain consistent regardless of learning mode in order to protect the integrity of student cohorts.

STAFFING

Individuals hold a valid certification/license appropriate to their service assignment. Certifications and licenses will be verified by the school using the internet-based tools made available by NYSED.

Additional staff will be hired to meet instructional and operational demands during the COVID-19 emergency period. Current staff may assume additional duties in order to meet operational demands during the COVID-19 emergency period.

Our school will undertake robust recruitment efforts to identify and process qualified substitutes. In the 2020/2021 school year, as permitted by NYSED, if qualified substitute teachers cannot be engaged, individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent, even those not working toward certification can first be engaged for up to ninety (90) days and then beyond the first ninety (90) day period through the end of June, 2021, as long as the superintendent documents and attests that recruitment efforts did not identify a fully qualified substitute teacher. The superintendent must attest to the shortage of qualified recruits initially and then at the end of the first ninety (90) day period. Recruitment efforts will be extensively documented.

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.

STUDENT TEACHING

Alcott School will not permit student teachers or student interns in our buildings during the 2020-2021 school year in order to comply with reduced capacity guidelines and to ensure proper social distancing.

