



# SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020 – 2021

Date: August 4, 2020

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## SINAI ACADEMIC CENTER REOPENING PLAN

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**High Quality Education is the lifeblood of any society. Health and Happiness of our students are prerequisite foundational elements upon which rigorous and meaningful learning can be built.**

In accordance of the Department of Health's *Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency*, Sinai Academic Center has developed an individual plan for reopening and operating during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Our plan meets the standards set forth in the guidance and reflects engagement with school stakeholders and community members, including but not limited to administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, and affiliated organizations. Specifically, our plan covers: (1) reopening of school facilities for in-person instruction, (2) monitoring of health conditions, (3) containment of potential transmission of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and (4) closure of school facilities and in-person instruction, if necessitated by widespread virus transmission.

Our school finds itself in a fortunate position, due to our building capacity and student population, to be able to safely provide full time in-person instruction. This plan will describe the precautionary measures that are to be implemented before and during the school year and the necessary logistics that will ensure the safety of our students as well as achievement of educational excellence for all students.

### I. Reopening of School Facilities for In-Person Instruction Capacity:

**Sinai Academic Center is a MIDDLE SCHOOL and HIGH SCHOOL with students in grade 6 to grade 12. Our building is able to host over 200 students at full capacity. At this time, there are 60 students in the school. Although new students are still registering for the Fall as a result of the confusion and safety concerns caused by the pandemic in NYC schools, we will be able to provide FULL TIME IN PERSON INSTRUCTION for up to 100 students in our building with protocols described in this plan**

Sinai Academic Center, located at 2025 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Brooklyn, NY, is housed in a large building. The classrooms are located primarily on the top floor, which has 11 classrooms, 3 of which are used as resource rooms for academic support services such as SETTS, and the office area with four offices. Each classroom is about 300 sq. ft. Using the 20 sq. ft. per student area as per *Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction*,

each classroom would be able to seat 12-15 students, depending on the size of the classroom. In other words, our space capacity is able to include all our students with sufficient distance between each and between students and teacher.

The bottom floor is comprised of a large lobby, a large cafeteria (2,800 sq. ft.), and the minor synagogue (350 sq. ft.). The cafeteria has ample space to accommodate the entire student body for breakfast and lunch with social distancing (as detailed below). It will also be utilized for classes and assemblies of groups that cannot be accommodated by any of the above mentioned rooms.

There's an outdoor basketball court that will be used for athletic activities (weather permitting).

### Social Distancing:

As mentioned above, Sinai Academy is fortunate to have ample space that enables us to have all our students in the building for fulltime in-person instruction. All students, faculty and staff will maintain appropriate social distancing, which means six feet of space in all directions between individuals.

- **Classroom Protocol:**

Desks have been arranged to maintain sufficient distance between each student in the classroom. Each classroom will be provided with hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes. Teachers will conduct hand sanitizing activity at regular intervals.

Schedule has been adjusted such that over 95% of students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day. Teachers will switch classrooms between periods. Teachers will be provided with disinfectant wipes so that they will be able to disinfect their desk.

Students will be encouraged to bring personal water bottles with them from home since the water fountain will be disabled. However, our school is also purchasing water bottles to provide for those students that need one. Students will have all their textbooks and supplies with them in their classroom for the entire day, as such eliminating the need to go to their lockers.

- **Hallway Protocol:**

During breaks between classes, students will remain primarily inside their classroom, as such eliminating crowds in the hallways. Teachers will be provided a limited number of "hallway passes", which they will be able to issue when the need arises. Masks will be required in the hallways or any other common areas.

- **Bathroom Protocol:**

The bathroom on the top floor can accommodate up to 7 individuals. Teachers will allow students to go to the restroom one person at a time. In case of strong need,

teachers will give a student a note to the office and that student will be allowed to the bathrooms located on the first floor of the building.

- **Arrival and Dismissal:**

As students arrive in the morning, they will be directed into the cafeteria located right off the front lobby. From the cafeteria, students will be directed upstairs individually so as to avoid stairwell crowding.

Dismissal from the classroom – whether to go to the cafeteria for lunch or home at the end of the day – will be staggered such that each classroom enters the hallway and the stairwell in a manner that maintains 6 feet of distance between each student.

## **PPE and Face Coverings:**

PPE and face coverings will be required in all settings where social distancing can be challenging such as all hallways and other common areas. Students, faculty, staff, and other individuals will be directed to use facemasks. Appropriate signage will be placed throughout the building.

We have made a bulk purchase of masks to provide for students and staff when needed.

## **Extracurricular Programs:**

All social distancing policies and procedures that apply to our regular school program will apply to our extracurricular programs as well.

## **Vulnerable Populations:**

To the greatest extent possible, we will make accommodations for vulnerable students to allow them to participate in educational activities which may include extra PPE or social distancing for the particular student or distance learning, when appropriate. Vulnerable faculty and staff will be encouraged to wear extra PPE such as gloves and/or face shields as appropriate.

## **Field Trips:**

Initially, all field trips will be suspended. When field trips will occur, students, faculty and staff will be asked to social distance and/or wear appropriate face coverings as the situation dictates.

## **Visitors:**

Visitors will be limited, and facemasks will be required of visitors as well as temperature checks.

## Transportation:

Sinai Academic Center does not provide transportation. Students that request transportation are referred to a private Car service provider.

## Food Services:

The Cafeteria at Sinai Academy is large (2,800 sq. ft). It thus enables us to serve breakfast and lunch as before with the following hygiene protocols:

- There will be no self-service (such salad bar)
- All meals will be individually served
- Students will form a line along markings (that ensure distancing) on the floor
- Students will sit six feet apart
- All staff will wear appropriate food service PPE (disposable aprons, disposable gloves, masks)

Students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating by washing their hands. Appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted through signage and teacher reinforcement and the sharing of food and beverages will be discouraged through the same means.

## Ventilation:

We have replaced the filters of the Air-Conditioning system with high efficiency MERV filters. Additionally, classrooms will be regularly “aired out” with outdoor air.

## Emergency Drills:

Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills will be conducted as in prior years without exceptions. Teachers will be trained to escort students out of the building using available staircases in a manner that does not jeopardize the health and safety of our students.

## Mental Health, Behavioral, and Emotional Support Services and Programs:

Positive relationships are at the very core of Sinai Academy’s ethos. Throughout the months of distance learning administration and staff went out of their way to communicate with and provide emotional support to our students. Academic progress can only be achieved when physical and emotional health is ensured. Our teachers are trained to observe for signs of mental, behavioral, and emotional issues with students. Our administrators and teachers continuously signal to our students that they should discuss with them any concern large or small. Channels of communication are always open. We also maintain a list of contacts with community based organizations and counseling service providers. Students that need additional mental health support will be referred these organizations such as the Sephardic Bikur Holim, Interboro Developmental and Consultation Center among others.

## Communication:

Communication is essential to our school community. As of last year (2019-2020), we have begun using JupiterEd for our LMS. Administrators and teachers continuously communicate with students and parents via JupiterEd messaging system. We also publish essential announcements on our school's website – [www.SinaiUs.com](http://www.SinaiUs.com). Additionally, we have a WhatsApp group for parents and a Discord server for students. These communication channels enable constant two-way communication between school staff and the parent body.

Throughout the reopening process we are communicating with our parent body and listen carefully to their concerns and their suggestions.

## Signage:

Appropriate signage will be placed throughout the building and informational material will be kept for distribution in the main office.

In a school of our size, the administrators – Rabbi Moshe Silber, Judaic Studies Principal and Mr. Feldstein, General Studies Principal - are the main point of contact for all matters including the identification of positive COVID-19 cases or any other safety concern. They will be responsible for subsequent communication. They will be responsible for answering questions from students, faculty, staff, and parents or legal guardians of students regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and the plan implemented by the school.

## Continuity of Learning:

Learning is paramount. Sinai Academy is committed to ensuring that high quality education for all students will continue throughout the coming school year. We are preparing for in-person instruction – instruction that will enable our teachers and support staff to offer the optimal learning experience combined with in-house academic supports. However, if the need arises, Sinai Academy can return to distance learning via Zoom and JupiterEd as we did during the lockdown. Hybrids of the two can also be made available when appropriate. We are and will communicate with parents and students regarding their learning experience, provide support for struggling students, and adjust accordingly.

## Attendance Taking:

Sinai Academy will continue to collect and report daily teacher / student engagement or attendance, regardless of instructional setting. All attendance will be recorded in our LMS. Parents have access to their son's attendance via their account on JupiterEd. Please see the School Handbook for details about our Attendance Policy.

## II. MONITORING OF HEALTH CONDITIONS

The facilities of Sinai Academic Center have been properly disinfected and appropriate signage and disinfection stations have been set up throughout the building. Furthermore, we have procured the proper amount of PPE and face coverings for our students, faculty, and staff.

### Hygiene Cleaning and Disinfection:

School wide cleaning and disinfection will take place on a daily basis with cleaning products approved by the CDC for use against COVID-19.

### Monitoring Health Conditions at School

- **Screening:**

Health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors will take place daily. Individuals will have their temperature checked each day. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility or sent directly to a dedicated area prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.

We will use a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff reporting to school and periodically use a questionnaire for students. Remote health screening (e. by electronic survey, digital application, or telephone, which may involve the parent/legal guardian) before an individual reports to school, will be implemented if and when appropriate.

- **Testing Protocols:**

Staff and students will be referred to their primary care physicians for diagnostic testing for COVID-19, in consultation with local health department officials, when needed. Symptomatic individuals, close contacts of COVID-19 suspected or confirmed individuals and individuals with recent international travel or travel within a state with widespread transmission of COVID-19 as designated through the New York State Travel Advisory will be encouraged to be tested by their primary care physician before such individuals return to school.

- **Testing Responsibility:**

The local health department will be the community organization primarily responsible for referring, sourcing, and administering testing.

- **Early Warning Signs:**

We will follow the metrics signs established by state and local health departments that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

## **Communication:**

Communication is essential to our school community. As of last year (2019-2020), we have begun using JupiterEd for our LMS. Administrators and teachers continuously communicate with students and parents via JupiterEd messaging system. We also publish essential announcements on our school's website – [www.SinaiUs.com](http://www.SinaiUs.com). Additionally, we have a WhatsApp group for parents and a Discord server for students. These communication channels enable constant two-way communication between school staff and the parent body. This will enable quick dissemination of information throughout our entire school community.

As mentioned above, the administrators – Rabbi Moshe Silber, Judaic Studies Principal and Mr. Feldstein, General Studies Principal - are the main point of contact for all matters including the identification of positive COVID-19 cases or any other safety concern. They will be responsible for subsequent communication. They will be responsible for answering questions from students, faculty, staff, and parents or legal guardians of students regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and the plan implemented by the school.

## **III. CONTAINMENT: RESPONSE AND PREVENTION**

### **School Health Offices:**

If an individual (student or staff) develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, he or she will be isolated from everyone and, in the case of a student, arrangements for the child to be taken home quickly will be made.

### **Isolation:**

Individuals who screen positive or those who become symptomatic while at school will be escorted downstairs and isolated and, in the case of a student, arrangements for the child to be taken home quickly will be made.

### **Collection:**

Parents or guardians will be contacted immediately and told to pick up their child. They will also be instructed that the child see a health care provider.

### **Infected Individuals:**

Individuals that have tested positive must recover and can no longer transmit COVID-19 will be allowed to return to in person learning. This will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

### **Exposed Individuals:**

Individuals who were exposed to the virus must complete quarantine before returning to in-person learning. This will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.



### Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection:

In all our policies and procedures, we will adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set forth by DOH and CDC.

### Contact Tracing:

We will support our local health department in contact tracing efforts.

### Communication:

We will share protocols and safety measures with all relevant parties. Sinai Academy employs a variety of communication channels to ensure that relevant information

## IV. CLOSURE AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

### Closure triggers

In consultation with state and our local health department, we will identify conditions that may warrant reducing in-person education or closing of the school, and we will plan for an orderly closure with them. Continuity of learning will be maintained as per above.

### Operational Activity:

Operations will be decreased and ceased via phases and milestones as the specific situation arises and determinations as to appropriate closures or partial closers will be done in consultation with the local health department. We may relocate classrooms within the building if such an option would be deemed safe or temporarily suspend in-person instruction as the situation demands based on advice of local health experts.

### Communication:

All changes and updates will be communicated to staff and parents and all other relevant individuals via all the above mentioned communication channels.

### Continuity of Learning:

As mentioned above, ensuring that learning will continue in a way that achieves highest outcome levels for our students throughout the coming school year is our top priority. Regardless of the medium of instruction or the circumstances, Sinai Academy and its staff will take all necessary steps to provide rigorous academic instruction and relevant support services. Our teachers are well prepared and our system is prepared for both fulltime in-person instruction or full time remote learning or any combination of these.