

Hopeful Journeys has prepared and submitted a fall reopening plan, as required, to the Massachusetts Department of Education and Secondary Education (DESE). This plan outlines how Hopeful Journeys will approach three distinct learning models for school this Fall. This plan incorporates parent/guardian feedback via responses to surveys and other methods of communication.

Hopeful Journeys conducted a building and classroom feasibility analysis using DESE's Initial Reopening Guidance recommendations. This analysis indicated that there are no substantial compliance challenges across the school for in-person instruction, as our school building provides ample space in order to maintain recommended distance guidelines between students, our supply of PPE is well monitored and sufficient for the school year, and cleaning and sanitizing protocols have already been successfully implemented in our existing summer programming.

Following the outlined requirements assigned by DESE, Hopeful Journeys has prepared the following framework for the three reopening plans. It should be noted that these plans will continue to be more fully developed to ensure that all key areas of consideration and concern regarding school learning and safety are more fully detailed. Parents/guardians will receive a comprehensive manual in advance of the start of fall services, beginning on September 8th, 2020.

## **Plan Recommendation**

Hopeful Journeys intends for the predominant model for instruction in the fall to be full in-person instruction as soon as it is deemed safest to implement. Currently, we are conducting four hours of in-person instruction for our summer services. For fall, the duration of the day will be increased, initially by one hour effective September 8th, with the goal of increasing to a full six hour day at some point in October. Until we are able to increase to the full day, we will implement a hybrid model, where five hours of direct in-person instruction will occur on-site, with the remaining hour being conducted remotely. This hour of remote learning allows Hopeful Journeys to ensure a very high standard of daily building cleanliness, for lunch for staff and students to remain at home (eliminating potential high exposure due to masks not being worn) and for common spaces, such as the playground, art rooms, cafeteria, staff break rooms and the gym to remain closed to keep exposure risks lower.

It is our goal to ensure that in-person services can continue for as long as possible throughout the COVID pandemic, and feel the highest level of success with this objective can only occur if we continue with our current safety and cleanliness standards at this time. Hopeful Journeys has been and will continue to diligently monitor the health metrics in Massachusetts with regards to trends of COVID cases. If cases continue on a downward trend, we intend to increase to a full day of instruction sometime in October. Hopeful Journeys staff have already participated in extensive protocol and safety training for our summer reopening, and we will continue to refresh and supplement this training with additional fall guidance. A phased transition to a full in-person learning model at all levels will begin as soon as circumstances permit. It is hoped and intended that full in-person services for all students will be in place as soon as possible in the fall.

*For Fall 2020, Hopeful Journeys has developed 3 different models of learning for students:*

- *Full 6 hour days on-site*
- *Hybrid - 5 hours per day on-site; remaining 1 hour remote*
- *Fully remote*

*Within each type of learning, students will continue to have full access to all IEP objectives and programming, modified for their specific learning type, in collaboration with their family.*

## **Arrival and Departure**

- Both students and teachers will arrive and depart at staggered times to avoid overcrowding and ensure social distancing when entering the building
- Additionally, social distancing markers are utilized throughout the parking lot as a prompt for students and teachers
- Purell hand sanitizers are stationed at the entrance to ensure students and teachers complete proper hand sanitizing prior to entering the building
- Parents will complete and return health assessments prior to bringing their child to school each day
- All staff members will complete health assessments daily with their supervisor prior to entering the building

## **Transportation**

Student transportation to Hopeful Journeys is provided by either the student's sending school district or the parent. Hopeful Journeys maintains and regularly updates contact information for all transportation providers as well as district contacts for transportation issues. In the event of any safety protocol concerns with regards to transportation, a member of Hopeful Journeys administration team will promptly contact and collaborate with the sending school district with regards to the transportation issue. For students transported by their parent/guardian, the daily health assessment and visual inspection will be conducted with the parent prior to the student exiting the vehicle. For students arriving via school district provided transportation, parents/guardians will be responsible for completing the daily health assessment form for their student prior to the student's assigned arrival time. This form will be sent as a daily form for completion via email. This form must be received in advance of student arrival. Failure to send prior to arrival will result in students not being able to enter the building. If any symptoms are checked as 'yes' or any exposure is noted, the parent/guardian should not place their child onto transportation to come to school.

- The staff conducting the screening will make a visual inspection of each student for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. Staff member will confirm that the student is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath. In the event a student

is experiencing shortness of breath or extreme difficulty breathing, emergency medical services will be called immediately.

- All staff, parents, children, and any individuals seeking entry into the program space must self-screen at home, prior to coming to the program for the day.
- Self-screening shall include checking for symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal symptoms, new loss of taste/smell, muscle aches, or any other symptoms that feel like a cold. Anyone with a fever of 100.0°F or above or any other signs of illness must not be permitted to enter the program.
- Parents and staff must sign written attestations daily regarding any household contacts with COVID-19, symptoms (e.g., fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, or diarrhea), or if they have given children medicine to lower a fever. Student and staff daily attestation forms will be filed in individual student or employee records.
- Individuals who decline to complete the screening will not be permitted to enter the program space.

Staff will conduct and record the results of a visual inspection of a student at various points throughout the school day, including arrival, at any time there is a change in the staff assigned to a student, and prior to departure. If the visual assessment indicates any signs of potential symptoms, the school nurse will be contacted immediately to conduct a more thorough assessment, including a temperature check. Once the nurse conducts the assessment, she will determine next steps (i.e. isolation room, contacting parent/guardian for pick-up).

## **Full Day On-site**

- Student will have access to programming for all IEP objectives
  - Skills that involve the bathroom, handling food, or other skills that put students and teachers at high risk for potential transmission of COVID-19 will be modified to be completed on-site with a safer alternative or consultation will be provided to support the family targeting these skills in the home environment.
  - Community based skills (i.e. vocational jobs, etc.) will be targeted following the student demonstrating the prerequisite skill of mask tolerance for the length of their time in the community.
- Parent communication will continue to occur on at least a weekly basis

In this model, our school building will be appropriately modified to address health and safety requirements issued by DESE. Modifications include, but are not limited to: utilization of areas not commonly used for classroom spaces to allow for appropriate social distancing between students, utilization of floor markers outlining 6 feet of distance in hallways and common areas, use of partitions to separate student spaces and ensure social distancing, signage regarding social distancing, hand washing, toileting and cleaning procedures, and closure of rooms and common areas that do not allow for appropriate social distancing between students. Our 40,000 square foot building has an approved occupancy of 881 persons, which is well above our total student enrollment of 111 and staffing

population of approximately 150. We have ample space that can be modified accordingly to ensure appropriate social distancing and safety protocols can be followed. Thoughtful planning regarding student desk configuration has been and will continue to occur prior to student attendance. Our building spacing allows for desks to be configured in a fashion so that students can maintain appropriate distancing and not face one another, with dividers separating all student work spaces. Students will continue to be staffed 1:1 per our licensing guidelines. Scheduling of students and teachers will be limited to rotation of staff every 2 hours only, with a maximum of 3 staff working with each student in any given day. Students will be grouped within cohorts and stay with their cohort during any activities scheduled outside of their classroom, such as lunch or outdoor playground time. We will ensure all goals within the student's IEP are worked on/modified as needed. Parents/guardians of students will be given discretion to determine if they would like to return for full in-person services, a hybrid model, or full remote instruction. Their decision regarding preferred method of services can be changed at any time.

## **Hybrid Instructional Model**

- Students will have access to programming for all IEP objectives
- Students will participate in a 5 hour in-person school day
- Students will transition home after a 5 hour day and continue with remote instruction for the remaining hour based on their family dynamics and ability to participate
- Students will be encouraged to participate in group activities remotely as such social interaction is limited due to social distancing guidelines associated with COVID-19
- For students who may benefit from increased 1:1 instruction, optional 1:1 remote sessions in place of remote group instruction will also be offered following a shortened in-person day
- Parent communication will continue to occur on at least a weekly basis
- Data will continue to be collected and analyzed during all in-person and remote sessions to ensure effective progress

In this model, students will alternate between in-person learning and remote learning. All health and safety protocols outlined in the in-person model will be adhered to during the time students are receiving in-person instruction. Hopeful Journeys hybrid plan will consist of 5 hours of in-person instruction daily, with the remaining hour of instructional time being conducted remotely. This model could also be structured to allow students to attend in-person for full days on selected days of the week, and remotely for full days other days of the week or it could involve daily attendance in person at a reduced number of hours, with the remaining hours of the school day occurring remotely depending upon parent request and preference. As all of our students are staffed 1:1, the remote portion of instruction can continue to be staffed 1:1, with all instruction and programming being individualized per student IEP goals. There will be opportunities for group learning and social interaction per IEP goals and parent preference. All students will have the ability to receive a full day (6 hours) or direct instruction with a 1:1 teacher, either in-person, remotely, or a combination of both. All programming and

instruction will be fully individualized to each student, with no blanket plan per student group/grade level.

## **Full Remote Instructional Model**

- Students will have access to programming for all IEP objectives
- Each student will have an individualized remote work plan for each week including:
  - Direct video time with 1:1 teachers and in a group setting
  - A structured time for each IEP objective to be completed
  - Behavior support plan including reinforcement for participating in learning programs, and management of challenging behavior to ensure success during remote sessions
  - All teachers and specialists will provide services to the student remotely as outlined in their IEP service delivery
  - A schedule for parent communication to work with families on troubleshooting challenging situations, ensuring collaboration on all instructional programs
  - Documentation regarding communication with the parent and their acceptance or modification of the individualized remote work plan
  - Documentation regarding materials and resources provided to families to ensure the successful implementation of IEP objectives remotely
  - Each plan is updated weekly based in order to continuously facilitate student progress
  - Each plan is reviewed by a member of school administration prior to being reviewed with the family
  - Following parent discussion, each plan can be modified to best meet the needs of the student and consideration of other family dynamics
- In addition to an individualized remote work plans, each student will have documented:
  - Number of IEP programs completed on a daily basis
  - Progress data for each IEP objective
  - Engagement data to support student success with remote learning as a means of education
- Parent communication will occur on a weekly basis to review the individualized work plan, assess progress with objectives via remote instruction and to make modifications to the work plan as needed based on parent feedback
  - Parents are encouraged to provide feedback regarding their child's success with remote learning, as well as the ease of implementation of remote learning sessions
  - Parent communication will occur more frequently as needed
  - All parent communication will be documented and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure parents are being provided with the most up to date information to help them make an informed decision regarding their child's learning needs
- Each student will have access to prepared materials to support their remote learning instruction delivered via email, mail, or in person to the home (with appropriate social distancing)

- Each student will have homework assigned on a daily basis to ensure skills can continue to be promoted outside of remote sessions
- For students that do not participate in remote video instruction, individualized consultation will be provided by their school team

In this model, students would receive direct 1:1 instruction remotely via learning platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom. Each student would have their own individualized remote learning plan which would outline IEP goals and benchmarks being worked on, an hourly schedule outlining lessons and programming, and the 1:1 teacher(s) assigned to work with the students throughout the day. Attendance for each remote session will be recorded and tracked via data collection on each individual program worked on with the student. Lessons will be individualized based on the student and will be presented as PowerPoint lessons, electronic materials via Google Classroom, or hard copy materials provided in advance. If this model is implemented, outlined and approved structured learning time requirements will be followed and adhered to. All remote academic work will be aligned to state standards and agreed upon IEP goals and benchmarks. Progress via remote learning will continue to be documented extensively per quarterly progress notes outlining progress made within each goal area, with supporting data, narratives, and graphs. Parent/guardian communication will occur within a phone call/virtual meeting on a minimum of a weekly basis, with opportunities for more frequent communication based on parent preference. The student's supervising behavior clinician and special education teacher will maintain this communication with parents, including regular check-ins and updates via email in addition to a weekly call/virtual meeting. Administration will ensure overall communication occurs with parents/guardians via regular updates via email, social media, and any other parent requested method of communication. All forms of communication will be translated for limited English proficient parents and guardians (and students as applicable), including providing interpretation services. While we intend for our predominant model for fall to be in-person or hybrid, Hopeful Journeys will continue to provide robust remote learning for families that choose this option for their children or when a student must stay home for quarantine or isolation.

## **Remote Group Instruction**

### *Afternoon Groups:*

The following groups are offered daily to Hopeful Journeys' students and families: Lunch Social and Speech Group, Art/Music Group, Academic Group, Gym Group. All groups are planned by specialists specific to the group area. Observations of groups are conducted daily by Education Managers, Licensed Special Education Teachers, BCBA's and the Occupational Therapist to ensure all students are able to access the curriculum and activities, that students are engaged in the material and are displaying appropriate group behavior; and that overall, we are providing a high quality group experience for students. Feedback is provided daily so that groups can continue to improve and to ensure that students having a more challenging time are supported by their team in future groups.

### Lunch Social and Speech Group:

Lunch and Social Group is offered for 1 hour daily Monday-Friday from 12:30-1:30 via GoogleMeet. This group is planned and run by Hopeful Journeys' Speech and Language Pathologists. Group Roles (staff assigned to plan group activities) also support the lesson plan development of these groups with guidance from the SLP's. The focus of this group is to generalize student IEP goals surrounding conversation skills and speech and communication targets to a group format. Students are encouraged to use their primary mode of communication to engage with their peers and work on a group lesson together. Lessons have included categorization, prepositions and following directions. During these groups, engagement data is recorded using whole interval recording. Data is collected for every 5-minute interval.

### Art/Music:

Art group is offered for 30 minutes on Monday and Wednesday from 1:30-2:00 and Music is offered on Friday from 1:30-2:00 via GoogleMeet. This group is planned and run by Hopeful Journeys' Art Teacher and is overseen by the Occupational Therapist. The Art Teacher plans all group activities. The focus of this group is to generalize student IEP goals surrounding fine motor skills and communication skills to a group format. Students are encouraged to use their primary mode of communication to engage with their peers and work on a group lesson together. Art lessons have included closed-ended art projects from art kits where they can practice skills such as cutting, coloring, and pasting. Students have made animal magnets and animal sun catchers. Music lessons have included dances from GoNoodle and music movement games. During these groups, engagement data is recorded using whole interval recording. Data is collected for every 5-minute interval.

### Academics:

This is offered for 30 minutes on Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30-2:00 via GoogleMeet. Academic Group is planned and run by Hopeful Journeys' Special Education Teachers. The Special Education Teacher develops all lessons. The focus of this group is to generalize student IEP goals surrounding academics and communication to the group format. Students are encouraged to use their primary mode of communication to engage with their peers and work on a group lesson together. Academic lessons have included WH questions based on stories read aloud, types of animals and facts about them, the five senses, colors and a mystery item game where students guess an object based on attributes. During these groups, engagement data is recorded using whole interval recording. Data is collected for every 5-minute interval.

### Gym:

This group is run daily Monday-Friday from 2:00-2:30 via GoogleMeet. Gym is planned and run by Hopeful Journeys' APE Role under the supervision of the Occupational Therapist. The APE role develops all lesson plans. The focus of this group is to generalize student IEP goals surrounding gross motor skills and communication to a group format. Students are encouraged to use their primary mode of communication to engage with their peers and work on a group lesson together. Gym lessons have included movement games, exercises, imitation of actions with sport objects such as a ball and dances.

During these groups, engagement data is recorded using whole interval recording. Data is collected for every 5-minute interval.

## **Student Learning Time**

For all models of instruction, Hopeful Journeys will ensure that all students have access to 6 hours of structured learning time per current DESE approval. In the full in-person model, all 6 of these hours will occur on-site. In the hybrid model, 5 of these hours will occur on-site, with the remaining hour being conducted remotely. Should health metrics dictate that a full remote instructional model is required, 6 hours of remote instruction will be developed and individualized for each student. For all instructional time, both in person and remote, students will be engaged in instruction, learning and assessments, within the curriculum of core subjects. Any independent study or directed study will be verified by Hopeful Journeys as structured learning time.

## **High Needs Students Overview**

Support regarding ELs is listed above in reopening plan details. To reiterate, translation services, including interpretation services will be provided to all parents/guardians and ELs. All communication to parents/guardians will be translated in their primary language. With regards to economically disadvantaged students, Hopeful Journeys will work closely with the student's sending public school district to collaborate on access to meals as well as technology as needed. Hopeful Journeys will ensure any economically disadvantaged students have access to devices (lpads, laptops) and internet services in order to access remote instruction. Students with disabilities (our entire student population) will continue to be supported in all models via direct 1:1 instruction and implementation of programming that reflects instruction in all IEP goal areas.

## **Student Mask Usage**

While many students within our served population have a history of difficulty wearing a variety of critical clothing items, including shoes, boots, jackets, gloves, etc, mask usage provides potentially similar challenges for all ages and levels. With the current state of Covid-19 and the social significance of wearing masks across public settings, it is critical to provide our students with the skills needed to successfully wear a mask to the greatest degree possible. Successful mask usage for our students aligns with the CDC's definition which includes that a mask must be worn over the nose and mouth, secured under the chin, and fit snugly against the sides of the face. The ability of our students to successfully wear a mask allows for greater access to their social environment and the community at large. Within our student population, a variety of skill levels related to successful mask usage have been observed, which include; fully developed repertoire with tolerance, fully developed repertoire without tolerance, and an emerging repertoire. As such, each student has programming related to successful mask usage that is in development, and falls under the category of either skill acquisition, tolerance, or maintenance.



## **Teaching Procedures:**

For students to fall within a skill acquisition track of instruction, they do not currently wear a mask for any duration, move away from and/or engage in challenging behavior when presented with a mask, and/or cannot identify a mask either receptively or expressively. For these students, a formal skill acquisition program is developed that breaks down the steps of wearing a mask into smaller components that can be taught and chained together. Pre-teaching may also be required in order to ensure the student can identify a mask independently, and have some way of meaningfully relating wearing a mask to its importance. Based on student performance during acquisition, they will either require ongoing support within maintenance or tolerance programming. Tolerance programming is implemented when a student has displayed the skills from acquisition, but are not able to leave a mask applied for any socially significant duration of time. In these cases, programming is developed and implemented that will target increases in consecutive periods of time (i.e. - minutes, hours, etc) successfully wearing a mask. Several factors are taken into account when developing tolerance programs, which include; developing attainable goals that align with each student's most likely usage patterns within their home and community environments, the potential for challenging behavior to occur when presented a mask to wear for extended durations, and the need to associate wearing a mask with more positive experiences as opposed to it being seen as an unpleasant situation. For example, it may be appropriate to target wearing a mask for 60 consecutive minutes in one case, but appropriate to target wearing a mask for a shorter duration that would simulate the timing of walking into a dental office, briefly sitting in the waiting room, and finally entering the cleaning room where it can be removed.

For students that have successfully displayed acquisition and tolerance related to wearing a mask, programming focuses on maintenance, which is considered as continuing to wear a mask on a daily basis. Continued instruction in the area of why wearing a mask is important as well as high levels of reinforcement and social praise for continuing to reliably wear a mask is implemented on an ongoing basis.

If a student is not progressing through the steps of mask acquisition or tolerance, alternative forms of protective equipment are available, including hats with built in face shields, or modified straps that can help hold a mask more comfortably around the back of the head, etc. These alternatives may provide a more comfortable solution for any students that are having a particularly hard time dealing with any points of discomfort that a mask may cause.

## **Method of Instruction:**

Mask programs are implemented utilizing individualized curriculum developed by the students educational team, including the special education teacher, behavior specialist (BCBA), and occupational therapist. In combination, structured programming is presented daily to each student based on their current level of need. Acquisition, tolerance, and maintenance are targeted within an educational team format to ensure each student is, to the greatest extent possible, able to independently apply and keep on a mask, which requires expertise from an interdisciplinary team in developing effective programming (i.e. a special education can target curriculum, the BCBA targets motivation and reinforcement, and occupation therapist ensures proper grasp/coordination/placement, etc.) Students will not be physically

guided to apply and/or keep on a mask at any time, and will only receive light physical prompting if needed to make minor adjustments to a mask, ensuring all safety guidelines are followed regarding cleaning, disinfecting, and PPE usage if any physical assistance is required. In conjunction with teaching programs, mask usage and reinforcement procedures will also be outlined within student behavior plans to ensure there are significant opportunities to receive positive attention, and that consistent student-specific expectations are clearly communicated to all staff supporting each student. Overall, the focus of instruction is on shaping and chaining the skill using positive reinforcement.

### **Tracking Progress:**

All mask programs implemented will have corresponding data collection to ensure effective progress and/or maintenance of skills. In acquisition and tolerance programming, data collection will focus on performances related to those specific programs, while maintenance data will focus more on general mask usage across the entire school day. Data will also be collected on students arriving and departing wearing masks in an effort to support mask usage in vehicles. Data on mask usage will be reviewed by teams on a regular basis as any other teaching procedure and modifications made to ensure the highest level of success possible is achieved.

### **Staff Mask and Additional PPE Usage**

It is required that all staff wear a mask upon entry to the parking lot daily and at all times within the building. Hopeful Journeys will provide all staff who work directly with students a new KN95 mask to wear on a daily basis. In addition to the KN95 mask, staff will also be provided with safety glasses to wear at all times when working with students. In addition to KN95 masks and safety glasses, Hopeful Journeys has procured and will maintain an ample supply of additional PPE to wear during activities which lend to increased exposure such as toileting, restraint procedures, and eating. This PPE includes: gloves, face shields, medical gowns to cover clothing, and disposable masks. Staff have received training by our school nurse as well as DPH provided trainings on the proper donning and doffing of PPE as well as the PPE required to be worn in scenarios listed above. Utilization and proper procedures regarding PPE are regularly monitored by supervisory staff and training is refreshed on a regular basis.