

# Reopening Plan for The Renaissance Charter School (TRCS)

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## **I. Overview, Key Features and Stakeholder Involvement**

Overview: **The TRCS Reopening Plan** has been developed to provide a framework for extending and expanding the [TRCS Educational Continuity Plan](#) to ensure continued and improved instruction and school services for all TRCS students in 2020-21. The TRCS Educational Continuity Plan was developed in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and provided TRCS with a blueprint for transitioning from its on-site in-person instructional program to a fully remote instructional program and for implementing high-quality academic programming, counseling and student supports through distance learning. A key part of the TRCS Educational Continuity Plan is the “*Plan to Resume On-site Academic Programming Once the School Building is RE-opened.*” This section of the plan described how the TRCS School Management Team (SMT), under the leadership of the Board and with the support and input of leaders from academic and operations departments, grade-level clusters and other school stakeholders, would develop procedures and recommendations to ensure continued instruction and support following the initial implementation of the Educational Continuity Plan and after the school building is re-opened. The TRCS Reopening Plan has grown from the discussions of these school stakeholders throughout Spring and Summer 2020 about transitioning to and implementing a remote learning program and from their evaluation of “lessons learned” from the remote learning experience.

The TRCS Reopening Plan does not purport to be a complete or permanent “roadmap” directing TRCS’ activities as it implements instruction in 2020-21. Rather, it outlines TRCS’ strategy and general procedures for providing instruction and school services while giving TRCS flexibility to respond to changes in circumstances. TRCS recognizes that COVID-19 has been unpredictable in its impact prior to and throughout the closure of NYS schools and that, going forward, the school

must be prepared to react quickly and appropriately to internal (e.g. persons in the school testing positive for the virus) and external (e.g. regional “spikes” in COVID-19 cases) issues. While New York State (NYS) and New York City (NYC) currently appear to have “flattened the curve” regarding new COVID-19 cases, Jackson Heights/Corona continues to be a “hot spot,” with more COVID-19 cases since March than any other NYC neighborhoods. TRCS must therefore maintain a very high level of vigilance in addressing COVID-19-related issues. Also, since the number of COVID-19 cases in the community and/or the city could increase at any time, TRCS must be prepared to adjust its educational program and, if necessary, return to an exclusive remote learning program. In addition, the governing guidance and data provided by NYS Governor’s Office, the NYS Department of Health (DOH), the NYS Education Department (SED), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) and other agencies may be updated and/or amended, which could require TRCS to make significant modifications to its educational program and/or health and safety systems. The TRCS Reopening Plan is designed to address these contingencies.

Key Features of the Reopening Plan: The TRCS Reopening Plan is grounded in the following principles:

- ***The TRCS Reopening Plan is aligned with Relevant Governing Guidance.*** In developing this Reopening Plan, we recognize that this plan will continue to be revised and reassessed as new information and guidance becomes available. TRCS has and will continue to abide by the Governor’s executive orders, and has and will continue to review the Guidance documents prepared by the [NYSDOH](#), [NYSED](#), and the [CDC](#). The TRCS Reopening Plan is aligned with the principles, recommendations and guidelines set forth in these Guidance documents. We recognize that, as new information about the virus is discovered and/or circumstances regarding the number and severity of COVID-19 cases change (including instances and trends regarding related illnesses such as Multi-syndrome illnesses currently impacting children), the guidance provided by the relevant agencies may be updated. The TRCS Reopening Plan will be reviewed and revised periodically to new and updated governing guidance.

Also, TRCS Principal Stacey Gauthier was a member of the NYS Regional School Reopening Task Force, where she provided input into the development of the SED

Guidance document. The TRCS Reopening Plan incorporates insights and recommendations based on her Task Force experience.

- ***The TRCS Reopening Plan is designed to build on policies, practices and “lessons learned” in developing and implementing the TRCS Educational Continuity Plan.*** The TRCS Reopening Plan builds on TRCS’ culture of continuous improvement by engaging school leaders, instructional staff and other school stakeholders in data-informed decision-making to ensure that the 2020-21 academic program is successful. Throughout Spring and Summer 2020, the SMT met frequently and reviewed a variety of data to assess the effectiveness of remote learning, measure progress towards school and charter goals and identify changes that should be made to improve the educational program. The SMT also solicited input periodically from leaders of academic departments and grade-level clusters, along with other members of the school community. The TRCS Reopening Plan reflects the data-collection, deliberations and understandings of the SMT.
- ***The TRCS Reopening Plan is designed to support flexibility in decision-making and implementation of the educational program.*** The TRCS Reopening Plan is designed to support the school in implementing an effective educational program in a variety of circumstances. It also provides TRCS with flexibility to react quickly to changes in conditions and to take appropriate action to protect the health of its students and staff. The plan envisions scenarios including all-remote learning, “hybrid” learning and eventual all-in-school learning, and it provides strategies and practices to support student safety and academic and social-emotional growth in each scenario.
- ***The TRCS Reopening Plan is aligned to TRCS’ Mission, Charter and Values.*** The mission of TRCS is to “provide a comprehensive academic program aligned with the New York State learning standards that fosters educated, responsible, humanistic young leaders who will through their own educational development and personal growth spark a renaissance in New York City and beyond. Its graduates will be global citizens with an abiding respect for peace, human rights, the environment and sustainable development.” The TRCS Reopening Plan supports TRCS’ mission by:
  - Ensuring that all students will engage in a comprehensive NYS standards-aligned academic program—whether remote or in-school or a “hybrid” combination of each—that supports them in achieving credits sufficient to move from grade to grade and graduate with their cohorts.

- Addressing the needs of the “whole child” through a variety of strategies including virtual and/or in-person project-based and experiential learning initiatives and virtual advisories, counseling and other activities and practices to promote social-emotional development.
- Continuing its commitment to civic education and fostering student empathy, advocacy, activism and global citizenship by exploring innovative ways to foster student community action and advocacy through virtual, in-person and/or “hybrid” means.
- ***The TRCS Reopening Plan Addresses the Needs of All Students.*** The TRCS Reopening Plan will provide comprehensive instruction to all students and ensure that all students receive sufficient and appropriate supports to help them progress from one grade to another through graduation. The plan addresses the needs of special student populations including SWDs, ELLs and economically disadvantaged students, and it provides enrichment activities for all students. The plan also provides for continuation of TRCS College and Career Readiness (CCR) programs through synchronous and asynchronous delivery of CCR instruction and supports.
  - TRCS is located in Jackson Heights, the epi-center of the NYC Pandemic in its worst days. We recognize that our students have undergone great stress, trauma and grief throughout this experience, and we are fully prepared to support them in managing their way back to academic life. We will be adding 3 more mental-health providers through a federal grant program, and are developing an expanded morning meeting/advisory system that incorporates mindfulness, social-emotional wellness, and empathetic awareness, in addition to academic counseling and stress-relieving tactics and exercises. To better prepare our staff, we will be providing professional development to "build a common understanding of trauma and resilience", anti-bias training, and culturally responsive teaching.

Stakeholder Involvement in Development and Implementation of the Reopening Plan: The TRCS Reopening Plan has fully considered the SED Guidance that says that it must “engage with school stakeholders and community members... when developing reopening plans.” Such total school community involvement is consistent with TRCS’ commitment to involving a wide range of stakeholders in school decision-making and being responsive to the school community. Accordingly, TRCS has engaged a variety of stakeholders in the development of this plan, and it intends to

expand the circle of stakeholder involvement as it implements the plan in Fall 2020. Stakeholder involvement has included:

- a) *The SMT*—TRCS’ Principal and senior instructional administrators have directed the development of the TRCS Reorganization Plan and will facilitate its implementation.
- b) *The Board*—TRCS’ SMT has kept its Board informed about the Reopening Plan through reports and discussions at Board meetings and through written and verbal communication with the Board Chairperson and individual Board members. Board input has been welcomed and considered as the Reopening Plan was developed.
- c) *Instructional staff*—The SMT has worked with academic department heads and grade-level cluster coordinators to solicit input and ideas regarding educational programming in 2020-21. The SMT will continue to engage instructional staff in data-collection and discussions to inform programmatic decision-making and implementation of the TRCS Reopening Plan throughout 2020-21 and beyond.
- d) *Parents*—The SMT administered a Parent Survey that provided significant data used in developing the TRCS Reopening Plan. Also, TRCS held well-attended monthly virtual Parent Association meetings throughout Spring and Summer 2020. Parent input generated through general discussion (with translation for non-English-speaking parents) and “open parent questions.” TRCS intends to solicit and act upon parent feedback throughout its implementation of the Reopening Plan.

In addition, TRCS has consulted with the UFT and DC 37 chapter leaders as it developed the Reopening Plan.

## II. General Reopening Strategy and Communications Plan

General Reopening Strategy: TRCS expects to implement its 2020-21 educational program in phases, with movement through each successive phase triggered by formal SMT decisions based on school-designed metrics that are consistent with SED, DOH, CDC and NYCDOE guidance and/or with NYS/NYC mandates (e.g. if the NYS Governor or NYCDOE orders school buildings to be closed). TRCS expects to begin the 2020-21 school Fall semester in **Phase One**, which requires it to provide instruction and school services in a 100% Remote Learning environment although, under certain circumstances, TRCS may start the year with a mix of in-person on-site instruction for preK-

K students and students with particular educational, emotional and/or behavioral needs and remote instruction for all other students. Subsequent phases will engage students in a various “hybrid” learning scenarios with some students participating in in-person on-site instruction and all others taking part in online instruction. Throughout each phase, TRCS will ensure that high educational standards are maintained and that all students have equitable access to excellent instruction. Indeed, a core characteristic of TRCS’ 2020-21 educational program is that all students, whether participating in in-person or online instruction, will be provided a comprehensive, high-quality and full-day five-day-per-week learning experience.

Recognizing that decisions to move the school from one phase to another or, in severe circumstances, to suspend in-person instruction entirely must typically be made quickly, the TRCS Board has empowered the SMT to act on behalf of the school to move from one phase to another based on a series of metrics including:

- *Preferences of students and families*—TRCS has worked closely and cooperatively with parents and families during the Spring 2020 transition from in-person instruction to remote learning and will continue to be sensitive to the concerns and wishes of parents and families in the coming school year. TRCS has made a commitment to parents and families that any student who chooses to engage in remote learning at the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year will be allowed to do so, and that the school will try to accommodate the choices of parents and students regarding their selection of remote or in-person instruction throughout the year. In other words, if parents who elect for their children to engage in remote learning at the beginning of the year request to participate in in-person on-site instruction later in the year, TRCS will consider the parents’ request. In Summer 2020, TRCS administered a survey to parents and families to determine the number and identities of students who are electing to engage in remote learning at the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year and those who are electing to return to in-person on-site instruction. TRCS’ leadership team is currently analyzing survey results to better understand how comfortable parents and families are with the idea of sending their children to school for in-school instruction. Survey results have informed TRCS’ development of the “phases” of the TRCS Reopening Plan, and future survey results will inform implementation of the Reopening Plan and movement from one phase to another. For instance, if an overwhelming percentage of parents and families express reservations about returning to in-person instruction, TRCS will make every effort to

address and alleviate their concerns, and if the parents are still hesitant about in-person instruction, adjust its educational programming accordingly. While respecting families' decisions, we will also work to alleviate concerns and to educate our families about the precautions we are taking. Alternatively, if a significant percentage of parents and families say that they want students to engage in in-person instruction, then TRCS will consider these concerns as it makes decisions about reopening its school building and implementing its 2020-21 academic program and will make reasonable efforts to accommodate their wishes.

- *Increases in the number and severity of COVID-19 cases in NYC and/or TRCS*—TRCS' SMT will monitor COVID-19 cases and outcomes in NYC and in the Corona/Jackson Heights community on an ongoing basis, including analysis of trends in the number of cases and the severity of such cases—e.g. the number of COVID-19-related deaths. TRCS, at minimum, will follow the guidance and rules established by NYS, which includes suspending in-person instruction and providing only remote learning if cases in the region exceed a designated percentage of the overall population. More specifically, TRCS will make determinations regarding movement from phase to phase and/or suspension of in-person instruction based on analysis of community and school-based COVID-19 data and will reserve the right to act in a manner that is more cautious or restrictive than the NYS guidance. For instance, if several students in a cohort or across the school exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, TRCS may suspend in-person instruction for the cohort or the school even though the percentage of cases in the region is well below the NYS-designated target percentage.
- *Government mandates and guidance*—TRCS will make every effort to comply with the mandates, rules, recommendations and guidance of relevant government agencies, including the NYS Governor's Office, SED, DOH and CDC. In the event that the NYS Governor's Office determines that NYC is no longer in NYS Reopening Status Phase Four and that schools can no longer provide in-person on-site instruction, TRCS will review its academic programming and make adjustments, if necessary, to ensure educational continuity in an all-remote learning environment. Similarly, if NYCDOE determines that its school buildings cannot open until a given date and/or once operating will be required to close, TRCS will review its programming and work with NYCDOE to make adjustments, if necessary, to ensure that its students continue to receive high-quality instruction.

- *Staffing restrictions*—TRCS’ decision to move from early-phase academic programming focusing exclusively or primarily on remote instruction to later-phase academic programming featuring a “hybrid” model of in-person on-site instruction and remote instruction is largely dependent on TRCS’ in-school staffing capacity. TRCS expects that many members of its academic and administrative staff may seek accommodations to work remotely in 2020-21. In compliance with the guidance and recommendations of the CDC and DOH, TRCS will consider approving requests for accommodations from staff members who provide documentation that they are in such specific “high-risk” categories as being 65 years old or older, having serious chronic diseases identified by the CDC or DOH. While TRCS expects to approve requests for accommodations from staff members who are 65 years of age or older or with documented chronic diseases, it will reserve the right to make determinations regarding accommodations, and granted if it is determined the staff member can perform their essential duties.

- In addition, staffing issues may arise because of NYS mandates. For instance, the NYS Governor’s Office has declared a travel advisory requiring any person entering NYS after having spent 24 hours or more in a high-risk state (which currently includes 34 states and Puerto Rico) must self-quarantine for 14 days. TRCS teachers returning from summer vacations or from visiting friends or relatives in a high-risk state must self-quarantine and may thus be unable to work in the school building at the very beginning of the school year.

- *Executive discretion*— The health and safety of our students and staff are the most important considerations in the TRCS Reopening Plan. TRCS’ SMT therefore reserves the right to take executive action to move the school from one phase to another and/or to suspend in-person instruction when, in its discretion and based on the most recent relevant information, it believes that changes in circumstances and/or health and safety concerns warrant such action. In such instances, the SMT will work closely with the Board and the school community to facilitate smooth transitions and educational continuity.

The TRCS Board has also empowered the SMT to communicate on behalf of the school with the charter authorizer, SED, DOH, NYCDOE and other relevant agencies, as well as members of the school and general community, to support implementation of the TRCS Reopening Plan.

The TRCS Reopening Plan outlines a series of phases of implementation of the TRCS educational program, with **Phase One** being a 100% remote learning experience for all students and with each



consecutive phase moving progressively towards a 100% in-person instructional program for all students or an intentionally “hybrid” learning experience for all students that combines in-person and remote instruction. Our general expectation regarding the phases is:

- **Phase One**—Phase One will deliver 100% Remote Learning for all students, with all TRCS students and staff engaging in online instruction five days per week. While TRCS has not firmly determined that it will begin the Fall 2020-21 semester in Phase One, it is fully prepared to do so and will decide whether or not to commence 2020-21 with Phase One in August 2020. (TRCS also recognizes that, if NYCDOE determines that its school buildings will not open in September 2020, then TRCS will probably be unable to provide on-site instruction and would most likely be required to engage in Phase One instruction.)

Phase One represents a continuation and improvement of the remote learning program that TRCS implemented in Spring 2020. In Phase One, all TRCS students will engage in synchronous and asynchronous online learning in all subjects and will participate in daily online Advisories and interactive, project-based learning. In implementing Phase One (and the remote learning components of Phase 2 and Phase 3), TRCS will provide students with meaningful standards-based learning experiences that are substantially similar to those that students would engage in in the physical classroom. TRCS firmly rejects the notion that remote instruction necessarily leads to learning loss and is committed to providing online instruction that is engaging, challenging and effective. The Phase One Remote Learning program will significantly expand “live,” synchronous online instruction with TRCS teachers engaging daily in classroom teaching through Zoom or other remote learning platform(s). Students will be able to interact with teachers during online office hours, and they will participate in project-based learning, field learning and related learning experiences through distance learning technologies. Students will also be able to access online counseling, tutoring and other supports.

- **Phase Two**—Phase Two will deliver instruction in a “Hybrid” Instructional Model providing opportunities for in-person and remote instruction to all students. TRCS expects to implement Phase Two in the following way:
  - In-person instruction will be provided five days per week to a targeted group of at-risk students in grades 1-12 whose academic, developmental, behavioral or other needs require them to receive in-person instruction and supports. These students will

constitute a “cohort” for purposes of academic/social grouping and social distancing. The selection of students who will participate in this cohort will be made by the SMT based on recommendations from instructional and/or counseling staff, requests from parents and other relevant data.

- Students in grades preK-6 who choose in-person instruction will engage in such in-person on-site instruction four days per week, with remote instruction from home one day per week. The availability of in-person instruction will be subject to staffing considerations discussed above. Currently, we expect that between 40%-50% of PK-6 students will elect for full-time remote instruction in Fall 2020. TRCS will strive to provide in-person on-site instruction to as many of the remaining students as possible, with the understanding that limitations on classroom space may impact the number of in-school students and that a sufficient number of instructional staff members at each grade must be working and teaching in the school building to accommodate all students. Regarding availability of classroom space:

- To facilitate social distancing, no more than 15 students can be taught in a classroom at any given time. To minimize contacts, students will be separated into “cohorts,” with each cohort remaining together all day. Students in each grade/cohort will generally be split into two groups in separate classrooms. With 22 classrooms available to support on site learning, the number of students who can be provided in-person learning is roughly 318 students.

In the event that TRCS’ classroom availability is insufficient to accommodate all of the students who request in-person instruction and/or TRCS does not have a sufficient number of in-school instructional staff, the number of preK-6 students who can participate in in-person on site instruction will be reduced.

All PreK-6 students will engage in remote learning from home one day per week. Such remote learning will be substantially similar to that provided to all students in Phase One. Specifically, students will engage in “live” synchronous instruction throughout the day. Even when students are completing work asynchronously, they will be supported, guided and/or coached synchronously by teachers and instructional paraprofessionals.

- Students in grades 7-12 will engage in remote learning from home four days per week, with in-person on site instruction one day per week. Please note that the

considerations regarding limited classroom availability and staffing discussed in connection to in-person on site instruction for preK-6 students apply to in-person on site instruction for students in grades 7-12 as well. Remote instruction will be delivered primarily through “live” teaching with students and teachers working closely and interactively in synchronous learning activities. Regarding in-person on site instruction, students will be separated into cohorts to engage in Advisories, project-based learning and similar activities.

- **Phase Three**—Phase Three will comprise a possible modification of the “Hybrid” learning program, based on analyses of data and “lessons learned” to improve instruction for students and expand student access to live, in-person on site instruction. The SMT will periodically review the effectiveness of the Phase Two program and make adjustments as necessary. A key objective of Phase Three is to make steady progress over time and based on relevant health, safety and academic data towards an instructional model that comprises 100% in-person on site learning and/or a long-term “hybrid” instructional model with an intentional mix of remote and in-person learning for all students.
- **Phase Four**—Phase Four will comprise 100% In-person On-site Learning and/or a long-term “hybrid” instructional model with an intentional mix of remote and in-person learning for all students. We view this as a long-range option that will be contingent upon significant and positive changes in health and safety conditions (e.g. a proven, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccine).

Communications Plan: TRCS is currently developing a comprehensive Communications Plan for students, parents, families, staff members and visitors. This plan includes applicable instructions, training, signage and a consistent set of procedures and practices to provide relevant information and support to the TRCS school community. TRCS intends to bring a wide range of strategies and resources to bear as it establishes plans for ongoing communication. Among these strategies and resources are:

- a) *Communication with parents and families* through the TRCS website, virtual town hall meetings, the TRCS newsletter, email and phone communication and social media. TRCS will also provide parents and families with online training and support to help them understand the components of the TRCS Reopening Plan and make informed decisions about whether or not to request remote learning or in-person instruction for their children and other key

issues. TRCS will continue its practice of having teachers and staff reach out directly to parents and families via telephone, email and social media to “check in” about their students, help them support their children academically and emotionally and answer questions about curricula, instruction, counseling and emotional supports and implementation of the Reopening Plan. TRCS will also communicate frequently with parents and families to ensure that they are aware of and able to access the academic, social emotional and family support services that TRCS is providing. To the extent possible, TRCS will provide information to parents and families in their respective home languages. To this end, TRCS is prepared to translate documents into Spanish, Mandarin, Bengali and Urdu, and it will leverage the bilingual capacity of its staff and parent leaders to communicate verbally with parents and families in their home languages.

- b) *Direct communication with students* through intentional teacher-to-student interaction, including orientation and training for students to ensure that they are aware of and able to follow rules and requirements regarding such important health and safety issues as hand hygiene, wearing proper face covering, social distancing and respiratory hygiene. Teachers will be trained and supported in helping students—and especially young students—to observe health and safety protocols. Also, the communications strategy will provide students with developmentally appropriate information to help them understand the nature and danger of the COVID-19 virus and the importance of taking proper health and safety precautions. Classrooms and hallways will have appropriate and engaging signage to reinforce the importance of vigilance in protecting oneself and one’s neighbors from COVID-19.
- c) *Communication with the Parent Association, the Collaborative School Governance Committee (CSGC) and school-based and community organizations.* TRCS intends to leverage its resources and relationships throughout the school and in the community at large to support its students, parents, families and staff in 2020-21 and beyond. TRCS will work with parent leaders—including members of the Parent Association and the CSGC—as well as with its student leaders (e.g. members of the Student Council) and community partners to ensure that information about health and safety issues, the academic program, supportive services and other important concerns is shared widely throughout the school community.
- d) *Training and support for teachers and staff.* TRCS recognizes the critical role played by its teachers, counselors and other staff in monitoring how well students are adjusting to and coping with the stress of COVI-19-related transitions and in communicating with and providing

assistance and support to students, parents and families. TRCS has established a series of formal and informal supports for teachers and instructional staff including training and access to social emotional resources. As the TRCS Reopening Plan is implemented, TRCS will review and improve these services to help teachers and staff to communicate effectively with the school community.

- e) *Communication with SED, DOH and NYCDOE.* As discussed later, TRCS has appointed a COVID-19 resource person who will be the main contact upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases and who will be primarily responsible, along with the SMT and designees, for answering questions from students, faculty, staff, parents and families regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and any plans implemented by the school. The COVID-19 resource person will also work closely with local health department to monitor public health conditions and, as appropriate, develop joint COVID-19 monitoring strategies.

### III. Health and Safety—The School Community

TRCS affirms its review and understanding of the guidelines issued by the NYS Governor’s Office, SED, DOH and NYCDOE and will submit and keep current Reopening Plans that follow the guidelines prior to and throughout reopening. TRCS has engaged with school stakeholders and community members including, administrators, faculty, staff, parents and families of students and the local health department in the development of the TRCS Re-Opening Plan.

TRCS is a community of educators, scholars, parents, families and concerned residents with a set of shared values and a commitment to making the world better. As part of their shared belief in the importance of serving others, TRCS community members are dedicated to treating one another with respect, courtesy, support and care. In this age of COVID-19, we expect the TRCS community to come together and act in a way that protects our children, our staff and our families. We further expect that all members of the TRCS school community will comply with the guidance, recommendations and requirements of the CDC, DOH, SED, NYCDOE and other relevant agencies to preserve the health and safety of TRCS’ students, staff and community members. To this end, the TRCS Reopening Plan calls for the following:

- ***Social Distancing***—TRCS recognizes the importance of all members of the school community maintaining the proper social distancing protocols established by the CDC,

DOH and SED –i.e. generally staying at least 6 feet apart, with additional distancing required in special circumstances such as when students participate in activities that require singing or otherwise projecting their voices, play wind instruments and/or engage in aerobic activity resulting in heavy breathing. TRCS will ensure that such appropriate social distancing is maintained for any persons while in school facilities and on school grounds. TRCS will maintain protocols and procedures for students, faculty, and staff to ensure appropriate social distancing to protect against the transmission of the COVID-19 virus when on school grounds and in school facilities. TRCS will configure spaces so individuals can maintain social distancing and will use signage throughout the school facilities to remind and assist students, staff and visitors to maintain social distancing.

- Students in most grades must wear masks when in the school building. While they may be permitted regular “mask breaks” during the day when they are outside or otherwise practicing social distancing, students will be expected to wear masks at all times while in the school building, on school buses or in any other physical space tied to the school.
  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Cloth face coverings with air valves are not permissible.
  - Students may use their own acceptable face covering. TRCS will provide face coverings to students who do not have their own, at no cost to the students.
- While TRCS will provide masks to any student or visitor who seeks to enter the building without a mask, TRCS expects that everyone entering its building will wear a mask.
  - TRCS will have an adequate supply of face coverings, masks, and other required PPE on hand should faculty or staff need a replacement, or a student be in need.
- TRCS will develop plans for face covering breaks for students when they can maintain social distance.
- Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health are not subject to the required use of a face covering.

- TRCS will consider assistance to students who may have difficulty in adapting to wearing a face covering.
  - TRCS will train all students, faculty, and staff on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings. This training will be extended to contractors and vendors in situations where TRCS will be supplying the contractors and vendors with PPE.
- ***Social Distancing for Physical Education, Music and Other Certain Activities***—In compliance with relevant guidance, TRCS will ensure that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities that require projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity resulting in heavy breathing (e.g., participating in gym classes).
- ***Schedules***—TRCS will schedule staggered arrival and pick-up times to facilitate proper social distancing, and eliminate the use of student storage areas. TRCS’ SMT is currently coordinating with NYCDOE, the NYC Office of Pupil Transportation and other relevant agencies to facilitate the staggered arrival and pick up of its students.
- ***Gatherings***
  - ***Meals***—TRCS is its own food authority and has full responsibility for providing meals to its students. TRCS will provide meals to students and families engaged in remote instruction. For students engaged in in-person on site instruction, TRCS will provide meals and ensure social distancing between individuals while eating. Meals will be served in classrooms. TRCS will prohibit sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet style meals, snacks), unless individuals are members of the same household. Adequate space will be reserved for students, faculty, and staff to observe social distancing while eating meals.
  - ***Small Spaces***—TRCS will limit gathering in small spaces (e.g., supply rooms, faculty offices) by no more than one individual at a time, unless all individuals in such space at the same time are wearing acceptable face coverings or are members of the same household. However, even with face coverings in use, occupancy should not exceed 50% of the maximum capacity of the space, unless it is designed for use by a single occupant.
  - ***Faculty and Staff Meeting***—TRCS will use video or teleconferencing for faculty and staff meetings and conferences to reduce the density of congregations, per CDC

guidance “[Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)”. When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not preferable or possible, TRCS will choose to hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces and ensure that individuals maintain appropriate social distance (e.g., leave space between chairs, have individuals sit in alternating chairs).

- ***Common Areas***—TRCS will encourage social distancing by reducing access to, or closing, non-essential amenities and communal areas that do not allow for adequate social distancing protocols to be followed. If open, TRCS will make hand sanitizer or disinfecting wipes available near such amenities or areas (e.g., vending machines, communal coffee stations). TRCS expects to close off or remove its water fountains and provide students with water in an alternative way—e.g. providing bottled water or enabling students to use disposable cups and get water from faucets. TRCS will put in place practices for adequate social distancing in small areas, such as restrooms and breakrooms, and will develop signage and systems (e.g., flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy when social distancing cannot be maintained in such areas.
- ***Student Drop-off and Pick-up***—TRCS will establish designated areas for student drop-off and pick-up for each TRCS school facility, limiting contact and entry of parents/legal guardians into the building, to the greatest extent possible. TRCS will comply with NYS-issued public transit guidance, protocols and procedures, with the understanding that it does not have authority over school buses and other public transportation and must therefore rely on, while cooperating with, the NYCDOE Office of Pupil Transportation and other agencies to ensure that the relevant guidance and requirements are met. TRCS will rely on NYCDOE Pupil Transportation to ensure that school bus companies and personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for safety. TRCS will also rely on NYCDOE Pupil Transportation to ensure that school bus companies and personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for cleanliness and disinfection. Any school buses contracted directly by TRCS will meet the same guidelines as provided by DOH. Those families relying on NYC public transportation will be provided with full information and guidance for using public buses, subways, and taxis according to DOH rules.
- ***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)***—Acceptable face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. TRCS recognizes that face shields worn without other



face coverings are not considered adequate protection or source control against COVID-19 at this time and will not be used. Accordingly, TRCS will use alternative face coverings—e.g. transparent face masks.

In addition to the necessary PPE as required for certain workplace activities, TRCS will procure acceptable face coverings and provide such coverings to faculty and staff while at work at no cost to the faculty or staff members, pursuant to Executive Order 202.16, as amended and extended). Face coverings will be cleaned or replaced after use and will never be shared. Students and parents/families should take responsibility for maintaining their face coverings. TRCS will consult CDC and DOH guidance for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of PPE, as well as for instructions on use and cleaning.

Students and staff will be expected to wear face masks when in the building, and when social distancing is not feasible. While students and staff are expected to wear their own face masks whenever they enter the building, TRCS will have a supply of face masks available at all times to provide to students and staff as necessary. TRCS will develop plans for face covering breaks for students when they can maintain social distance.

#### **IV. Health and Safety—Building and Classrooms**

TRCS will not provide in-person on site instruction unless and until its building and classrooms meet appropriate health and safety guidelines and requirements. Because it is located in a NYCDOE-owned building, TRCS must rely on NYCDOE to ensure that the building meets all regulatory and health and safety requirements. TRCS is therefore relying on and cooperating with NYCDOE in ensuring that the building is safe and meets all relevant requirements.

TRCS expects to retain its NYCDOE-provided nurse who will provide health services to students and staff and will coordinate the school's COVID-19 health responses and initiatives. In the event that TRCS does not have access to a NYCDOE-provided nurse in 2020-21, it will appoint one or more staff members to provide health-related services and to be a primary contact to public and private health, medical and emergency services in NYC. TRCS will coordinate its health planning and services with NYCDOE.

As noted earlier, TRCS has determined the maximum number of persons who can safely be in classrooms and offices in the TRCS s school building and has adjusted its plan accordingly. In addition, TRCS has considered other health and safety concerns and made the following accommodations:

- ***Space Configurations***—TRCS will (1) modify or reconfigure spaces and areas, and/or (2) restrict the use of classrooms and other places where students, faculty, and staff gather (e.g., lockers, cubbies, entryways, hallways), so that individuals can be socially distanced (e.g., side-to-side and when facing one another), and are not sharing workstations, desks, tables, or other shared surfaces without cleaning and disinfection between use.

Where feasible, TRCS will put in place measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in hallways, or spaces throughout the school, and post signage and distance markers denoting spaces of six feet in all commonly used areas and any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g., outdoor spaces, classrooms, cafeterias, health screening stations).

- ***Signage***—TRCS will post signs throughout the school and will regularly share similar messages with the school community, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage regarding public health protections against COVID-19. TRCS will develop its own customized and age-appropriate signage specific to TRCS or educational setting, provided that such signage is consistent with the Department’s signage. Signage should be used to remind individuals to: a) Stay home if they feel sick; b) Cover their nose and mouth per the TRCS face covering policy; c) Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE; d) Adhere to social distancing instructions; e) Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19, and how they should do so; f) Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines; and g) Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
- ***Ventilation***—TRCS has relied and continues to rely on the NYCDOE regarding any and all matters related to air quality in the TRCS building and proper ventilation. TRCS will work with the NYCDOE to increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols. In coordination with NYCDOE, improvements to HVAC systems will be made, as well as air conditioning repairs, to improve air circulation, including replacing regular air filters with higher efficiency types..
- ***Cleaning and Disinfecting***—TRCS will rely on and cooperate with NYCDOE to ensure that cleaning and disinfection of the building are performed by the school’s custodial staff. in addition, TRCS will provide appropriate cleaning and disinfection

supplies to faculty and staff for use in disinfecting shared and frequently touched surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) These surfaces should be wiped down before and/or after use, followed by hand hygiene.

To reduce the possible spread of the virus on high-touch surfaces, TRCS will install touch-free amenities, such as trash receptacles and paper towel dispensers, where feasible.

TRCS will conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities and more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces, including desks and cafeteria tables which will be cleaned and disinfected between each individual's use, if shared. If student cohorts are used, cleaning and disinfection will take place between each cohort's use rather than each individual. Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed. The custodial staff will refer to DOH's "Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19" and "Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Primary and Secondary Schools for COVID-19" for detailed instructions on how to clean and disinfect TRCS facilities.

TRCS will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use. Best practices to implement in shared (i.e., communal) bathrooms include, but are not limited to: a) installation of physical barriers between toilets and sinks if six feet of separation is not feasible; and b) use of touch-free paper towel dispensers in lieu of air dryers.

TRCS will ensure that materials and tools used by employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. Custodial supervisors will refer to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) list of products registered in NYS and identified by the EPA as effective against COVID-19. If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, TRCS will put in place hand hygiene stations between use and/or supply disposable gloves and/or limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.

TRCS will ensure distancing rules are adhered to by using signage, occupied markers, or other methods to reduce restroom occupancy at any given time, where feasible.

TRCS will ensure the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces.

- ***School Safety Drill Modifications***—Education Law § 807 requires that schools conduct 8 evacuation and 4 lockdown drills each school year. When planning drills, TRCS will modify its drill procedures to minimize risk of spreading infection. Conducting drills is an important part of keeping students and staff safe in an emergency. However, TRCS will take steps to minimize the risk of spreading infection while conducting drills. As such, it will be necessary for TRCS to conduct drills in the 2020-21 school year using protocols that are different than the protocols used previously.

Regardless of the modification used when conducting a drill, TRCS 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; maintaining social distancing in an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown may not be possible and should not be the first priority. TRCS modifications to evacuation drill protocols will include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting drills on a “staggered” schedule, where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once, and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site. Staggering by classroom may minimize contact of students in hallways, stairwells, and at the evacuation site. If conducting drills using a modified procedure, it is required that the drill be conducted with all students in the school building on that school day, so it may be necessary to do so during a class period that is extended for this purpose.;

Modifications to Lockdown Drills may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting lockdown drill in classroom settings while maintaining social distancing and using masks;
- Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing, however schools must be certain that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person; and

- Conducting lockdown drill in classroom without “hiding” or “sheltering” but, rather, providing an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom.

**V. Health and Safety—Screening, Isolation and Response to “Positive” Tests**

TRCS will employ the following measures to screen all students, staff and visitors to the school building:

- **Temperature Screenings**—TRCS will implement mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff, and, when applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Temperature checks may be conducted under the supervision of TRCS staff per U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines, or for students, may happen at home with appropriate attestation from parents or guardians. (While we expect to take temperatures for all visitors in the building, we will consider any additional guidance from the DOH as well as any improvements in technology that could better facilitate the taking of temperatures.) All individuals must have their temperature checked each day before entering the TRCS facility. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, and if the individual is a student, he/she will be taken directly to the facility’s isolation room prior to being picked up by a parent or family member

TRCS will also use a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff reporting to school; and periodically use a questionnaire for students, particularly younger students, who will require the assistance of their parent or family member to answer, following the guidance of the DOH. Changes and/or additions to the current questionnaire will be completed in consultation with the DOH.

- Screening for all students, faculty, staff, and, where practicable, visitors, contractors, and vendors, will be completed using a questionnaire that determines whether the individual has:
  - a) knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
  - b) tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;

- c) has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days; and/or
  - d) has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.
- **Health Assessment by Nurse or Health Representative**—TRCS students or staff who have been assessed positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms by the school nurse or health representative, will be placed in the school’s isolation room and supervised until their parents, family members guardians or emergency contacts can retrieve them from school. Any student placed in the isolation room who is waiting to be picked up will remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is socially distanced prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.
- **Observing Signs of Illness**—TRCS will seek assistance from a professional health services provider in developing a written protocol to instruct staff to observe for signs of illness in students and staff. Staff will be provided training on the COVID-19 symptoms to look for what will signal the possibility that the person being screened may be symptomatic. This protocol will require symptomatic students and staff to be sent immediately to the nurse or other designated personnel. The TRCS protocol for caring for a student, faculty, or staff member who is identified as having COVID-19 symptoms during the school day includes:
  - Screening will be completed for all students, faculty, staff, and, where practicable, visitors, contractors, and vendors using a questionnaire that determines whether the individual has:
    - a) knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
    - b) tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
    - c) has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days; and/or
    - d) has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

TRCS understands that the quarantine of students, faculty, or staff may be required after international travel or travel within certain states with widespread community transmission of COVID-19, pursuant to current CDC and DOH guidance, as well as Executive Order 205. TRCS further understands that the manifestation of COVID-19 in children, although similar, is not always the same as that for adults. Children may be less likely to present with fever as an initial symptom, and may only have gastrointestinal tract symptoms, which should be taken into consideration during the screening process. TRCS staff will remind parents and family members that students may not attend school if they have had a temperature of greater than 100.0°F at any time in the past 14 days, even if a fever-reducing medication was administered and the student no longer has a fever.

On site screening by staff will be coordinated in a manner that prevents individuals from intermingling in close or proximate contact with each other prior to completion of the screening. Procedures have also been established to ensure that symptomatic students who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is socially distanced.

PPE requirements for school health office staff caring for sick/infected individuals will include both standard and transmission-based precautions. If there is moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield) will be added. When caring for a suspect or confirmed individual with COVID-19, TRCS staff members may use gloves, gowns and a fit-tested N-95 respirator, if available (or a surgical face mask and face shield, if not available), as well as eye protection. TRCS expects that DOH will provide all the PPE and supplies necessary for outfitting the school health office, including but not limited to eye protection, gloves, gown, and masks.

- **Observing Signs to Stay Home**—TRCS will advise and train parents to observe their children and identify signs that they may have symptoms of COVID-19 and need to stay at home. Parents and family members will be provided resources and training regarding the recognition of COVID-19 symptoms by TRCS. Training will also be provided about the process of conducting home health observations for COVID-19. Parents will be reminded of this daily requirement via a weekly email and/or telephone message. Specifically, parents and family members will be advised to keep their child home and notify the school if their child):
  - Has fever or chills (100°F or greater)

- Has knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19
- Has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- Has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days
- Has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19. The COVID-19 symptoms that parents/guardians will be advised to be on the lookout for include: a) Fever or chills (100°F or greater); b) Cough; c) Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; d) Fatigue; e) Muscle or body aches; f) Headache; g) New loss of taste or smell; h) Sore throat; i) Congestion or runny nose; j) Nausea or vomiting; and/or k) Diarrhea, flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, and/or irritability or frequent use of the bathroom.
- **Accommodations for High Risk Students**—TRCS will provide accommodations for students and staff members who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, subject to the conditions and considerations described earlier in this plan. These accommodations may include but are not limited to remote learning or telework, modified educational or work settings, or providing additional PPE to individuals with underlying health conditions.
- **Confirmed Case Protocol**—TRCS may implement short-term closure procedures if a confirmed infected person has entered or has been in the TRCS building, regardless of community spread. If this happens, TRCS will follow CDC/DOH recommendations and implement the following actions:
  - Coordinate with local health officials
  - Dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This short-term dismissal allows the local health officials to help TRCS determine appropriate next steps, including whether a short term or an extended dismissal is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.
  - Communicate with staff, parents, and students. TRCS will coordinate with local health officials to communicate full or partial dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.
  - Clean and disinfect thoroughly, in compliance with DOH, SED and NYCDOE guidelines and requirements and in coordination with the DOE. TRCS will follow



CDC guidelines on “Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility,” if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.

- Ensure continuity of education during the dismissal.
- Make decisions about extending the school dismissal based on analysis of relevant data and in coordination with DOE and DOH.
- **Returning to School After a Confirmed Case**—TRCS will work cooperatively with DOH, SED and NYCDOE to determine when students may return to school following a confirmed case. TRCS will ensure that reporting plans are in place for individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted to such exposure via tracing, tracking or other mechanism. TRCS will also refer to DOH’s [“Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure”](#) regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.