

## **Harlem Village Academies Reopening Plan for New York State Department of Health (“NYSDOH”)**

### **1: Summary**

Harlem Village Academies values the safety and security of our students, families and staff. Therefore, we will begin our school year on a fully remote basis until October 16<sup>th</sup>. During this time, we will assess the overall situation in New York City including infection rates, family and staff feedback and the New York Metropolitan Area transportation system. We will also communicate and observe the actions and experiences of fellow educational institutions that must determine if it is appropriate to transition to a hybrid environment. During the remote learning period, we will implement procedures to comply with NYSDOH requirements and to train staff and students on COVID-19 safety procedures, prior to returning to our physical buildings.

### **2: Reopening Operations, Monitoring, Containment & Closure**

#### **2a. Reopening Operations for In-Person Instruction**

- **Capacity**

Three of our schools (East Elementary, East Middle and West Middle) are in NYC Department of Education (“DOE”) buildings. The number of people allowed in each classroom in accordance with social distancing best practices has been calculated by the DOE Facilities group, based on 50 square feet allowable for each occupant. HVA School Operations Directors have reviewed the DOE calculations for accuracy.

Three of our schools (West Lower Elementary, West Upper Elementary and HVA High School) are in private facilities, all of which are located on 124<sup>th</sup> Street in Harlem and serviced by Hensel Phelps (“HP”); third-party Facilities Management Company. HVA applied the DOE 50 square-foot-per-person allowance to HP measurements of the rooms in these buildings to determine the number of people permitted in each room.

- **Social Distancing**

Our three schools in DOE buildings will be subject to the protocols set by the DOE, which have yet to be formally released. We expect these protocols to be similar to the procedures we set in each of our schools located in private facilities, including the following:

- Staggered arrival and/or dismissal times
- Visual aids to illustrate traffic flow and appropriate spacing to support social distancing
- Modification of classes where students are likely to be in very close contact
- Specialist teachers will travel to classrooms versus rotating all kids through a shared space
- Lunch and breakfast delivered directly to classrooms
- Rearrange desks and common seating spaces to maximize the space between students
- Turn desks to face in the same direction
- Cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings

7 /31 /20

- Installation of polycarbonate plastic barriers to protect security and HVA staff seated at the entrance of each school and in other locations such as the main office
- One-way stairways, either Up or Down, marked with appropriate signage
- Signage to remind staff, students and visitors to wear face masks and social distance

- **PPE and Face Coverings**

Face coverings that meet CDC guidelines are required for all staff, students, facilities personnel and visitors entering any HVA school. HVA will provide reusable and/or disposable masks for staff and students or staff and students may wear their own masks that meet CDC guidelines. HVA will also have ample supply of masks, gloves and other PPE supplies as recommended by the NYDOH.

To accommodate individuals who are not able to medically tolerate a mask, HVA will provide a remote learning option to these families. Students will receive periodic face mask breaks while maintaining social distance.

- **Operational Activity**

Rather than having all students return to school at once, HVA is considering a hybrid approach to learning that combines face-to-face and online instruction during our second phase of the school year. All students and staff will be fully remote during our initial phase, until October 16<sup>th</sup>. During phase two, we're considering the possibility of having students attend school in person two days a week and learn online three days a week. For instance, half the students in each class could attend on Mondays and Wednesdays, and the other half could attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Fridays, we would have everyone working and learning from home while custodial staff deep cleans the entire building.

Visitors will be discouraged and any necessary visitor (e.g. repairman or computer support) will be subject to the same face mask and other requirements as HVA staff.

Lunch will be served in classrooms which will allow cafeteria space to be re-purposed for educational purposes. Gymnasiums may also be re-purposed.

Remote learning will be available to any student who is not able to return to an in-person educational environment, or who is uncomfortable doing so.

All field trips are cancelled until we believe it is safe for our students to travel.

- **Restart Operations**

- Our private buildings have been maintained since we closed in March. HP staff have conducted regular building walkthroughs and reviews of all building systems which were partially shutdown. All buildings have and will continue to undergo air and water testing. They have all undergone deep cleaning, which will be updated, as necessary.
- We will increase the frequency of cleaning the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) ductwork and will inspect and replace all filters on an accelerated cadence. In addition, we have engaged our HVAC engineers to increase fresh airflow within our facilities. They have also installed additional air purification capabilities within our system. We are implementing overall indoor air

7 /31 /20

quality testing and measurement protocols to test for particulate matter (PM2.5), moisture, formaldehyde concentration (HCHO), and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs).

- **Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection**

Our custodial protocols are designed to meet or exceed the guidelines for building sanitation and disinfecting as recommended by the relevant authorities in New York City, e.g., Centers for Disease Control, NYS Department of Health, which provide guidance for schools and workplaces.

- Overnight and between sessions, high-touch surfaces will be wiped down. We will wipe down all regularly used hard surfaces, such as desk and table-tops, learning materials, e.g., toys and supplies. Other high-touch points, such as light switches, door handles, handrails and bannisters, restroom fixtures will be sanitized with disinfecting / cleaning agents that are certified as disinfectants for coronavirus. All floors will be mopped with disinfectant cleaners and all carpets will be vacuumed. We will use electrostatic disinfectant sprayers as an additional effort to kill viruses as appropriate.
- During school hours, we will monitor hallways, restrooms, and common areas and disinfect high-touch areas with increased frequency. We will also respond to any emergency spills or bodily fluids. All nap materials will be disinfected after each use.
- Touchless hand sanitizer stations will be positioned around the school in strategic and high-traffic locations (e.g., at entryways, elevator lobbies, commons, cafeteria, and near stairwells) and individual pump dispensers will be available in all classrooms.
- Paper towels in restrooms to operate any sinks, urinals, or toilets that are not configured as “touchless.” Air dryers will be disabled.

- **Extracurriculars**

We do not anticipate any interscholastic sports or assemblies being planned. Any smaller groups that might get together will adhere to social distancing protocols.

- **Before and After Care**

We currently have no plans for before or after care services. We will be considering options during the period that we are in remote learning.

- **Vulnerable Populations**

Remote learning will be available to any student who is not able to return to an in-person educational environment, or who is uncomfortable doing so. A process will be available to receive and assess staff member accommodation requests. The process for accommodation will follow the same evaluation protocol as for someone who requests and accommodation under the American with Disabilities Act (“ADA”).

- **Transportation**

HVA schools participate in the DOE MetroCard program. Some students have busing mandates per their IEP and those students are bussed to HVA. Those services are provided by the DOE and we expect our students to comply with all DOE-established protocols, if DOE bus transportation is available.

7 /31 /20

- **Food Services**

HVA schools utilize DOE's School Food Services, which has not released any information on its COVID-19 procedures. We believe that meals will be pre-packaged for easy distribution to students. Cafeterias will be closed, and students will receive pre-packaged meals in their classrooms. Sharing food will be prohibited, and students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to eating. Teachers and/or School Aides will utilize PPE supplies as they distribute food and disinfect all surface areas. Once students complete their meal, the Teacher and/or School Aide, will utilize a new set of PPE supplies to disinfect and dispose of the trash. In our private facilities, HP will provide support to remove trash from classrooms after meals.

- **Mental Health, Behavioral, and, Emotional Support Services & Programs**

The Dean and the Social Workers at each school will be the point persons to identify any students who require support on their return to the physical school. All Deans and Social Workers are receiving training from our Senior Director of Student and Family Affairs to ensure they are prepared to lead this process.

Staff members have access to assistance from our medical insurer as well as an Employee Assistance Program from a second insurer. In addition, our Human Resources staff will be alerted for issues regarding staff members.

- **Communication**

Family and Staff surveys were distributed to understand their concerns and desires for the upcoming school year and this data assisted in forming our decision to continue remote learning. A web page is under development for staff and one for families, which will be available to them well prior to our return to our buildings.

## **2b. Monitoring**

- **Screening**

Our three schools in DOE buildings will be subject to the protocols set by the DOE. They have yet to be formally released by the DOE. We expect these protocols to be similar to the procedures we set in each of our schools located in private facilities including the following:

- Prior to returning to school buildings, a communication to families and staff will be distributed describing COVID-19 symptoms per the CDC; informing and encouraging everyone to stay home if they or family members are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. We will also consider other forms of communication including webinars. Signage will also be developed to communicate the same message to students and staff as well as to communicate healthy hygiene protocols.
- Request daily self-declaration from families, staff and visitors through a digital screening and monitoring platform.
- Students, staff, DOE contractors for student services, and, third party Facilities staff will all be subject to mandatory health screenings for COVID-19.
- Staff will be educated on the symptoms of COVID-19 to observe students and fellow staff members.

7 /31 /20

- Visitors will be limited to those who must be in the school (e.g. for emergency repairs, building inspectors, etc.) and will be subject to mandatory health screenings and must wear face masks. All visitors will require pre-approval by the Head of Facilities Management or the Chief Operating Officer.
- Temperature checks will be performed. Anyone who has a temperature more than 100 degrees will be denied building access.
- The mandatory health screening will include the following questions which must be answered in a cellphone application. A paper form will be used as a backup procedure. Anyone who answers yes to one of the questions will be denied building access:
  1. In the past 14 days, have you tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19?
  2. In the past 14 days, have you been in close contact or near someone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19?
  3. In the past 14 days, have you been in close contact or with anyone who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?
  4. In the past 14 days, have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100 degrees?
  5. In the past 14 days, have you travelled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the [New York State Travel Advisory](#).

All students, staff and visitors will be reminded that they should report to their nurse, teacher, or the Operations staff if their answers change during school or outside of School hours.

Note: The School will only maintain a record of pass or fail on the daily symptom screening in accordance with NYSDOH regulations.

- **Testing Protocols**

If it is believed that a student or staff member is symptomatic, HVA will contact the School Nurse (if available). The Principal or Operations Director will ensure that the symptomatic individual is handed off to the School Nurse or another trained staff member to quarantine the individual until a family member arrives to take the student home.

The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a healthcare provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center.

The school will contact the NYC Department of Health for guidance.

Symptomatic students or staff members will follow CDC's [Stay Home When You Are Sick](#) guidance unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the NYC Department of Health. If the student or staff member has emergency warning signs such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, the Operations staff or the Principal will call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19;

- If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school, subject to the following:
  - Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours

7 /31 /20

- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school
- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:
  - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms
  - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine) medicine
  - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved fever.

- **Testing Responsibility**

The School Operations Director, in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer, will be responsible for referring and administration of testing.

- **Early Warning Signs**

HVA will monitor attendance and sickness at each of its six schools for patterns that might indicate a trend within the school. HVA will also monitor NYC Department of Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and NY State published infection rates which are readily available on the respective governmental websites.

**2c. Containment** – includes protocols and procedures for how to respond to positive or presumed positive COVID-19 cases.

- **School Health Offices**

HVA utilizes nurses provided by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. If it is believed that a student or staff member is symptomatic, HVA will contact the School Nurse (if available) and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for guidance. The Principal or Operations Director will ensure that the symptomatic individual is escorted to the School Nurse or other trained staff member to quarantine the individual until a family member arrives to take the student home.

The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a healthcare provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center.

Students or staff suspected of having COVID-19 who are awaiting transportation home will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult utilizing appropriate PPE.

- **Isolation**

The Principal or Operations Director will ensure that any symptomatic individual, upon arrival or should they become symptomatic during the day, is handed off to the School Nurse or other trained staff member to quarantine the individual until a family member arrives to for transport home.

The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a healthcare provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center.

Students or staff suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet.

A supervising adult will be present and should have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies. School nurses or staff assessing or providing care to ill students and staff should use appropriate PPE including an N-95 mask (if available), disposable gloves or a face shield with underlying cloth mask and, if necessary, a gown.

- **Collection**

The School Operations Director will reach out to the parents/legal guardians and ask them to pick up the child at the School. The parents/legal guardians will be informed that the child must be seen by a health care provider or an urgent care center.

The parents/legal guardians will be asked to call the Operations Director prior to arrival at the School so that the individual can be brought out of the building to them. The staff that is supervising the isolated individual will move them to the parent/legal guardian under the direction of the Operations Director, to ensure there is no contact with any other students or staff.

- **Infected Individuals**

Symptomatic students or staff members follow CDC's [Stay Home When You Are Sick](#) guidance unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours.
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person is diagnosed by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms.
- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine).
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and fever.

- **Exposed Individuals**

Individuals who have been known to be exposed COVID-19 shall quarantine for fourteen days. The Schools will coordinate with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene regarding their return to School.

7 /31 /20

- **Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection**

In accordance with CDC and NYSDOH recommendations, HVA will:

- Close off areas used by a sick person and not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, we will wait as long as possible
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas
- Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected it can be reopened for use
- Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.

- **Contact Tracing**

The Schools can assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:

- Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members.
- Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
- Maintaining a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited.
- Assisting local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Test and Trace Program.

- **Communication**

- School stakeholders (e.g., administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students) were all surveyed regarding reopening plans. Further discussions and staff training will take place with staff during Summer Institute beginning on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and prior to reentry to our buildings. This will cover safety protocols and emotional and mental health regarding COVID-19.
- Plans are also being made to discuss survey results with families.
- Regular weekly written communication to families takes place during the school year which begins on August 24<sup>th</sup>. We communicated the plan for the school year to families on July 24<sup>th</sup> via email and we are planning to communicate regular updates until the first day of school on August 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Family and Staff web pages are being developed to facilitate communication.
- Families will be provided with safety and health protocol details including



7 /31 /20

hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing and respiratory hygiene prior to returning to our buildings.

- Student safety training will take place prior to return to our buildings.
- Signage will be posted to communicate safety procedures such as wearing a facemask, social distancing, etc. and marking on the floors and walls will assist in communicating the safety protocols.

## **2d. Closure**

- **Closure triggers**

- HVA will work with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to determine what conditions (i.e. number of positive COVID-19 cases in the building) would trigger a pod, section, or full school closure and the amount of time of the closure.
- Public information is readily available on the infection status of NYC neighborhoods and this will be monitored as well as NYC Dept. of Health communications. HVA is also aware of the triggers that Governor Coumo has published.
- Increased absenteeism or increased illness in school community will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

- **Operational Activity**

In the case of a closure of a school building due to an outbreak of COVID-19, we would first seek the advice of the NYC Department of Health and Hygiene. We would then review the space in our other buildings to determine the best solution to continue with in-school instruction for as many students as possible. If space is an issue, we would attempt to keep as many of our youngest learners in a physical building as possible. For example, if an elementary school required closure, we would attempt to move the youngest children into the space in a middle school or high school and have the middle school and/or high school students switch to remote learning as they are more able to function in the remote environment independently.

- **Communication**

Regular communications occur weekly. In an emergency, we would use email and text communication to notify impacted families of any important information. The mass mailing technologies employed would be the same that were used when school shut down in March.