



Patagonia Montessori Elementary School, Inc.

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July 13, 2020

Parents and Students,

First and foremost, I want to thank your family for being part of our school community. I know the past few months have presented various challenges and have definitely changed how we go about our everyday lives. I have been an educator for almost 20 years, and I have never experienced anything like this before. The abrupt school closing in March brought many new challenges for our teachers and students. I was so impressed with how our teachers worked tirelessly to create work and packets for home instruction. While not an ideal situation, our students completed the work, asked questions, and continued learning. Our Zoom meetings brought me so much joy, and I could not be prouder of these young people. I know this was not easy for any of us, and I want to express my gratitude to all of the parents for supporting your children with at home learning. We have learned a great deal since March and are confident that we can provide a quality educational experience for our school families.

Over the past few months, we have been working on a plan to reopen based on the guidance from the Arizona Department of Education, the county superintendent's office, and the local health department. The health and welfare of all of the parents, students, teachers, staff, and community is of utmost importance to us. With the guidelines outlined in our reopening plan, we feel that we can safely offer in-person instruction, and have concrete plans if schools are mandated to close.

While this next school year will look much different from past years, I am excited to take this journey with you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, ideas, or concerns. I will be in contact with you this week to find out how we can best serve your individual needs. This is a fluid plan and we will be adjusting it as needed.

Sincerely,

Jessi Beebe

MISSION STATEMENT: We believe education is a drawing forth of the child's innate being. In a structured and nurturing environment, we provide tools for successful living and learning: respect, responsibility, confidence, discovery and joy.

Patagonia Montessori School
Plan for Reopening for the 2020-2021 School Year
Revised August 11, 2020

The 20-21 school year begins on August 17th. We will be offering online direct instruction and work packets to all students. As per Executive Order 2020-51, while we are unable to fully open, we will be providing onsite learning opportunities and support services. We will be opening our campus for in-person instruction once all of the health department benchmarks have been met. We will take every precaution to provide a safe environment for all of our students, teachers, and staff.

Below are the additional measures we will be taking to ensure a safe environment for all.

Arrival

We will implement a student drop off lane. School gates will be open from 8:15-8:30. If you arrive before the gate opens, please have your child wait in the car. Once the gates open, students should enter, one family at a time, beginning at the start of our drop off lane.

We will be screening students as they arrive. Screening will include a visual symptoms check and a temperature check. If a student appears sick or has a temperature greater than 100.4 (we will recheck after a cool down period for students who appear healthy and may just be overheated), they will be invited to work from home for the day. Primary parents will need to sign students in and out at the gate. All other parents should stay in their vehicles.

Departure

Students will be dismissed as families arrive in our student pickup lane. Students walking or riding bikes will be dismissed after most of the traffic has cleared.

Classroom Environment

Montessori education emphasizes hands-on learning and requires students to use materials to come to conclusions and learn concepts. Our classroom materials will stay the same. However, after a student uses a material, they will place it in a designated area where it will be cleaned and disinfected before being returned to the shelf. Students will have their own supply of pencils and other consumable materials.

The reading room will be closed, but books will be available to students to have in their classroom.

Students will each have an assigned work area. Students will still be able to move about the classroom, but will need to maintain 6 feet of distance when doing so.

Classroom groups will be self contained and interaction between classes will be limited.

We will have a designated outdoor classroom space for each class. Classes will work outside when possible.

Each class will have designated individual recess time. Our play structures will be closed, but we will have different play items that conform to physical distancing and limited contact. Shared items will be cleaned between student uses.

Air purifiers with H13 HEPA filtration systems will be used in each classroom.

Additional classroom assistants and /or cleaning personnel may be employed to assist teachers and help with enhanced cleaning schedules.

Lunch and snack will be eaten in the classroom or in the outdoor classroom space. Students will not be able to share food. All students will bring their own snack and lunch.

Elementary students will have tablets and we are working on acquiring chromebooks for middle school students.

Physical Distancing

Especially with younger students, we realize that keeping students apart will be challenging. For the safety of everyone, students will need to stay 6 feet apart as much as possible.

Hand Hygiene and Hand Washing

Additional hand washing sinks will be installed in each classroom. All sinks will be equipped with touchless faucets and automatic soap and paper towel dispensers.

Students will be taught and reminded of proper hand washing techniques (ie. washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, washing hands often).

A hand sanitation station equipped with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will also be available in each classroom.

Respiratory Etiquette

Face masks will not be required for students under 5 years old. Face masks will be required for all students in the elementary and middle school when social distancing is not possible. Students should bring their own masks. We will have some disposable masks on campus for students.

Teachers and staff will wear face masks when working closely with students and when social distancing is not possible.

Face masks will be required of all visiting adults.

Cleaning and Disinfection

All classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Shared objects will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

UV light sanitizing wands will be used on items that cannot be cleaned in the traditional way.

Mandatory School Closure

The campus will be closed if it is state mandated.

If there is a COVID-19 outbreak, the school will go on a 14 day online/packet instruction model.

Online Model

All students will meet online as a class for an hour of instruction each day. Students will also meet online in small groups for instruction and help. Each student will meet with the teacher every day for individual or small group lessons. Teachers will also be available during school hours via Zoom. Students will be able to talk to their teacher anytime during the day. Students will be able to assist each other as well. We will offer in person small group learning when possible.

In the event of mandatory school closure, students will need to meet online with their teacher for no less than an hour per day.

All classes will meet online as a group each morning. After the meeting, students will meet at designated times throughout the day. Unlike the closure in March, all lessons will need to be attended, and all work will still need to be completed.

Proposed Reopening Options

Once it is safe to open, families will have the choice of the 3 reopening options. We will do our best to accommodate all of our families. Depending on the numbers, we will consider offering more than one option.

Option 1: In person instruction for the full school day. This would be 8:30 – 3:15 Monday – Thursday and 8:30 – 12:00 on Fridays. Preschool hours will be 8:30 – 12:00 Monday – Thursday.

Option 2: Flex Schedule with reduced in person instruction and home study packets with online meetings.

Option 3: All online and home study packet instruction with daily remote lessons or in person individual and small group instruction. This will be the only option if schools are mandated to close.