



# Reopening Plan 2020-2021

# Guiding Principles for Reopening Little Meadows

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Ensure the **safety** and **wellness** of students and staff

Deliver **high-quality** instruction to **students**

Provide parents **flexibility** and **choice** in instructional models

## **Little Meadows Early Childhood Center Reopening Plan**

Updated: 9/2/2020

**Agency Name:** Little Meadows Early Childhood Center, Inc.

**BEDS Code:** 342600880365

**Administrative Address:** 67-25 188<sup>th</sup> St.  
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365

**Program Site Address #1:** 67-25 188<sup>th</sup> St.  
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365

**Program Site Address #2:** Common Point Queens Sam Field Center  
58-20 Little Neck Parkway  
Little Neck, NY 11362

**Program Site Address #3:** Pee Wee Folks  
12-45 Clintonville Street  
Whitestone, NY 11357

**Program Site Address #4:** International Nursery  
1-39 Northern Blvd  
Flushing, NY 11358

**Program(s) provided at this site:**

- 4410 (Pre-school Special Education)
  - Special Class
  - Special Class in an Integrated Setting
  - Multi-Disciplinary Evaluations
- Early Intervention
- PKA

**Contact Person (Name, Title):** Linda Silver, Executive Director

**Contact Phone Number:** (718) 454-6460

**Contact Email Address:** lsilver@littlemeadows.org

**Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted:** [www.littlemeadows.org](http://www.littlemeadows.org)

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## Introduction

This plan was developed to conform to the guidance provided by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in their July 2020 document entitled: *Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools – Reopening Guidance*. This plan will be revised and updated as needed to adjust to changing public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 virus and all the new requirements and regulations which may emerge. We solicited input and involvement from both the families we serve and our staff during the original drafting of our reopening plan. We will rely on continued input from all stakeholders as we move toward implementation and contemplate any additions or modifications.

Of course, as with every plan under these ever-changing conditions, this document will remain fluid and change as necessary based on guidance from state agencies and local health experts, as well as input from our students, staff, and families. We will closely monitor the conditions of our community as the COVID-19 pandemic continues in conjunction with the effectiveness and appropriateness of our plan. Be assured that nothing has changed our sincere commitment to our students and our determination to provide the highest possible quality of educational programming and related services during these difficult times.

The goal of the plan is to guide the delivery of high-quality educational services as safely as possible, whether service delivery is in-person, through a remote learning or in a hybrid of both remote and in-person services. Our focus and concerns extend to the social and emotional needs of our students, families, and staff members. By diligently working together and remaining focused on the outcomes we desire, we can find solutions to the many challenges ahead.

Our plan includes all the required elements identified by NYSED and follows the structure of the guidance by addressing the following areas as they apply to our students with disabilities and without and their families:

1. Communication/Family and Community Engagement
2. Health and Safety
3. Facilities
4. Nutrition
5. Transportation
6. Social Emotional Well-Being
7. School Schedules
8. Budget and Fiscal
9. Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
10. Technology and Connectivity
11. Teaching and Learning
12. Career and Technical Education
13. Athletics and Extra Curricular Activities
14. Special Education
15. Staffing
16. Teacher and Principal Evaluation System
17. Student Teaching

Any suggestions, concerns and/or questions about our plan should be directed to the contact person identified at the beginning of this document.

## **A. COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Little Meadows reopening plan is an ongoing collaborative effort of incorporating information from our staff (reopen committee) including administrators as well as representatives from each department such as teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, clerical/office and custodial. In addition, we reached out to the parents/guardians of the children scheduled to attend in the fall to get an understanding of their concerns and to inquire about their scheduling preferences. We also consulted with medically oriented personal and researched information regarding PPE equipment. All participants were given the opportunity to provide input regarding recommendations for implementation of the overall policy. We consider the plan to be dynamic and the ‘reopen’ committee will convene regularly until and after school reopens, and thereafter when needed but no less than quarterly.

Little Meadows remains committed to communicating all elements of the reopening plan to parents/guardians, staff, and visitors. The plan is available on the Little Meadows website and will be updated throughout the school year, as necessary, to respond to our community needs and local circumstances.

Staff will be trained on how to follow COVID-19 protocols during staff orientation (prior to school reopening). Staff will teach children how to implement COVID-19 essentials, such as social distancing, wearing face coverings and hand washing as well as proper etiquette for wiping their nose coughing/sneezing.

Little Meadows has developed an effective means of communication for staff and parents. We will use emails, telephone, text, social media, and a variety of platforms that are parent friendly, such as WebEx, Zoom, Google Duo and Microsoft Teams. It is our goal to help parents access technology and receive technical support for utilization of equipment. Our communications will reinforce Little Meadow’s fidelity to adhering to COVID-19 protocols by highlighting the use of face covering, social distancing and proper hand health. Signage will be placed in strategic building locations reminding staff of our commitment “we all need to work together”.

All communication to parents will be in their preferred language for notices.

## **B. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Education & Training**

Parents/guardians and staff members will be provided resources to educate them regarding the careful observation of COVID-19 symptoms. In addition, all staff members will undergo a COVID training provided by a medical professional prior to reopening. This training will specifically instruct staff how to observe for signs of illness in both students and other staff members.

Healthy hygiene practices will be taught and re-taught at school for both students and staff. We will also provide instruction to the families in hand and respiratory hygiene. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand hygiene supplies including disposable masks, hand soap, and hand sanitizer has been stocked and time will be allocated to allow for frequent hand hygiene. Little Meadows has created a daily checklist for use by school personnel to inspect their work area and ensure that they have sufficient supplies (i.e. face covering, tissues, hand hygiene supplies and cleaning supplies, etc.).

Appropriate DOH and/or CDC signage will be posted throughout the school reminding and instructing everyone in proper hand and respiratory hygiene procedures. Signage will remind individuals to:

- Stay home if they feel sick.
- Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- Adhere to social distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
- Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Teaching healthy hygiene practices will be accomplished in person, as well as by announcements, posters, and signs. Signage will be posted in highly visible areas such as:

- Entrances
- Restrooms
- Classrooms
- Administrative offices
- Gymnasium

The school has assigned a COVID-19 Officer to supervise the reopening plan implementation. In addition, several staff members will also be cross trained to conduct any necessary health checks and screenings before allowing anyone entry into our building.

Linda Silver, Executive Director, and designee will function as our COVID-19 resource people. She is the lead administrator and help write the reopening plan. She will lead illness response, acting as primary point of contact with local health agencies, and direct family and staff trainings. The Executive Director and designee will be the main points of contact for all parents, state and city agencies. This information will be shared with all our stakeholders.

Contact Information: Linda Silver (718) 454-6460

### **Health Checks & Screenings**

**Children:** Parents/guardians will be required to conduct a health screening for their child each morning before coming to school to ensure the absence of symptoms. They will be provided a list of questions to answer each morning (also available on our website):

1. Does your child have a temperature >100°F without fever reducing medications?
2. Have you or anyone in your household tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
3. Have you or anyone in your household experienced symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? (symptoms include, but are not limited to: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, headache, muscle or body aches, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, or new loss of taste and/or smell)



4. Have you been in close contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?
5. Have you traveled internationally, to a restricted state, or been in close contact with anyone who has returned from a restricted state in the last 14 days?

Little Meadows will send a text/email each morning through a group messaging service, One Call Now.

- Each family will be required to respond to the message confirming that all questions are “No”.
- If a parent/guardian answers “Yes” to any question or fails to respond to the text/email, the Executive Director or designee will directly contact the family to follow up or confirm the information.
- If any of the questions are confirmed as “Yes”, then the child will be asked to stay home, and additional guidance/support will be provided by the Executive Director or designee to the help the family take the appropriate next steps.
- If a parent/guardian does not respond within an allotted period, the teacher from that child’s classroom will contact the family to get the answers to the questions before the child arrives at school.

Upon arrival at school, all children will have their temperature taken.

- If anyone has a temperature  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ , they will be isolated from others and sent home immediately.
- Students will be supervised in the isolation area while awaiting transport home. The family will be referred to a healthcare provider if necessary.

Teachers and staff will evaluate students throughout the day. This includes asking students how they are feeling and observing general wellness. If a child shows symptoms of COVID with no other explanation, the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the child for follow up with a health care provider.

All accommodations possible will be made to assist families with technological or language limitations (see Bilingual Education and World Languages section).

**Staff:** Similarly, all staff will be required to conduct a health screening each morning before coming to school. They will be provided a similar list of questions to answer each and Little Meadows will send a text/email through One Call Now.

- Each staff member will be required to respond to the message confirming that all questions are “No”.
- If the staff member answers “Yes” to any question or fails to respond to the text/email, the Executive Director or designee will reach out to follow up or confirm the information.
- If any of the questions are confirmed as “Yes”, then the staff member will be asked to stay home, and additional guidance/support will be provided by the Executive Director or designee to them take the appropriate next steps.



- If a staff member does not respond before arrival at school, they will be screened before entry is allowed.

Upon arrival at school, all staff members will have their temperature taken.

- If anyone has a temperature  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ , they will be sent home immediately and referred to a healthcare provider if necessary.

**Visitors/Guests/Contractors/Vendors:** Little Meadows will restrict admittance to only those individuals that are scheduled to be onsite. All other visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors that must be admitted for proper functioning of our daily activities will undergo a full screening at the door. They will be asked to answer the 5 entry questions, their temperature will be taken, and their entry will be logged. If they answer “Yes” to any of the questions or their temperature is  $>100^{\circ}\text{F}$ , they will be denied entry. Parents who request entry into the children’s space of the building must have a recent negative COVID-19 test.

### **Partition Controls & Social Distancing**

While much effort will be made to attain the health check information for all staff and students prior to their arrival, temperature checks and additional screenings will still be necessary upon arrival of all people. Given the age of our students, a combination of parents/guardians, school staff will assist the children through the screening process while maintaining at least 6 feet between each adult/child pairing (markers will be placed outside the building). All staff and children will always be required to wear a mask (see below for details).

Little Meadows has 2 sets of entry doors providing a natural spacing system at the entrance to the building. Each adult/child pairing or individual adult will undergo the following protocol upon arrival:

- One pairing or individual will be admitted through the first set of doors where they will be required to undergo a health check/temperature screening. We have constructed a clear vinyl barrier at the entry point to shield the staff member’s face and mucous membranes from respiratory droplets that may be produced if the child/adult being screened sneezes, coughs, or talks.
- The staff member conducting the screening will wear disposable gloves and using a non-contact infrared thermometer.
- Once a pairing or individual clears screening, they will be instructed to perform hand hygiene, either washing their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol that is located just inside the entryway.
- At this point, the next pairing or individual will be allowed to enter the checkpoint.

**Hand Hygiene:** Students and staff will practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Time will be scheduled throughout the school day to allow for hand hygiene. Hand hygiene includes:

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), is the preferred method.
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout common areas and near high touch surfaces.
- Signage will be placed near hand sanitizers and bathroom indicating proper protocols.
- Students or staff that are unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers for health reasons will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water.

It will be recommended that, at a minimum, students and staff should wash hands as follows:

- Upon entering the building and each classroom.
- After using shared objects or surfaces (e.g. electronic devices, musical instruments, writing utensils, tools, toys, desks, or tabletops).
- Before and after snacks and lunch.
- After using the bathroom.
- After helping a student with toileting.
- After sneezing, wiping, or blowing nose, or coughing into hands.
- Upon coming in from outdoors.
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

**Respiratory Hygiene:** It is critical that all employees, visitors, and students practice good respiratory hygiene as this is the primary vector for viral spread. It is important that students and staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately.

A supply of tissues and no touch/floor pedal trash cans will be available in each room when feasible. If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing, and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

- All employees and visitors will be required to wear a cloth face covering or mask at all times.
- Students will be required to wear a cloth face covering or mask in all common areas and whenever social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Due to the young age of our students, they will be able to remove masks “masks breaks” only when in the classrooms.

Little Meadows has purchased several thousand disposable masks that will be available for staff and students who have forgotten their cloth face covering or masks. It is recommended that all staff and

students provide their own masks or face covering if they adhere to CDC guidance. These will generally provide a better and more comfortable fit.

**Social Distancing:** Little Meadows will actively require a physical distancing of 6 feet between all adults and, whenever possible, all children. All staff members will be trained to enforce social distancing policy at all times.

- Student groupings will be as static as possible by having the same group/cohort of students stay together.
- The size of groups/cohorts of students be determined by regulations provided by the NYDOHH and NYSED.
- Arrival and/or dismissal times will be staggered to allow increased social distancing on buses as well as in classrooms.
- An arrival schedule will be developed for all students who are dropped off by a parent/guardian.
- As discussed above, a designated student drop-off and pick-up area has been designated to limit contact and entry of parents/guardians into the building, to the greatest extent possible.
- In-school movement will be limited to the greatest extent possible. Students within a defined area or classroom and modifying class schedules or class transitions using these recommendations:
  - Students area assigned to a specific classroom and will be with the same teacher and teacher’s assistants each day.
  - Special area teachers (e.g., music) will go to individual classrooms. Whenever possible, music time will be conducted outside to encourage students distancing.
  - The use of restrooms will be staggered and flexible to maintain social distancing. Bathrooms will be monitored by staff to ensure social distancing, that it is clean, and students are washing hands after use.
- Windows will be kept open as much as possible to improve ventilation unless there is a health risk.
- Student belongings will be kept separated. There will be limited use of shared supplies to each classroom and these supplies will be clean between use. Individual students will be given their own supplies and storage container whenever possible.
- We have redesigned the common space by erecting large barriers to create several additional areas where children can be spaced as needed.
- The use of classrooms and other places where students, faculty, and staff gather (e.g., lockers, cubbies, entryways, hallways) will be restricted, so that individuals can be socially

distanced. Student storage will be assigned by classroom and we will attempt to minimize the need bring materials to and from the home as much as possible.

- Gathering in small spaces will be limited to no more than one individual at a time, unless all individuals in such space are wearing acceptable face coverings.
- Playground use will be limited to one classroom at a time rather than allowing multiple classes to play together. Similarly, we will limit any activity where multiple groups interact. Children will wash their hands before and after touching play structures and keep 6 feet of space from other children as much as possible.
- All student assemblies, performances, and school-wide parent meetings are canceled. If meetings are needed or required, virtual meeting will be we conducted whenever possible.
- Visitors to school building will be limited to immediate staff, students, and necessary vendors. Parent access will be as minimal as possible.

### **Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups**

Alternative provisions for social distancing will be provided for the following groups due to the increased risk for complications from COVID-19. Accommodations will be made for those in need in the school community to the best of our ability.

Persons in these groups should consult with their healthcare provider regarding prevention:

- Individuals age 65 or older.
- Pregnant individuals.
- Individuals with underlying health conditions including, but not limited to:
  - chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - serious heart conditions
  - immunocompromised
  - severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
  - diabetes
  - chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - liver disease
  - sickle cell anemia
  - children who are medically complex, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or who have congenital heart disease are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children.

As a school for children with special needs, we have paid close attention in our plan to the student's medical risks and general ability maintain social distancing, participate in hand or respiratory hygiene, or wear a face covering or mask. We will work closely with the family to make sure we are aware of all risks

and limitation so an informed decision can be made on how best to meet the child's needs at school, or if best, remotely, while protecting their health and safety. This may include:

- Additional PPE for staff caring for such students;
- Assigning only one staff member to care for the student; and/or
- Decreased students in a classroom, alternating schedules, and provision of related services to an individual instead of group setting.

Finally, we will provide options for in-person, remote learning, and a hybrid model of both for the parents/guardians to select if they so choose.

### **Personal Protective Equipment & Face Covering**

Little Meadows has combined the OSHA COVID-19 guidance with the CDC's recommendations that school-based health personnel use Healthcare Facilities: Managing Operations During COVID19 Pandemic Updated June 29, 2020 guidance when providing care to ill persons as part of infection control protocols. If it is suspected a student or staff if ill:

- Standard precautions will be used at all times.
- If a person is suspected of having COVID-19, transmission-based precautions will be provided.
- Little Meadows has purchased and will maintain an adequate supply of PPE such as, but not limited to:
  - Face masks (disposable surgical masks).
  - Respirators (N95) – too be wore if an aerosol generating procedure is necessary.
    - One N95 will be provided to each Speech Therapist and each MAT trained staff member.
    - If used, the mask will be placed in a labeled bag and stored for their personal future use.
    - If it is necessary for the staff member to use a N95 before 3 days have passed from last use, they will be provided a 2<sup>nd</sup> N95.
  - Face shields
    - Must be used with a face mask.
    - Extend below the chin anteriorly and to the ears laterally.
    - No exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece.
    - Each person will have their own shield to be labeled.
    - Will be cleaned between uses.
    - The wearer should wash their hands after removing the shield and before putting it on.

- Gloves.
- Gowns.

**Cloth Face Coverings:** Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. As mentioned above, all staff in the school and on school grounds will always wear face coverings or masks except when on a mask break or at lunch. A covered outdoor area will be provided as a break/lunch space for staff. All students must wear cloth face coverings:

- Whenever they are within 6 feet of someone;
- In hallways;
- In restrooms; and
- In other congregate settings, including buses.

We will provide acceptable face covering to employees (and students if they forget their own) and will maintain an adequate supply in case of need for replacement per Executive Order 202.16. An employee can wear their own acceptable face covering but will not be required to supply their own face coverings. Any employees with healthcare provider documentation stating they are not medically able to tolerate face covering will not be required to do so.

Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school, so scheduling mask breaks is important. At Little Meadows, face coverings will not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old.
- Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

We will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors, and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings.
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering.
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings.
- The importance of routine cleaning of reusable face coverings.
- Face coverings are for individual use only and should not be shared.

Students and staff may use alternate PPE (i.e., face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (e.g., hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the staff member.

### **Management of Ill Persons**

Students and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 that are not explained by a chronic health condition will immediately be isolated and dismissed for follow up with a health care provider, pursuant to Education Law § 906. Our designated COVID safety coordinator, in conjunction with the administrative staff, will immediately notify a local public health agency of any disease reportable under the public health law and take any additional steps they deem necessary to protect the health of the students and staff.

Little Meadows staff must immediately report any illness of students or staff to the COVID safety coordinator in a manner compliant with FERPA, and Education Law 2-d.

Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in an area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Per CDC and NYSDOH recommendations, this area will be:

- Closed off and not used until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred.
- Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- 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.
- If more than seven days has passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, we will return to routine cleaning and disinfection.

Little Meadows has developed an isolation protocol for potentially infected individuals:

- If weather is permitting, the person will be isolated outside.
- If weather is not permitting, an isolation tent will be set up in the corner of the gymnasium with a six-foot buffer on all sides.

A facemask (e.g., cloth or surgical mask) will be provided to the student if they can tolerate wearing it and does not have difficulty breathing, to prevent the possible transmission of the virus to others while waiting for transportation home. Upon arrival of the parent/guardian:

- The students will be escorted from isolation area to the parent/guardian.
- The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider.
- All symptomatic students or staff members will follow CDC's Stay Home When You Are Sick guidance.



- 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, we will call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19.
- If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, our school administrators will notify the local health department to determine what steps are needed for the school community.

**Return to School After Illness:** Little Meadows will follow the CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of 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:

- 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 a known chronic condition with unchanged symptoms, or a confirmed acute illness (ex: laboratory confirmed influenza, strep-throat) and COVID-19 is not suspected, then a note by their healthcare provider explaining the alternate diagnosis is required before the child can return to school.
- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test, their symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they will be required to 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 shortness of breath.

**COVID-19 Testing:** The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted will be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health, not Little Meadows. We will defer all testing decisions to our local health department. If a parent or staff member suspects they have COVID-19, Little Meadows will provide the location of local testing facilities. Little Meadows staff will participate in cyclical testing.

**Contact Tracing:** Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus. We will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing and will assist public health departments by:

- Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members.
- Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
- Keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited.

- Assist local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. We will defer to guidance and direction from the local department of health as to who is to be excluded from school based on contact.

**School Closures:** Schools must collaborate with their local health department to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

School administrators should consider closing school if absentee rates impact the ability of the school to operate safely. Schools may choose to modify operations prior to closing to help mitigate a rise in cases.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

Little Meadows will follow all CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection. School wide cleaning includes all classrooms, restrooms, and common spaces. The guidance framework is based on carrying out the following:

- Normal routine cleaning of surfaces and objects to reduces the risk of exposure.
- Disinfection using Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved products for frequently touches surfaces.
- A schedule and log of cleaning and disinfection frequency for each area.
  - Logs includes the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection in a facility or area.

The safety of our custodial staff, as well as other staff carrying out basic cleaning or disinfection, is of vital importance. All relevant PPE will be provided to the custodial staff and others per the guidance of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Additional staff will be trained on basic cleaning procedures to maintain a high frequency of disinfection.

High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently though out the day. Examples of high touch surfaces include:

- Tables.
- Doorknobs.
- Light switches.
- Countertops.
- Handles.
- Desks.
- Phones.

- Keyboards and tablets.
- Toilets and restrooms.
- Faucets and sinks.

Students will not be present when disinfectants are in use and will not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.

See **Respiratory Hygiene** and **Facilities** sections for air quality plans.

Per CDC guidance:

- Outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
- Do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds - it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19.
- High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings should be cleaned routinely.
- Shared therapeutic equipment (e.g., balls, pads) will be cleaned between use.

Little Meadows has purchased an ultralow volume (ULV) cold fogger to disinfect all classrooms at the end of every day by coating all areas with a fine “mist” of disinfectant.

### **Safety Drills**

Education Law § 807 requires that schools conduct 8 evacuation and 4 lockdown drills each school year. Regardless of the modification used when conducting these drills, students will be instructed that if it was an actual emergency that required evacuation or lockdown, the most imminent concern is to get to safety.

If Little Meadows employs a “hybrid” in-person model, we will be sure that all students receive instruction in emergency procedures and participate in drills while they are in attendance.

*Fire Drills/Evacuation Drills:* The procedures will remain mostly the same for evacuation of the building with minor adjusts specific to reentering the building. To ensure social distancing as cohorts, areas will be designated outside the building where classes will wait until the ‘all clear’ signal is given. Entrance back into the building will be per class as directed by the Fire Marshall.

*Lockdown Drills:* Shelter in place drills will be performed as usual since the instructions are for a lock down coincide with social distancing rules in self-contained classrooms.

### **Aftercare**

Little Meadows offers a 1-hour aftercare program at the end of the day for our students if needed. All Health and Safety protocol will be followed during aftercare in the same manner as during the standard school day.

## **C. FACILITIES**

Little Meadows has implemented many features to enhance the safety of our environment and subsequently reduce infection in our school due to COVID-19 in accordance with CDC guidance. We enforce social distancing, handwashing, clearly marked directional signs, regular cleaning of common space and objects that might be used by more than one person. As for air quality:

- Ventilation systems and air ducts were professionally cleaned.
- HVAC system has been upgraded to MERV-13 filters for heightened air purification.
- Honeywell True-HEPA air purifiers were added to each classroom and therapeutic areas used by children.

Since Little Meadows services children under the age of five, it is the policy of NYCDOHMH/Daycare that child between the ages of 2-5 must wear a face covering prior to entering the facility. As described under the **Respiratory Hygiene** section, Little Meadows encourages children to wear masks throughout the facility, unless medically vulnerable. All adult staff and visitors must wear a face covering while in the school building.

Little Meadows has both crafted plastic separators and purchased dividers to enforce and control social distancing as needed. A barrier/divider is situated at the reception and at the front entrance of the building. A barrier was placed at the side entrance as well. Most staff and visitors will use the front entrance; the side entrance is available for those not able to negotiate stairs. Dividers will be used in therapeutic areas to separate/space therapists at a minimum of 6 feet from each other. Occupational and Physical therapy have common space which is separated by dividers in compliance with social distancing. Children will have their own materials during therapeutic sessions. Separators may also be used in the classroom to encourage a staggered lunch for children.

Administrative offices will be at 50% capacity or at least 6 feet distance from desk to desk. Only 1-2 people will be allowed in the conference room.

Adult bathrooms must only be used by one individual at a time. Disinfectant will be available in the bathroom to clean the toilet and sink handles. Adult bathrooms will be cleaned regularly on a cleaning schedule by the custodian.

The fire drill procedure will remain mostly the same for evacuation of the building with minor adjustments specific to reentering the building. To ensure social distancing as cohorts, areas will be designated outside the building where classes will wait until the 'all clear' signal is given. Entrance back into the building will be per class as directed by the Fire Marshall. Shelter in place drills will be performed as usual since the instructions are for a lock down coincide with social distancing rules in self-contained classrooms.

In the classroom, hand-washing signs are visible at each sink. Children will wash their hands upon arrival, after outdoor play, before snack and/or lunch, and of course, after using the toilet. After each bathroom use, the toilet and faucets will be wiped with a disinfectant by the teacher assistant in the classroom. Only one child will use the bathroom at a time, or if not possible, a plastic divider will be used.

Little Meadows plans to stagger arrival and departure of children. Parents who drive or walk their children to school will be given a schedule. For children who arrive by school bus, arrangements will be made with the transporters to stagger the arrival and departure times. For staff, Little Meadows has already staggered schedules. It should be noted that children, as well as staff, will have their temperature taken before entering the building (see Health & Safety section). 6 ft markers will be placed outside the building to

ensure social distancing upon entry. Staff will be encouraged to use the side door of the building for existing to help maintain social distancing at the entrance.

Hand sanitizer has been placed at each door throughout the building. They are filled with alcohol base hand rubs. The custodian refills no less than daily. Little Meadows will keep windows open for increased natural air flow to the greatest extent possible. We will not be keeping doors open as we must maintain the safety of our children.

#### **D. NUTRITION**

Little Meadows will follow all relevant guidance specific to nutritional needs of children. Lunch will continue for children receive lunch as part of their school program.

- Little Meadows does not prepare food on site.
- All food is delivered to daily.
- Our catering service will provide individualized, prewrapped lunches; there will be no family style food service.
- Little Meadows will only provide individually wrapped snacks for children as well.
- Many of our children bring lunch from home. Those children will only be served the food that was prepared at home, as per our standard policy.
- Each child will have his/her own utensils stored in a plastic container labeled with their name.

As customary the names of children with food allergies will be posted in the classroom as all staff need to be informed regarding food allergies. The policy for children will be no food sharing.

Children eat all meals in the classroom. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks may be staggered to encourage social distancing, as fewer children will be seated at classroom tables. Children will still have this time for socialization and language development. A staff member will be seated with the children.

As typical children wash their hands prior to any meal. Children also clean-up after eating and discard unwanted food/beverage. For children who bring their lunch from home, food not eaten is returned home so that parents know what the child ate during his/her school day. Staff will wash their hands prior to handing out individual portions and utensils to children. Staff may wear gloves during food activities. Little Meadows will maintain communication with families regarding lunch and menus via phone calls, email, media, and One Call Now. All parent notices are provided in their preferred language.

#### **E. TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation (school bus) is provider for preschool students with disabilities enrolled in our 4410/CPSE program by the NYC Department of Education. Little Meadows is, however, involved when students embark and disembark the school bus.

Little Meadows will be working with the bus company to implement staggered arrival and departure times to ensure social distancing. When children are taken off the bus, they will be wearing a mask and will be taken to their assigned classroom. Upon entry to classroom the child will wash their hands.

For children whose parents bring them to school, we will also have staggered arrival and departure times. Parents will bring the child to the reception area where the child will be greeted by a staff member and brought to their assigned classroom. Upon entry to classroom the child will wash their hands.

Health checks for all children arriving to school is described in the **Health and Safety** section.

## **F. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

In planning our reopening in September, Little Meadows is taking into consideration the variety of needs of students, families, and staff that must be addressed during the transition back to school. It is recognized that families and staff will return with fear or anxiety. Thus, we must balance physical safety with social emotional needs.

Initial focus will be directed to the social and emotional needs of the staff before they return to school and on an ongoing basis. Staff must have systems of support including meaningful peer relationships, opportunities to connect, and resources. Without these supports in place, staff may not have their optimal capacity to support the needs of students and families.

To address these concerns, Little Meadows will establish a Social Emotional Learning Team lead by one of our school psychologists. The team will consist of teachers, teacher assistants, clinical staff, clerical staff, and administrators. Their mission will be to support staff, children, and their families during the different transitions as we move through the school year. Part of the focus will be to support young children in a blended learning model, which consists of a combination of in-person and virtual instruction. The team will help both teachers and parents provide children with a learning experience that promotes relationships as well as supports learning. The Social Learning Team will provide professional development opportunities for staff on how to talk with staff, parents, and children about the public health emergency. They will also provide staff support for coping and resilience.

We know after a prolonged closure, many of our staff, students, and their parents will require social-emotional supports to reengage and reenter into both work and school. Little Meadows is committed to creating an emotionally and physically safe environment. The composition of staff at Little Meadows consists of mental health professionals who have always been and continue to be available for the emotional support of children, families, and staff. The Social Emotional Learning Team will bring structure and a broader perspective to reinforcing social emotional health during the current health crisis.

Some of the factors that might be addressed are the following:

- Emotional reactions to interfacing with someone coming out quarantine.
- Stress of daily health monitoring and overall fears of living with uncertainly.

Team goals may include establishing a culture that support and emphasizes mental health services, explore the use of Restorative Practices, assisting in training and assisting in mental health referrals as needed.

## **G. SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

Little Meadows will reopen on September 14, 2020. All Special Education classes will begin remote until bussing is available. PKA will begin per the parent's choice of learning models.

Little Meadows 2020-21 reopening plan will include strategies for resuming in-person instruction, remote and a combination of both (hybrid). Since most of our population are preschool students with a disability, we have prioritized in-person instruction for children who have greater educational needs, as well as the needs of their parents. We have completed a parent survey for their preference of learning models and the response has indicated that all three models will be in effect. Since we realize these decisions are based on many family considerations, parents will be able to change learning models on November 1, 2020 with a minimum of 2 weeks written notice to Little Meadows. Our learning models are:

- 1) In-person = Full-time face-to-face learning (social distancing and reduction in class ratios)
- 2) Remote = Full-time remote learning. This will be live interaction with the teacher and the students every day. This will include remote group instruction. Learning materials will be uploaded into our learning system (Google Classroom) and will include daily messages, assignments, and directions for parent to work with their child. For children with IEPs, the teacher will schedule individual sessions with each child.
- 3) Blended = 50% Remote & 50% In-person – The student will have an in-person teacher and a remote teacher. The in-person teacher will coordinate with the remote teacher to ensure continuity in learning for the student participating in the hybrid/ blended learning experience.

Students will rotate over a 2-week window as follows:

- a. Week 1 – Group A
  - i. In-person = Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
  - ii. Remote = Thursday, Friday
- b. Week 2 – Group A
  - i. In-person = Monday, Tuesday
  - ii. Remote = Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
- c. Week 1 – Group B
  - i. In person = Thursday, Friday
  - ii. Remote = Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
- d. Week 2 – Group B
  - i. In person = Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
  - ii. Remote = Monday, Tuesday

Since many students will be on remote learning, Little Meadows will have a 'remote teacher' who will be able to conduct remote classes while in-person students are in school. Collaborative learning units will be reinforced through staff meetings and overall supervision. We will have a remote supervisor to ensure that the in-person and remote curriculum is synchronized.

For our special education children, we are planning for a 5.5-hour day to eliminate rest time. As of 1/1/2021, our Special Education children will attend a 5-hr instructional day. Children will still have lunch with peers and teachers/Tas will work on IEP goals.

Arrival and dismissal of students will be on a staggered schedule. We have some children whose parent/caregiver brings them to school and some children who ride a school bus. Arrival will be scheduled with at least a 10-minute gap. Entrance to the building will be split into front and side doors to maximize



social distancing. This will allow sufficient time for the health screening followed by a staff member escorting the student to their designated classroom. Children will essentially remain in the classroom for their instructional day, except for outdoor playground time.

Student and staff exposure to different people will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Staff will be assigned to the same cohort of children on a day to day basis. Little Meadows policy is only staff and enrolled students are permitted into the building. Meetings with parents or other incidental people who are involved with the program will be held through remote platforms.

Little Meadows has several means of communication with families, including emails, texting, phone calls, and remote platforms. Messaging will be in the preferred language of the parent.

## **H. BUDGET AND FISCAL**

Little Meadows has and will continue to meet all reporting requirements for our 4410 special education programs and PKA program. We maintain a 180-day school calendar. Attendance records are maintained according to best practice and government oversight requirements. During the last few months, due to NYS State of Emergency due to COVID 19, we have modified our budget and expenses to account for COVID-19 related expenses. Little Meadows has applied for and received CARES Act funds. We recently applied for CARES2 funding.

If our tuition reimbursement is insufficient to meet the additional costs of providing services during the COVID-19 emergency, Little Meadows will approach financial institutions. However, currently we do not see a need for that action.

We have instituted policies for parent engagement that encourages regular attendance of children. We have ongoing relationships with referral sources regarding openings in our program and currently, our enrollment for September 2020 is optimistic.

## **I. ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

Little Meadows takes daily attendance whether in-person, hybrid, or remote instruction. Attendance policies and procedures will be communicated to parents prior to the start of the school in September or if the instructional model changes during the school year. Teachers will take daily attendance and will record on an individual attendance card per student. Additionally, for students receiving IEP mandated therapy services, that service will be recorded into the NYC DOE EasyTrac system. For children who are on a hybrid model or remote model, it is anticipated that they will have at least one educational contact per day. Children who are expected to participate in an educational event and do not participate as anticipated, the parent will be called to determine the reason for absence and to find out if there is a barrier the student may have to participate in daily lessons. Attendance will be reviewed weekly by a designated staff member.

Little Meadows plans to provide ongoing communication regarding instruction, educational topics, and units of study via of a virtual interactive platform, such as school Dojo, Google Classrooms, etc. If a parent does not have Wi-Fi, then a staff member will call the parent to find out what is doable for them.

If circumstances arise when a student is absent for more than 5 consecutive days without our ability to contact the family, then Little Meadows staff will reach out to the CPSE regarding the unexplained absence.

For children who have chronic absenteeism, which is absent more than 10% of the school days, we will reach out to the parents through a variety of methods, i.e. calls, letters, emails, and emergency contacts. Once we reach the parent, the Little Meadows representative will review with the parent the importance of school participation and the attendance policy. Afterwards, the child's attendance will be closely monitored. If needed, the parent might be receptive to daily calls from one of Little Meadows mental health professionals.

If, after every outreach effort is exhausted, it is thought that the situation might be educational neglect, Little Meadows will report the circumstances to Child Protective Services.

## **J. TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY**

Access to technology is essential for a successful implementation of this reopening plan. Little Meadows will do all within our means to ensure equitable access for students and staff. When developing plans, consideration is given to our student population and their home access to reliable internet and electronic devices.

A survey will be conducted of our families to gather data regarding access and electronic device availability. We will also try and identify the learning needs of our staff, then support their ability for virtual learning. We are considering implementing a Help Desk to trouble shoot all technical problems for staff as well as parents.

Little Meadows in the process of standardizing the platform we will use for virtual instruction as well as communication with parents. The teachers are forming a committee and will submit recommendations to administration. All platforms considered will be either HIPAA and/or FERPA certified as needed. As for assessing the effectiveness of the digital tools and platforms, we have been conducting remote learning and therapy since the beginning of the pandemic quickly learned which platforms are safe, effective, and user-friendly.

## **K. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Little Meadows has developed a continuity of learning plan for the 2020-21 school year. Our plan consists of 3 models for learning: all in-person, hybrid, or all remote instruction. In the event of school closure, our staff is prepared to change from all in-person and hybrid models to all remote learning. The foundation for instruction is based on the NYS Learning Standards and the NYS Pre-Kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. For preschool students with disabilities, there will be continuity of instruction toward development of IEP goals through individual and group instruction across all models of instruction available to parents.

Parents have access to Little Meadows staff via multiple means of communication, i.e. emails, text, phone, and website.

Equity is at the heart of all school instructional decisions. All instruction, regardless of the model preference of the parent (or total remote due to State closure), will be designed to be clear, comprehensive, and accessible to all students. All students will have access to educational and clinical staff and opportunities for feedback. During the spring months of the pandemic, our staff has learned a lot about successful remote learning and now to tailor instruction based on not only the needs of student, but also the preferences of the parent. Our staff has developed the skills for implementing remote instruction to encourage and enable student developmental growth.

As stated earlier in this document, Little Meadows will have a Social Emotional Learning Team that will provide recommendation to the staff for creating a positive climate and rekindle behavior supports for your students. At Little Meadows, our staff is comprised of multidisciplinary teams for all the preschooler that attend our program. Collaboration is encouraged among team members. Remote staff meetings are held regularly to review overall status of each classroom, as well as to review individual needs of the children. Beginning in September, the focus will be on mental health and wellbeing as students learn the new rules of coming to school. This includes helping children tolerate masks and learning about social distancing, even while developing critical relationships with children.

There will be continuous opportunities for staff development. Little Meadows will use staff development days to support staff as we negotiate the challenges of teaching during a national health crisis.

Children will learn about new health and safety procedures, i.e. washing hands upon arrival, after the playground, new etiquette for showing respect for others by following new rules. As typical, for Little Meadows education program, all children will still undergo a preliminary assessment period, using Teaching Strategies Gold. This assessment tool is used with all our pre-kindergarten populations, both PKA and special education.

Social distancing underscores most of the new rules in the classroom. Although children will have lunch in school, all lunches will be individual and sharing of foods, utensils, and snacks will no longer be permitted. Children will experience small group interactions which means playing or working together in a group of 2-3 children. Fifteen children per classroom is the maximum; however, most of the classroom will probably be smaller. Certain materials traditionally available to children in a prekindergarten classroom will no longer be available such as sensory tables, water tables, carpeting to play on or soft chairs to sit on. Each child will have their own materials housed in container label with their name. However, children will still have fun activities such as music and movement and outdoor play. They can still communicate with each other and form peer relationships which is so critical to the early years of learning.

Little Meadow has several types of programs for preschool; we cater to children with and without disabilities. Programs include Pre-K for All, Special Class in an Integrated Setting (children with and without IEP), and children whose developmental needs are best met in a special class setting. Regardless of the program the child attends, all models of instruction are available to parents. To the greatest extent possible, children will remain in their assigned classroom and spend their time in school with the same cohort of children. Children who may receive individual therapy, as mandated on their IEP, will receive those service to the greatest extent possible by the therapist assigned to the class. There will be no changing of assigned staff per classroom unless it is unavoidable, i.e. staff absence. Our goal is to minimize exposure to different adults and/or children during the school day as per CDC guidelines.

Movement of children will be minimized, and to the greatest extent possible, children will receive mandated services within the classroom.

It is important to note that all special education teachers, early childhood teacher and therapeutic staff are NYS certified or licensed in their discipline.

## **L. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

CTE does not specifically apply to 4410 programs except for the basic Learning Standards which can be achieved in remote, blended or in-person preschool instructional models.

## **M. ATHLETICS AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Athletics and extra-curricular activities are not part of our 4410 program.

## **N. SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Little Meadows has been providing special education services to preschool students with a disability since 1989. Preschool Students with a disability, who are referred and approved to attend our program by the CPSE, will continue to receive all IEP mandated service regardless of the instructional model selected by the parent. Parents indicate their preferred language for communication which is noted on the child's IEP. The staff of Little Meadows communicates with parents, written and verbal, using the preferred language. In the event a child received a service from a monolingual clinician, then an interpreter is available to ensure that the parent is engaged in the session and understand the activities and goals.

Our reopening plan does prioritize in-person instruction for our special education students. We can accommodate in person instruction for children approved for a class with a 12:1:2 staffing ratio. Classrooms can accommodate students while maintaining social distancing. For children who participate with a hybrid model, to the greatest possible, related services will be provided in-person; however, if that is not possible, they will receive the service remotely. Preschool students with disabilities will receive all the supports and modifications they need to attain IEP goals and objectives. Teacher work closely with parents to ensure that, regardless the model of instruction, the student receives individual and small group instruction. Student progress toward IEP goals and quarterly progress reports will be provided regardless of the instruction model. As typical, students will undergo an assessment period during the first months of school, which will be the benchmark for determining the child's progress. The assessment tool used by the teacher is Teaching Strategies Gold. Quarterly assessments are completed throughout the school year. These checkpoints give the teacher and support staff data as to how the child is doing in all developmental areas, including social emotional development and ability for learning. Parent Teacher conferences will be held as typical; however, this year conferences will be held via telephone or the preferred type of remote communication.

Little Meadows has and will continue to document the provision of special education services. Speech, Occupational and Physical therapy sessions are documented into the NYC EasyTrac system. Therapists enter notes into the parent log section to indicate the level of service a parent verbally consents to receive. Classroom teachers write weekly lesson plans and create a weekly schedule consisting of group and individual instruction. This will differ depending on the learning model in which the child participates. Plans are reviewed by the education supervisor. As stated previously (in the **Teaching and Learning** section), related service providers, to the greatest extent possible, will be assigned a specific classroom to

minimize student exposure to different adults. There might be extenuating circumstance due to bilingual factors.

Communication with the CPSE continues throughout the pandemic's effects. We continue to send CPSE progress reports and hold annual reviews as required. CPSE are generally responsive to changes that might be needed to the child's IEP due to changes in learning environments or other stressors that might be impacting on the child's development. In the event NYS must revert to total remote functioning, Little Meadows has already established effective pathways to communication with the CPSE across boroughs. Additionally, for children in need of initial evaluations, Little Meadows has continued its CPSE evaluation program. We have conducted remote and most recently, a small number of in-person evaluations. CPSE have been responsive in scheduling CPSE meetings for initial evaluations.

## **O. STAFFING**

As stated in the **Teaching and Learning** section, all special education and related service providers are appropriately NYS certified or licensed. Currently, we do anticipate making staffing changes once the school year begins. There might be circumstance when a substitute teacher is needed due to a teacher absence. However, there will be no assigning of incidental teachers. We do have a music and movement specialist who works with the children in-person and remotely. His schedule will be created to minimize the cohorts of children he sees on the same day. For example, he might conduct several remote session and work with one group of children in person.

Hopefully, we will embark on the school year with healthy staff and minimal illness. However, if we do have to recruit for a substitute teacher, we will make diligent effort to recruit a NYS certified teacher. However, if needed during the 2020-21 school year (as permitted) by NYSED, if a qualified substitute teacher cannot be engaged, we will consider uncertified teachers for up to ninety (90) days.

If during the school year a staff member requests an accommodation from reporting for in-person work due to concerns about their own health, they must notify Little Meadows' administration and comply with submitting requested information per CDC guidelines. We will then determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made based on the applicable law, regulation, and the agency's needs and resources.

## **P. TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM**

This required section of the reopening plan is not applicable since 4410 programs are not subject to the specific laws and regulations regarding professional evaluation cited in the NYSED guidance.

## **Q. STUDENT TEACHING**

Little Meadows does not anticipate any student teachers for in-person models but would consider a student teacher for remote learning.

## **R. BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES**

Little Meadows general education preschoolers come from linguistically diverse families. As stated throughout, equity is at the core of our reopening educational plan. Little Meadows prefers to use the term Emergent Multilingual Learner (EMLL), in accordance with NYSED, to refer to preschool children who

are learning a language, other than English, and have the opportunity to become bilingual or multilingual in school. EMLL students will be offered the same learning models as all families, i.e. in-person, hybrid or remote. For EMLL students who have opted for remote instruction, to the greatest extent possible, we offer instruction in their preferred language. Our goal is to keep the unique needs of parents in mind and provide support and guidance on the logistics and functionality of the remote model so parents feel fully engaged in their child's program.

Positive outcomes for a successful transition for EMLL students back to school in the Fall of 2020 will depend on staff and their cultural sensitivity awareness, especially considering these atypical times. Staff will participate in professional learning on topics related to the core areas of focus when supporting EMLLs such as: instructional supports, environmental supports, and family & community supports. Staff will need to become proficient in the use of common words in various languages, not only in the classroom, but within the context of remote group instructional lessons. This may mean simple things such as using pictures in different languages, interjecting different languages into instruction, or making a communication board. Although we cannot ask parents to visit the class (as might have been common in prior years), this year we can request parents remotely visit classes and perhaps tell a story or sing a song in their native language. The concept is to infuse the educational environment with cultural and linguistic diversity.

Prekindergarten classes will institute best practices when planning for EMLL students in any of the instructional models by following the Core Principles for high quality instruction for EMLL's. The principles are the following:

1. A child's home language is an integral cultural asset that should be honored, sustained, and reflected in the classroom and program environment.
2. Introducing the home language for instruction and programming enriches learning, supports English language acquisition, and promotes multilingualism.
3. Programs encourage families to sustain their home language and use their home language for learning activities.
4. Lifelong multilingualism is beneficial and desirable for all individuals.
5. Everyone in the program makes a commitment to adopt multilingual approaches.

All students receive an authentic assessment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, if required of a preschooler, an ELL identification will be conducted within 30 school days. These initial assessments will enable teachers to identify gaps in learning due to limited English proficiency when skills are assessed at quarterly checkpoints during the school year.

To establish a positive and welcoming culture to all parents of children attending our program, we will have signage in various languages. Currently, we do have staff that speak diverse languages that will be available for interpretation upon need. Little Meadows will research information related to COVID- 19 and other topical issues in various languages and will share with families. An additional resource available to our program is the NYCDOE interpreter service. By appointment, they can provide interpreters for meetings, evaluations, and assessments. Parents of EMLL students will have access to the same emotional supports and technological supports as all students who attend the Little Meadows program.

Little Meadows plans to be in full compliance for special education students who have bilingual class and bilingual speech on their IEP. Those children will be in the same cohort as others with similar language needs and will be assigned staff that speak their family language.

## **S. OFF-SITE SCIS CLASSES**

- Little Meadows' off-site SCIS classes are collaborations with community organizations.
- Little Meadows will work with these centers to coordinate schedules and continuity of learning.
- Little Meadows staff and families will follow our collaborating center's protocols for health and safety, arrival and dismissal, cleaning protocols and social distancing.
- Little Meadows will be working collaboratively with our colleagues to assure that their standards meet our standards.
- Little Meadows will offer parents options learning models, i.e. in person, hybrid or remote. We will collaborate with our community partners to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, an appropriate balance of children with and without IEPs in the classroom.
- Little Meadows students will follow the Little Meadows calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.