



## ***Eden II Programs Re-Opening Plan 2020-2021 School Year***

***853 School Location: The Genesis School  
600wbridge Road. East Meadow, NY 11554***

### **I. Plan Development**

This re-opening plan was developed through collaboration with families, staff, and other key stakeholders. Parents were surveyed several times in relation to school re-opening and staff were in daily contact with families since we closed our programs in March. In addition, weekly meetings of the Education Committee of the Interagency Council of NY provided invaluable information. Lastly, several members of Eden II/The Genesis School's leadership participated in the Council of Autism Service Providers Re-Opening Task Force. This task force met weekly and was made up of schools providing services to children with autism across the United States. Lastly, this plan relies on data available on the New York State COVID Dashboard with regard to hospital capacity, rates of COVID across the state and other key metrics.

### **II. Program Overview**

Eden II Programs/The Genesis School is currently offering a hybrid teaching model. This model consists of both remote and in-person instruction on a set cohorted A and B schedule. While this is the current model we have chosen, we are also prepared to go fully remote at any given moment, depending on the current health situation in the school and the CDC and NYS guidance.

The students have been divided into two groups, A and B. This results in about 50% of a class attending in person sessions at a time. Student schedules have been determined based upon parent preference (hybrid, or fully remote). Each student will continue to have staff assigned to them in order to facilitate both the in person and remote instruction. This staff will be the same person for all of the instruction. Staff will also be divided into A and B groups. Their schedule will be based upon the student that the staff are serving.

### **III. Communications**

Parents will be surveyed to determine their preferences for the September opening. Students will be provided the option of remote instruction only or a hybrid model of some remote instruction along with some direct face to face instruction. Parents will be allowed to change their minds about the type of instruction their child is receiving at any time.

Parents will receive weekly phone calls from a program administrator to ensure that there have not been any changes in travel or health of family members in the home. Parents have been instructed, however, to notify school immediately if a member of the family has been in contact with a person who has tested positive, tests positive themselves or demonstrates any COVID related symptoms.

Parents/Guardians are instructed to ask if they need any communication translated into another language or if they have any other accessibility needs.





Teachers will continue to be in regular contact with parents via different forms, including: e-mail, communication logs, remind app, phone calls, etc. Each student will continue to be assigned a staff member and that person is responsible for program implementation both in-person and remotely.

Parents and program administration (from executive level down) have been and will continue to participate in parent town hall meetings. These meetings are used to discuss any new guidance for updates from SED, what the plans are for the school program, and to discuss any issues or concerns that parents might have or that need to be discussed.

#### **IV. Training**

We trust that staff will do the utmost to keep themselves and their colleagues healthy and safe. We will keep staff informed of any changes as we enter new phases and/or update our agency practices and protocols. As previously stated, any questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of their supervisor, director, or the Covid Safety Officer.

- Staff are being trained on the following topics:
  - Required actions if possible COVID symptoms are observed in staff and students
  - PPE- donning and doffing
  - PPE- cleaning and disposal of non- disposable PPE
  - Hand Washing/ Sanitizing
  - Covid 19 facts, sign and symptoms
  - Covid 19 refresher of numbers, transmission, rates of transmission
  - Social Distancing
  - Arrival/ Dismissal Procedures
  - Fire Drill Procedures/ Lockdown drills
  - Traffic Flow in Hallways and on stairs
  - Bathroom Use Procedure
  - Refrigerator and Microwaves use Procedures
  - Student temperature check procedures
  - Classroom cleaning Procedures
  - Antecedent Based Strategies to reduce challenging behaviors
  - Reduction of Physical Interventions

#### **V. Mask-Wearing Requirement/Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Eden II/The Genesis School policies and practices on the provision of and use of masks and other PPE in the workplace are in line with guidelines provided by OSHA, the CDC, and the Department of Health. In fact, the steps The Genesis School is taking to keep staff safe often exceed the recommendations provided by those public agencies.

As previously stated, all employees must wear a face-covering (that covers the nose and mouth) when outside of their private office or workspace. Staff might see some administrative staff wearing cloth masks but since teaching staff are more likely to come into close contact with others, and given that some students might refuse to wear (or might not properly wear) face coverings, all staff working with students must, at a minimum, cover their mouth





and nose with a 3-ply surgical mask; these masks are generally considered to be more effective than many cloth face coverings at filtering out pathogens. Masks (and other types of PPE & necessary supplies) will be provided by their program management. If staff see that they are running out of masks, staff are to inform their supervisor immediately, providing sufficient notice whenever possible.

Enhanced PPE may be provided to staff as required, based on assessment of risk (e.g., face shield, gowns, etc.). If staff feel that a specific workplace condition increases the risk of transmission of COVID-19 or if their healthcare provider has informed any them of an increased risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19, they are to inform their program management and/or the HR Department and staff will make a determination on a case-by-case basis, consulting with the agency's Covid Safety Officer as necessary.

Note that given the challenges of mask-wearing for many of our students, masks are not mandatory for students but are highly encouraged. Program management will work with staff to implement programs/activities to teach students to wear masks/increase time spent wearing masks. Child-sized surgical masks are available if these are required. Students will be allowed to take Mask Wearing Breaks. Staff will be trained on signs of possible discomfort in students wearing masks who are unable to effectively communicate this discomfort. For students who tolerate wearing masks for an extended period of time, staff will give students mask breaks for 5-10 minutes. While engaged in a mask break, students must be socially distant from peers and staff.

## **VI. Arrival at Work/Pre-Work Screening/Signing In**

**Arriving at Work:** Staff must bring a face covering and hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol so that staff can cover their mouth and nose before entering the worksite and clean their hands before touching common surfaces. Face masks and sanitizer will also be provided to staff at the worksite - see the PPE section of this plan. Eden II/The Genesis School employees are required at all times to wear a face covering or mask (that properly covers the entire mouth and nose area) while in the building unless alone in their own office/work space or while eating lunch in a classroom in a socially distanced manner, in accordance with agency protocols. If staff do not have their own face covering for entering the facility on their first day back at work, staff will speak to their department director.

ONLY approved Genesis employees will be able to enter the facility, as only employees are trained in the COVID-19 prevention policies and protocols which will help keep us all safe and well. If employees see a school bus staff or staff they do not recognize trying to enter with staff as staff open the door with their key fob, they will be informed that they are NOT allowed to enter the building. If the individual attempting to enter does not comply, staff must inform someone in charge as quickly as possible.

**Signing In:** Staff will be signing in on a paper timesheet in their individual classroom

**Required Pre-Shift Health Screening Form:** Each day, prior to reporting to work staff must complete and submit a *Pre-Shift Employee Self Health / COVID-19 Risk Assessment Google Form* which will be provided by the program director via google forms(it is suggested staff bookmark it on their computer or phone as staff will need to complete this each day). This health assessment requires staff to take their temperature *before* entering the





worksite. If staff do not have a working thermometer at home, one will be made available at the entry of the building.

If staff answer YES to any of the questions on the form (i.e. if staff have any possible symptoms or any concerns about potential exposure to COVID19), staff are prohibited from entering any Genesis facility. Staff will contact their supervisor/program director immediately to report and discuss.

**NOTE: If Staff Start to Feel Sick at Work:** If staff start to feel sick while at work, it is essential that they stay as far away from others as possible and take precautions to prevent transmission. Staff will hand supervision of their assigned student to a colleague within their cohort and immediately inform a supervisor or someone else in charge at their worksite (via phone). Ensure that staff continue wearing their face mask. Their supervisor/other person in charge will help staff figure out a plan for leaving the facility in a way that eliminates risk to others. Employees who become ill while at work will be directed to leave the facility as soon as possible.

## **VII. Transportation**

The Genesis School does not use its own private transportation. It is provided by through the office of pupil transportation from each individual school district. Student arrival and dismissal procedures are documented below.

## **VIII. Student Arrival & Dismissal Protocols**

**Student Arrival:** Students will arrive in the back of the building in organized drop-off vehicle line - no parents can enter the facility. Staff must be outside (wearing a 3-ply surgical mask) at the designated time for the arrival of their assigned students. Students and staff will enter the building ensuring that there is more the 6 feet between them and another student.

**Student Dismissal:** Students will dismiss at in the back of the building. When staff receive a call that their assigned student's parent or bus is waiting outside the facility, staff will bring their assigned student downstairs and immediately hand them off to the parent, then return immediately to their classroom.

## **IX. Student Temperature Checks:**

- Student temperatures will be recorded as pass/ fail on a spreadsheet for record retention purposes.

**Upon Arrival:** Students must have their temperatures cleared before leaving the facility entrance and going to their classrooms. After staff retrieve their assigned student from the vehicle, staff will take their temperature. If the student has a fever of 100°F or higher, and they have been transported by a parent they will not exit the vehicle. If the student has arrived on the bus and has a fever they will be immediately taken to an isolation room. Isolation Protocols will be followed (see below).

**During the School Day:** If a child starts to show any signs or symptoms of COVID while in the classroom, staff are to immediately call the nurse and program director. The nurse will come to the classroom and take the student temperature. Staff are not to remove the student from the classroom. If the student has a heightened (100 degrees) or higher, staff will be directed to bring directly to the Isolation Room. Isolation Protocol will then be implemented. See Below.

## **X. Isolation Protocols if a Student has Symptoms**





**Symptoms Noted Upon Arrival:** If a student arrives at the facility with a heightened temperature or other obvious symptoms staff must not have them exit a parent’s vehicle. If the student has arrived by bus, staff are to take him/her to the isolation room – at Newbridge site these are the staff lounge and Mary McDonald’s office. The nurse will immediately call on the assigned *isolation room staff* to supervise the student (while the staff is wearing a full PPE ensemble). Parents will be immediately called to return to the front of the building to retrieve their child.

**Symptoms Noted During the School Day:** If a child starts to show any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. respiratory illness, fever, etc.) while in the classroom, staff must immediately call the nurse and program director. The nurse will go to the classroom and take the student’s temperature. If it is heightened (100 degrees or more), the nurse will notify the person at the front reception desk and the following announcement will be made over the phone/intercom system: *“Please keep all staff and students in their classrooms. Someone is being transported in the hallway. Do not use the hallway or stairs until told ‘All Clear.’”*

The nurse will then call the staff assigned as the isolation protocol staff to don PPE ensemble and wait with the student in the isolation room. The nurse will also call the family to pick up their child. Staff working in the sick student’s cohort will be provided with instructions for escorting remaining participants from the facility as their parents/caregivers arrive, and for leaving the area after care of participants has been safely transferred.

The isolation protocol employee, and staff who were working with the sick student, or who worked in the same room as the student, will be dismissed for the day, and recommendations will be provided for assessment and testing. Staff and parents/caregivers will receive additional guidance from program leadership with regard to expected actions and return to work/program.

After the individual leaves the isolation room/area, program management will arrange for the isolation room, classroom, and other specific areas of the facility that may be contaminated to be aired out), cleaned, and sanitized as required consistent with the CDC guidelines and will provide information and instructions to staff with regard to such precautions.

The program will report each case of a sick participant to the Covid Safety Officer /COVID-19 Committee. The local health department will be informed about the suspected case.

**XI. Tracing and Tracking of Covid exposure**

<b><i>Conclusion of Investigation</i></b>	<b><i>During Investigation</i></b>	<b><i>Post Investigation</i></b>
<b>At least 2 cases linked together in school</b>	Close Classroom	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; no school closure after investigation
<b>At least 2 cases linked together in school, different classroom</b>	Close School	Classroom of each case remains closed for 14 days. Additional school members are quarantined based on where exposure was in the school. Decision to close the school for 14 days will be made based on the specific facts of each investigation.
<b>At least 2 cases linked together by circumstances outside of</b>	Close School	School opens after investigation , classrooms remain closed for 14 days.





<b>school (ex. acquired infection by different setting and source)</b>		
<b>At least 2 cases not linked, but exposure confirmed for each outside of school setting</b>	Close School	School opens after investigation , classrooms remain closed for 14 days.
<b>Link unable to be determined</b>	Close School	Close school for 14 days

- Eden II Programs will be monitoring the New York State Covid Dashboard. If there is a steady increase of 2-3% in covid infections, over a two week period, The Genesis School will close the program for 14 days.

**XII. Students return to school procedures after suspected/ known Covid exposure**

In most cases of reported illness, students will be initially directed to stay home and keep management informed. The period of time students will be directed to engage in remote learning will depend on their symptom evolution or resolution. In cases where the illness does NOT appear consistent with COVID-19 (based on parent report, physician’s evaluation, or negative testing results), approval to return to school may occur within 7 days. In cases where student illness seems like it may be consistent with COVID-19, in most cases students will be asked to stay out of school for at least 11-14 days, and until they have been without fever for at least one week and their symptoms have greatly improved or resolved completely. Students who report continued coughing after 14 days, even if fever and other symptoms have resolved, will be required to stay out longer.

In all cases, if a student is not able to access in-person services due to Covid related illness or exposure he/she will have access to remote instruction.

**XIII. Visitors and Vendors**

Onsite parent training will not occur until further notice. Parents are able to request virtual observations on a scheduled basis with their child’s classroom teacher. This will ensure that social distancing protocol are being adhered to.

Essential visitors (which may include parents) will be permitted only at the discretion of program directors. Any visitors that are approved must follow the same infection control protocols as employees: e.g. self-health checks, use of face coverings, use of hand-sanitizer, and social distancing. The person who is meeting with the visitor is responsible for ensuring that the visitor adheres to our safety plan (including wearing a face covering at all times when in the facility).

Essential vendors (e.g. equipment repair engineers) may enter Eden II Programs/The Genesis School worksites by appointment only, and only with the approval of someone in charge. As with essential visitors, the employee responsible for arranging the vendor’s visit must ensure that the vendor adheres to our safety plan. All visitors into the building will be logged. Information including, name and telephone number will be tracked and stored.

**Food/Lunch Deliveries:** Food delivery workers are not permitted to enter any Eden II Programs work site; pick-ups must take place outside the facility. Reception staff will not be responsible for interacting with food





delivery workers or for ensuring payment of any employee's food delivery so if ordering food, please provide the food vendor with your personal cell phone number, pay in advance when possible.

## **XIV. Handwashing/Sanitizing & Respiratory Hygiene**

- Signage has been placed in every classroom, at the entrance of every floor, and in every bathroom regarding appropriate mask wearing, handwashing, and coughing etiquette.

**Staff:** Staff should never touch their face with unwashed/unsanitized hands. We recommend that staff thoroughly wash their hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible, but also realize that this may not always be possible. Hand sanitizer will therefore be available throughout their worksite and we recommend that staff sanitize often. Cover all surfaces of their hands with enough sanitizer to keep the hands wet for at least 20 seconds and keep rubbing their hands together until staff feel dry. Program management will have systems in place for monitoring and refilling hand sanitizer, but staff should let management know if hand sanitizer needs to be replenished.

With regard to respiratory hygiene, even though face masks will help prevent the spread of respiratory droplets, we recommend that whenever possible staff also try to distance themselves or at least turn their head away from others when sneezing/coughing. Note that an isolated few sneezes or coughs with no other symptoms would typically not be a concern, but coughing is a well-known symptom of COVID-19 and must be treated/reported as such.

**Students:** Staff are responsible for ensuring that students wash their hands multiple times a day –always upon arrival, every hour on the hour, before and after lunch, after bathroom use, and prior to dismissal. Staff must log student handwashing on the sign-off sheet provided by management.

## **XV. Promoting Social Distancing**

Non-essential physical contact with colleagues, such as hand-shaking or hugs, is prohibited in the workplace at this time. While we realize that staff will at times have to work within 6 feet of students, try to reduce time spent in close contact with students whenever possible and appropriate. This might require staff to take actions that are contrary to pre-COVID19 practices and directions. For example, whereas students may have been encouraged to eat meals sitting closely together around a table in the past, in COVID19-times the risk of crowding would outweigh the benefits of socializing together. Students should participate in activities in smaller groups than usual, and staff should avoid having students engage in activities that require physically prompting for extended periods. Program management will provide staff with further instructions and guidance in this area. Note that to help us adhere to CDC-recommended physical distancing, in facilities with central admin/administrative staff, those staff are being phased back to onsite work at reduced building occupancy rates. Additionally, most employees are currently restricted to working at only one worksite.

## **XVI. High Risk Staff and Students**

**Staff:** Staff that are in the high-risk category, whether it is age or other health conditions, will be assessed on a case by case basis by the HR department and the Covid Safety Officer in accordance with ADA and CDC guidelines.





Staff is encouraged to communicate with program management regarding all concerns prior to their designated scheduled work time. He/ she will be contacted about needed accommodations and decisions will be made based on all information available. Enhanced PPE (googles, gowns, face shields, etc) will be available upon request for high risk staff that are providing in person services.

**Students:** Program administration will communicate with families of students that would be in a high-risk category. Parents and administration will make decisions on a case by case basis regarding any accommodations that a particular child might need, while ensuring continuity of learning across remote and in- person setting. The Covid Safety Officer will also be informed of any decisions that are being made and will be available for consultation to program administration. Accommodations can be made to educational settings, including remote instruction or enhanced PPE (googles, gowns, face shields, etc) for high risk students that are receiving in person services.

## **XVII. Protocols for Addressing Known/Suspected COVID-19 Exposure in Employees**

The Genesis School will attempt to reduce the spread of COVID-19 through quick, conscientious, and stringent precautionary actions when employees or participants have a known COVID-19 risk (whether symptoms, history of exposure someone with COVID-19 /suspected COVID-19, or travel to a location with high levels of community transmission).

Given The Genesis School's obligations to protect its employees and participants and the risk of serious illness and death associated with COVID-19, The Genesis School will determine when employees are approved to return to work. The Genesis School will adhere to government issued directives (when/if made available) with regard to staff leaves/contacts/and returns to work as a minimal standard, and take steps we view as reasonable and appropriate given the changing medical understanding of COVID-19, and changing guidance of public officials.

In most cases of reported illness, employees will be initially directed to stay home and keep management informed. The period of time employees will be directed to stay out of work will depend on their symptom evolution or resolution. In cases where the illness does NOT appear consistent with COVID-19 (based on employee report, physician's evaluation, or negative testing results), approval to return to work may occur within 7 days. In cases where employee illness seems like it may be consistent with COVID-19, in most cases employees will be asked to stay out of work for at least 11-14 days, and until staff have been without fever for at least one week and their symptoms have greatly improved or resolved completely. Employees who report continued coughing after 14 days, even if fever and other symptoms have resolved, will be required to stay out longer. In some cases, employees who can work remotely and have COVID-19 but are feeling better and able to work might be permitted to return to remote work after a shorter absence given the lack of transmission risks.

With regard to employee travel, employees must inform their directors of any travel plans outside of the tri-state area (NY, NJ, and CT), and directors must report any known travel plans of employees in their site using the special google form for further review. All travel requests will be reviewed by the COVID-19 Committee and specific precautions will be directed. In most cases, employees who travel to locations where there is current community spread will be required to have two weeks where staff self-isolate at home to ensure staff are symptomfree before being approved to return to any Eden II worksite.





## **XVIII. Facility Cleaning & Sanitizing**

Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing will take place at the facility. The Facilities Department will ensure that Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectant is used and the date, time, and scope of cleaning/sanitization will be documented in a log kept at the site.

The after-hours cleaning company will keep a cleaning log of areas that have been cleaned. The log will be located across from the front entrance on the window sill. Upon confirmed Covid exposure a deep cleaning of the building will occur.

Commonly touched surfaces and objects in the work environment will be carefully cleaned and sanitized on an enhanced basis, but we recommend that each time staff touch a common surface (e.g. countertop, doorknob, light-switch), staff avoid touching their face, then wash their hands with soap and running water and/or use hand sanitizer.

Staff at The Genesis School are responsible for the cleaning of the commonly touched surfaces in their classrooms at least three times per day: mid-day, after lunch, and upon dismissal of all students. All flat surfaces, chairs, door knobs, light switches, refrigerators, microwaves, etc. must be cleaned and disinfected with cleaner provided by management prior to leaving the building for the day. Staff must log the cleaning in the provided log sheet.

## **XIX. Use & Cleaning of Essential Shared Equipment & Student Supplies**

While sharing of equipment is discouraged, certain pieces of equipment will have to be shared, e.g. copy machines and classroom appliances such as refrigerators and microwaves. Equipment will be sanitized at least once daily but since COVID19 (and other pathogens) can be easily transmitted to surfaces, when using common touchpoints, it is recommended that staff use a stylus pen or pencil with eraser or a clean tissue instead of touching the device. Always use hand sanitizer to thoroughly clean hands after using shared equipment.

Classroom IT equipment (iPad, computers, smartboards) will be cleaned using alcohol-based sanitizing wipes. Staff are permitted to only use appliances that are in their own assigned classrooms. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their lunch in brown paper bags. Classroom refrigerators must be cleaned at the end of each day and microwaves must be cleaned after every use, and also at the end of the day. Staff must always wear clean vinyl/nitrile gloves when handling students' food.

Students are not permitted to share any materials with other students in the classroom.

## **XX. Use of Common Areas:**

**Restrictions on Common Areas:** During our agency's initial reopening phases, use of common congregating areas such as the staff lounge, or the cafeteria, or the café is not permitted. Staff will therefore have to eat lunch in the classrooms or outside of the facility. Employees may leave the building during their lunch break or for another short break outside but must adhere to infection control protocols when returning to the worksite (e.g. wear a face mask and sanitize hands upon re-entry).





## **XXI. Stairs, and Foot Traffic**

All staff and student must follow stairway markings when using stairways. Enter hallways and rooms with caution. As stated previously, staff must always wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose. Staff will be reminded of the fact that some colleagues might be in the COVID-19 high-risk category and both extremely anxious about being around others, and at heightened risk of very serious illness if affected by COVID-19.

## **XXII. Safety Drills**

Safety drills will be conducted in accordance with NYSED regulations.

**Fire Drills:** The Genesis School will conduct fire drills on a room by room basis. Classrooms are assigned specific evacuation stairwells, as well as, specific evacuation points in the parking lot allowing for social distancing.

**Lock Down Drills:** The Genesis School will continue to conduct 4 lock down drills per year. Students and staff will be required to stay in their designated classrooms during the lock down.

## **XXIII. Social Emotional Learning**

Training will be provided on social emotional learning that will explain the signs and symptoms and changes in the behavior of our students that teaching staff should be looking out for when school reopens in September.

Counseling will be provided to students as per the IEP and any student issues related to COVID-19 and changes to routines will be addressed in sessions. IEP goals will be adapted as needed. Consultation will be provided to teachers to assess any at-risk students who may need further support in their mental well-being during this time. The school counselor will schedule weekly check-ins with each teacher for the month of September to discuss how the students are adjusting to being back in school.

## **XXIV. Teaching and Learning**

Student's Individualized Educational Plans (IEP)s will be followed and instruction will be aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards whether programming is hybrid or remote. All instruction will be developed so that whether delivered in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model there are clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students. Information will be shared with Committees on Special Education on an as needed basis. The Genesis School will continue to ensure access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique related needs of students. Adaptive Physical Education will continue to be provided whether students attend in a hybrid model or are fully remote. Speech and Language Therapy and Counseling services will continue whether students attend in a hybrid model or are fully remote.

## **XXV. Certification**

Eden II Programs/The Genesis School will attempt to employ teachers that hold valid and appropriate certificates for their teaching assignments. In areas where the class does not have a fully certified teacher, Eden II Programs/The Genesis School will continue to actively recruit to fill the position.

