A Division of Cerebral Palsy of Westchester

School Reopening Plan
Updated February 2022
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INTRODUCTION

The BRIDGE School at Rye Brook recognizes that all students are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), even during the time of a public health crises brought upon by a global pandemic. This reopening plan will outline how we will provide continuity of learning for all the students we serve.

Students with disabilities should not be denied access to the Special Education programs and services outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) regardless if they are attending school in person or remotely.

In cooperation with the Committees on Special Education (CSE) of the public school districts of residence of our students, we will strive to provide each and every student with an opportunity to learn in a safe and healthy environment.

The BRIDGE School will work with the CSEs to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on IEPs, plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources.

Students will retain access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet their unique disability-related needs.

The BRIDGE School will continue to provide meaningful engagement with the parents/guardians of our students in their preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to their children.

This document was developed through the collective efforts of The BRIDGE School staff, including administrators, teachers, and staff representing the nursing, clinical, therapeutic and Quality Assurance departments. Feedback from key community stakeholders including staff and parents/guardians of our students is integrated into the final version of this document. The BRIDGE School sincerely thanks each person who played a role in the development of this document.

It is anticipated that this document will be updated, as additional guidance is provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (DOH), the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Local Health Department, and, as our collective understanding of the COVID-19 virus evolves.

It is The BRIDGE School's goal to utilize this document, with its included safety procedures, to keep our students, and staff, as safe as possible as we reopen our programs. If we each accept our role and responsibility to implement the practices set forth, we will be able to achieve our goal to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, and, to create an environment where our students can achieve their greatest level of independence.
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Models of Instruction

The BRIDGE School is making considerations for the continuation of our In Person/Hybrid Model (combination of in person and remote instruction and services) as well as a Fully Remote Model of instruction and services.

In Person/Hybrid Model

In person instruction is available, parents maintain the option to send their children to school for in person instruction or to keep them home and participate in a fully remote program. Parents may also choose a hybrid model in which they may send their child to school fewer than five days a week or for therapies only while utilizing the remote learning opportunities on the days that their child is not attending in-person.

All students will be granted equal opportunity to attend school in person.

All students will have access to remote instruction and services on those days that they do not attend in person. All aspects of the Fully Remote Model will be available to students participating in the Hybrid Model.

Each student at The BRIDGE School will be provided with an individualized learning plan based on their IEP goals, mandated related services, learning needs and capabilities.

Academics

Our online learning platform is a suite of applications by n2y including Unique Learning System which is a fully web-based curriculum system aligned with New York State Learning Standards. Each student has their own login capabilities allowing teachers to track the students’ progress digitally. This learning platform can be accessed by students both in the classroom and at home.

Related Services

Students attending school in person will receive all the mandated related services designated in their IEPs while in school. Social distancing will be maintained to the extent possible and all therapy equipment will be sanitized before and after being used by each student.

All mandated related services will be documented weekly indicating if they were provided or not and what progress was made.

Related service logs will be maintained in the Frontline and EasyTrac systems.

Parents/guardians and school districts receive progress reports on all programs and services provided three times per year.
**Fully Remote Model**

Each student at The BRIDGE School will be provided with an individualized set of materials and opportunities based on their IEP goals, mandated related services, learning needs and capabilities. Materials and opportunities may include but are not limited to, live interaction with teachers and therapists, worksheets, videos, websites and specific online learning activities.

**Academics**

Our online learning platform is a suite of applications by n2y including Unique Learning System which is a fully web-based curriculum system aligned with New York State Learning Standards. Each student has their own login capabilities allowing teachers to track the students’ progress remotely.

All students, teachers and therapists are provided with G Suite for Education accounts. These accounts include apps such as Google Classroom, Google Meet (for video conferencing), Google Docs and more.

Each teacher will provide daily live interactive video sessions with their students using Google Meet (or other available platforms.) All students will have equal opportunity to live instruction from their teachers. Video sessions may include but are not limited to, direct instruction, guided learning, opportunities for students and parents to seek individual help, and opportunities for students to socialize with each other.

Teachers will communicate with students and parents daily via email providing the lesson plans for the day. These lesson plans may include a variety of activities from the options mentioned above including lessons and activities on the Unique Learning System, videos to watch, hands on activities to do at home or worksheets to complete from the packet of materials sent home.

**Related Services**

All students will have the opportunity to receive their mandated related services through a telehealth model. This can take a variety of forms including but not limited to, direct video conferencing, telephone sessions, recorded videos and additional written documents.

Related service providers may also provide documents that outline activities, exercises and practices that the students could do at home with their parents. They will include specific instructions, photographs/images/diagrams and timelines for activities.

All mandated related services will be documented weekly indicating if they were provided or not and what progress was made.

Related service logs will be maintained in the Frontline and EasyTrac systems.

Parents/guardians and school districts receive progress reports on all programs and services provided three times per year.
Communicating with the School

Regardless of the model of instruction, students and parents/guardians have multiple methods available to them to communicate with school personnel. Teachers, therapists, and administration regularly communicate and can be reached by telephone, email, text and Google Classroom. All pertinent information will be provided to parents/guardians in their preferred language or mode of communication.

Teaching Staff

The BRIDGE School will continue to employ teachers who hold valid and appropriate certificates for their teaching assignments except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner’s regulations or Education Law.
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Communication
The BRIDGE School will communicate pertinent information to students, parents/guardians, staff and visitors in a variety of formats.

Information may be shared through direct mailings, email, text, phone, in-service trainings and posted signage.

Screenings and Health Observations
Staff will be trained and instructed to observe for signs of illness in students and staff. Symptomatic persons will be sent to the school nurse for observation. Upon observation, if deemed necessary, individuals will be isolated from all other students and staff (students will be supervised by the school nurse or other designee) until such time that they can be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider who will determine if a COVID-19 test is necessary. If the school nurse or medical director is unavailable to perform an observation, the individual will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider who will determine if a COVID-19 test is necessary.

Parent Responsibilities
Parents/guardians will be required to take their child’s temperature and observe for signs of illness daily before sending the child to school. Parents/guardians will be required to sign a daily screening questionnaire as directed by Department of Health guidelines. Any child with a temperature equal to or above 100.0°F or exhibiting signs of illness must be kept home from school. Any child who does not pass the daily screening questionnaire as indicated by their parent/guardian must be kept home from school.

Student Screenings Upon Arrival
Students will be screened for signs of illness and have their temperature taken daily upon arrival at school before entering the school building. Any student with a temperature equal to or above 100.0°F or exhibiting signs of illness will not be permitted to attend school that day.

If the student was driven by a parent/guardian or by a transportation service that is able to take the student directly back home, then the student will be sent home without entering the school building.

If the transportation service is not able to take the student directly home, then the student will be isolated from all other students and staff in a designated enclosed area and will be supervised by the school nurse or other designee until such time that they can be sent home.

Staff Screenings Upon Arrival
All staff will be screened for signs of illness, have their temperature taken and will be required to sign a screening questionnaire as directed by Department of Health guidelines daily upon arrival at school before entering the school building. Any staff member who does not pass the daily screening questionnaire or has a temperature equal to or above 100.0°F or is exhibiting signs of illness will not be permitted to work that day and will not be permitted to enter the school building. In the event that the staff member does not have a way to get home immediately, he/she will be isolated in a designated area until such time that he/she can go home.
Continued Monitoring
All students and staff will continuously be observed for signs of illness while in school and will have their temperature taken at various intervals throughout the school day. Symptomatic persons will be sent to the school nurse for observation. Upon observation, if deemed necessary, individuals will be isolated from all other students and staff in a designated enclosed area and will be supervised by the school nurse or other designee until such time that they can be sent home. If the school nurse or medical director is unavailable to perform an observation, the individual will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider.

Visitor Policy
All visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors will be kept to a minimum and will only be allowed into the school building if deemed necessary and appropriate by school administration. All visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors will be screened for signs of illness, have their temperature taken and will be required to sign a screening questionnaire as directed by Department of Health guidelines upon arrival at the school before entering the school building. Any individual who does not pass the screening questionnaire or has a temperature equal to or above 100.0°F or is exhibiting signs of illness will not be permitted to enter the school building.

Hand Washing
All staff and children will practice healthy hand and respiratory hygiene. Upon arrival, all staff and children must immediately wash their hands. Soap and water for 20 seconds at each washing is recommended. An alternate use of a 60% or greater alcohol-based hand foam or gel is also acceptable (parent authorization required). Children will be encouraged to wash or sanitize more frequently, especially after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing, touching their face, and before and after eating. Signage is posted in each class and restroom regarding proper hand-washing procedures.

Social Distancing
Physical distancing of at least 6 feet between all persons in the school building will be maintained whenever possible. Exceptions may include but are not limited to diapering, dressing, comforting, feeding, etc. Universal precautions will be followed by staff doing diapering, dressing, comforting, feeding, etc.

Accommodations for High Risk Students
The BRIDGE School provides care and education to a population of students with diagnoses and disabilities that more often than not require special needs care. These students may be at a high risk for COVID-19 or may be living with individuals at high risk. Due to this factor, we will take all precautions recommended by the DOH and CDC in caring for all of the students within our program. It should be noted that if a student is medically frail, and unable to maintain 6 feet social distancing, the parent should work with their child's medical provider to make a decision whether in-person instruction is appropriate, or whether it is more appropriate for the student to participate in a fully remote learning option. We will follow all CDC and Department of Health guidelines on caring for a special needs or immunocompromised student.
Accommodations for High Risk Staff

For staff members who are at high risk or living with individuals at high risk, they may contact the Human Resources Department to discuss work related accommodations. The Human Resources Department will assess each request individually and make a determination of and provisions for appropriate accommodations.

Respiratory Hygiene (Mask/Face Covering Protocols)

All staff and adult visitors must wear a face covering whenever inside the school building.

   Staff may be excused from wearing face coverings during their lunch or break (social distancing must be maintained) or if they are the only person in a room.

All staff must wear a face covering when working with students inside or outside the school building.

All face coverings should be of the surgical type or N95/KN95.

Students will be encouraged to wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.

   Students whose physical or mental health would be impaired by wearing a face covering will not be required to do so.

   Students who cannot remove a face covering themselves will not be required to wear a face covering.

Students who are able to tolerate a face covering will be given an opportunity to remove the face covering for a minimum of five minutes each hour while in school.

All students who are not wearing face coverings for any reason, will be kept a minimum of six feet away from all other students to the extent possible.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The BRIDGE School will supply PPE to all employees and to students who do not or cannot supply their own. PPE including, but not limited to, disposable masks, gloves, face shields, gowns, hand sanitizer, hand soap and cleaning supplies will be maintained by the administrative staff. The school administration will maintain contact with the Agency purchasing department to ensure adequate supplies are onsite, when needed. All PPE including masks, gloves, tissues, hand hygiene supplies and cleaning supplies, will be monitored to ensure an adequate supply is on hand. PPE will be provided as needed to all employees, including custodial staff for cleaning.
Closure Policy

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 among the staff or students of The BRIDGE School, contact tracing will be performed and any individuals that may have been exposed will be notified as per the DOH requirements and regulations. The school will be cleaned and disinfected and we will contact the local Department of Health for further guidance. Based on the results of the contact tracing, a determination will be made whether any classrooms or the entire school will need to close to in-person learning and for how long. All staff, parents/guardians of students and participating school districts will be informed of the closure due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. In the event that one or more students will be required to remain home from school, all affected bus companies will be notified of the dates that transportation will be suspended.

Returning to School After a Positive Case of COVID-19

Staff and students testing positive for COVID-19 will be directed to work with their county's Health Department and/or their healthcare provider. The health department and/or healthcare provider will determine the length of time that person must be under isolation/quarantine.

If the individual who tested positive has symptoms (Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, Chills, Shivers, Repeated Shaking with Chills, Muscle Aches, Headache, Sore Throat, Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Fatigue, Congestion, Runny Nose or New Loss of Taste or Smell) the Clearance Criteria for release from isolation are:

- Minimum of 5 days (day 0 is the day symptoms start; isolation ends after day 5).
- 10 days if unable to wear a well-fitting mask and
- When fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and
- The individual is symptom free

If the individual who tested positive is asymptomatic the Clearance Criteria are:

- 5 days (day 0 is the day the test was collected; isolation ends after day 5).
- 10 days if unable to wear a well-fitting mask
- If symptoms develop after testing positive, start 5-day count again with day 0 being the day symptoms started.

Before returning to the program, all staff and students must provide documentation of release of isolation/quarantine from DOH or healthcare provider and that they are free and clear of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and that they are cleared to return to work or school.

Returning to School After Exhibiting Symptoms

Staff and students that exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will be directed to their healthcare provider who will determine if a COVID-19 test is necessary.

Before returning to the program, all staff and students must provide written proof of a negative test result for COVID-19 or documentation from their healthcare provider that they are free and clear of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and that they are cleared to return to work or school.
Returning to School After Close Contact with an Individual with COVID-19

Staff and students that have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be directed to their county's Health Department and/or healthcare provider.

Before returning to the program, all staff and students who have not been vaccinated must:
- provide documentation from their healthcare provider that they are free and clear of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and that they are cleared to return to work or school.
- self-quarantine for a minimum of 5 days since the last contact with the infected individual.

Staff and students who are fully vaccinated may continue to attend or work at school after exposure so long as they are not exhibiting any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.

Getting tested for COVID-19

A list of testing sites can be found on the WCDOH health website (https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus) under the testing, results and treatment tab. Students, faculty and staff can also call the NYS COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-364-3065 for assistance locating a testing site.

When should an exposed individual get tested for COVID-19?
- Test whichever comes 1st: at least 5 days after last exposure
- or right away if Symptoms develop
- If positive, isolate for at least 5 days from symptom onset
  Or (if no symptoms) date test was collected

Reporting positive COVID-19 cases to WCDOH

Upon learning of a positive COVID case, The BRIDGE School will Immediately notify WCDOH if a student, faculty or staff member tests positive for COVID-19:
- 914-813-5110 (weekday hours)
- 914-813-5000 (evening and weekend hours)

Contact Tracing

The BRIDGE School will work closely with The Westchester County Department of Health to assist in contact tracing.

Are schools responsible for contact tracing for students, faculty and staff?

While WCDOH has the primary responsibility for contact tracing, effective contact tracing is a joint collaborative effort - WCDOH will need the assistance of schools in providing staff and student lists and schedules and other information to identify exposed individuals, arrange for testing, etc.

How long will contacts to positive COVID-19 cases be required to quarantine?

Individuals who are not vaccinated and have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 but, have no symptoms will be required to quarantine for 5 days from the day they were last exposed. Please note that a negative test does not release an individual from quarantine. Individuals who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine after exposure so long as they are not exhibiting any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
What qualifies as an exposure to COVID-19?
Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person displaying symptoms of or testing positive for COVID-19 for 15 minutes or longer. Close contacts will be required to quarantine if unvaccinated and/or showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
Proximate contact is defined as being in the same enclosed environment such as a classroom or office, but greater than 6 feet from a person displaying symptoms of or testing positive for COVID-19. WCDOH will determine if a proximate contact should be under quarantine.

If a child tests positive and has a sibling in the school, should the school keep the sibling out of school?
Yes, unless the siblings reside in separate households, the sibling must be placed on quarantine which would mean that the sibling should not attend school during the required period for quarantine.

If a student/staff member is home on quarantine and then develops symptoms, please explain how that impacts attendance to school/work and what it means for the siblings that may have been continuing to go to school.
If a student or staff tests positive, their household members will likely be considered close contacts and will need to quarantine. Students or staff testing positive will require isolation for a minimum of 5 days.

What is the timeframe for contract tracing? Will you work with the school immediately? What if we are notified in the evening and siblings may be at school in am.
WCDOH will notify relevant school staff upon learning of a positive test for COVID-19 at the school. WCDH also verifies that individuals reporting a positive COVID test have a positive lab test result in order to proceed with further measures. Labs are required to report to New York State Department of Health any positive test results immediately, and local health departments aim to contact positive individuals within 24 hours of receiving that lab report. Schools should be conducting daily health screenings, including asking whether the child/staff has been in contact with a person who has tested positive.

Cleaning and Disinfecting
Education staff, administration and custodial crews will be trained on proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures related to COVID-19. A cleaning checklist will be utilized to ensure continuity and compliance in accordance with CDC guidelines. Several times throughout the day, staff will provide additional cleaning of high touch points such as:
- Door handles
- Electronic devices
- Tables
- Surfaces in classrooms
- Adaptive equipment will be cleaned before and after each use
- Bathrooms will be cleaned before and after each use

Staff will clean an area they use after each use. They will be expected to clean all areas in their personal work space as needed.
**Safety Drills**

The BRIDGE School will conduct all safety drills required by Education Law § 807 with modifications to promote social distancing.

- Evacuation drills (fire drills) will be conducted such that all students maintain a minimum of six feet between them while exiting the building and at the evacuation site.
- Lockdown drills will be conducted without the need to "hide" and gather closely in a corner of the room so that students may remain six feet apart.

Students and staff will be instructed that in the case of an actual emergency, getting to safety is the first priority and should be considered before social distancing.

**Designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinators**

**On-Site COVID-19 Safety Coordinator**
Barry Wasser, School principal
Email: barry.wasser@cpwestchester.org
914-937-3800 ext. 415
914-843-9398 (cell phone)
1186 King Street
Rye Brook, NY 10573.

**Off-Site COVID-19 Safety Coordinator**
Arlene Halstead, Director of Nursing Services
Email: arlene.parsard@cpwestchester.org
914-424-3508 (cell phone)
CHILD NUTRITION/FOOD SAFETY

Hygiene
All students will maintain social distancing of at least six feet from other students and staff while eating or drinking.

The only exception will be for those students who require staff assistance during feeding.

All surfaces utilized during meals will be sanitized before and after eating.

All students and staff will wash their hands before and after handling any food or drink.

Reminders and lessons about proper mealtime hygiene will be provided daily by classroom staff.

Sharing of food and beverages between any two individuals will not be permitted.

Location
All meals will be served in the student’s classroom and food allergies will be monitored with appropriate restrictions and protocols taken in each classroom.
TRANSPORTATION

The majority of BRIDGE School students are transported by busses provided by their local school districts. Bussing policies will be determined by the districts and bus companies. Parents will be required to send in the health and safety screening questionnaire daily and all students will have their temperature taken before the student can enter the building.

In the event that one or more students will be required to remain home from school for a COVID-19 related case, all affected bus companies will be notified of the dates that transportation will be suspended.
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Supporting Students and Staff

The BRIDGE School recognizes the importance of the social emotional well-being of both students and staff. The BRIDGE School will ensure to adequately respond to and be proactive in addressing the social and emotional needs of our students, their families, as well as our teachers, administrators, and other school-based staff. We will continue to institute protocols and guidelines to support a nurturing, positive, and productive learning environment.

The BRIDGE School’s Social Worker will work in conjunction with other mental health professionals and school-based staff who specialize in working with young people and their families. This treatment team will collaboratively ensure the delivery of services to assist students in managing challenging emotions, developing coping skills, and navigating stressful times. Each students clinical, educational, and therapeutic team will meet to review any concerns and unmet needs of students and their families. The treatment team will continue to ensure the social emotional well-being of children by conducting formal and informal screenings and evaluations which will help to identify students who may need additional support. When additional support is required to ensure the well-being of students and families’ social emotional needs, The BRIDGE School Social Worker will provide referrals to local mental and behavioral health agencies. The School Social Worker will also continue to work closely with student Care Coordinators to address any unmet needs within the home environment.

The BRIDGE School Worker will strive to improve outcomes for all students by maintaining its comprehensive school counseling program, helping students to properly manage emotions, build strong social relationships, as well as provide grief and trauma counseling if so required. To foster a strong support system, the school counseling program will prioritize relationships and healthy human connections by providing students with skill building opportunities to manage relationships with peers (and adults) and to maintain those relationships over time. Counseling services will reinforce strategies and techniques for students to learn to communicate their thoughts and feelings effectively, engage productively and collaborate successfully with others, and be able to offer and seek help when needed - the focus of this being on establishing and maintaining healthy supportive relationships.

The School Social Worker will continue to provide formal counseling services as noted in students IEP related service mandates. In addition The BRIDGE School’s Social Worker, in conjunction with all school staff will evaluate the social emotional needs of those students who are not assigned counseling services on their IEP, and provide the needed resources and referrals.
**Professional Development**

The BRIDGE School’s school-based mental health professionals have established guidelines for staff to employ which utilizes a combination of a holistic and trauma informed approach to support the social emotional needs of our students. All BRIDGE School staff have received training from the schools Licensed Clinical Social Worker on the social emotional needs of students returning to school after the extended school closure. The content of this training will be reviewed with staff periodically and/or on an as needed basis. In general, these guidelines encourage staff to understand how the caregiver-child relationship is the base for social emotional support, become aware of the importance of caregiver self-care, understand the possible social emotional effects of prolonged school closure, utilize supportive strategies (ex., mindfulness/relaxation strategies), to create a positive/supportive learning environment, effectively communicate a valid, non-threatening understanding of the societal challenge to students, instill behavioral changes with students to assist in staying healthy (ex., utilizing masks, maintaining safe distance, handwashing, etc.), and provide an understanding of societies new reality to address anxiety and construct positive behaviors with students.
ATTENDANCE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES

Attendance Tracking
The BRIDGE School will maintain accurate records of daily teacher/student engagement or attendance regardless of the instructional setting. Data will be recorded on an internal system and made available to school districts and parents/guardians as appropriate.

Absenteeism
Teachers will monitor student attendance/engagement and their progress toward their academic goals on a regular basis. Teachers will take appropriate actions in order to prevent students falling behind in their learning.
TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Access to Technology for Students

The BRIDGE School will survey all the families of all students to identify those who do not have access to devices and highspeed internet in order to fully participate in the remote learning opportunities granted to them.

In the event that a student does not have the appropriate access to the remote learning program, The BRIDGE School will facilitate communication with the student’s local school district to request a loaner device and/or assistance obtaining adequate internet access.

Access to Technology for Staff

The BRIDGE School will assure that all teachers and therapists have adequate technology to provide the remote learning and teletherapy opportunities to our students.