

Addendum to The Renaissance Charter School Reopening Plan (8/12/2020)

The Renaissance Charter School (TRCS) submitted a Reopening Plan to the New York State Education Department (SED) and the New York State Department of Health (DOH) on July 31, 2020. This Addendum will highlight and expand upon a few topics included in the plan—namely: (1) the Remote Learning program that comprises Phase One of the Reopening Plan; (2) the school’s plans regarding COVID-19 testing for students, staff and visitors to our school building; and (3) the school’s plans to support and cooperate with the efforts of relevant state and city agencies to track and “contact trace” students and staff members who test positive for COVID-19.

The Remote Learning Program:

TRCS expects to open on September 14 for students with an all-Remote Learning program. (Teacher professional development begins on September 8.) The *Phase One* Remote Learning program will run for 3 weeks when it will be replaced with a *Phase Two* “hybrid” approach, provided that: a) the 5-day average of COVID-19 cases in New York City and/or Jackson Heights/Corona did not exceed 3 percent; b) TRCS’ building and classrooms are determined to be sufficiently safe and prepared by the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the DOH and the TRCS School Management Team (SMT); and/or c) TRCS determines that proper protocols, practices and resources are in place to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff.¹ TRCS may elect to postpone its transition to Phase 2 or to return from Phase 2 to Phase 1 if it determines, based on COVID-19-related conditions at the time, that in-person on site instruction could unreasonably risk the health and safety of its students and staff.

In Phase One, TRCS will deliver a 100% Remote Learning for all students, with all TRCS students and staff engaging in online instruction five days per week. Phase One represents a significant extension 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 its Remote Learning program, 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. TRCS’ Remote Learning program will expand “live,” synchronous online instruction appreciably 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

¹ These same considerations will guide TRCS in making decisions regarding possibly returning to Phase One after moving to Phase Two in the event of a “spike” a Citywide or Neighborhood-wide COVID-19 cases or other relevant changes in COVID-19-related circumstances.

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.

In designing its Remote Learning plan, TRCS has benefitted from the advice, expertise and resources of a variety of community partners. TRCS is continuing to work with these organizations as it implements the plan. These community partners include:

- Hunter College’s School of Education, Department of Educational Foundations and Counseling, which is supporting TRCS in the areas of Social Emotional Wellness;
- The Heartfulness Foundation, which is supporting TRCS in the areas of Social Emotional Wellness;
- Kickboard for Schools, which is supporting TRCS in implementing online Positive Behavior Systems and Trauma Informed Response;
- Achievement Network, which is supporting TRCS’ remote Teaching and Learning and Assessment initiatives;
- NWEA, which is supporting TRCS’ online assessments and Teaching and Learning initiatives;
- The Collaborative for Inclusive Education, which is providing Professional Development;
- Coalition of Community Charter Schools, which is sharing best practices in remote learning from independent charter schools across New York City;
- 82nd Street Academics, which is working with TRCS to support Social Emotional Wellness in its extended day programs;
- JPS Solutions, which is supporting TRCS in Strategic Planning;
- IKON Business Group, which is providing technology solutions to TRCS; and
- Several community-based organizations that contribute to our student Leadership Program in the high school, and cultural institutions that provide virtual residencies for project-based learning throughout the K-12th grades.

In implementing the Remote Learning program, TRCS will continue and expand its commitment to **equity, accountability/school improvement** and **providing social-emotional support** to students, families and staff. When TRCS converted its academic programs to a Remote Learning format in the Spring, it developed an Educational Continuity Plan and a series of policies, practices and resources to ensure that the program would provide high-quality educational services to all students. In developing its reopening plan, TRCS evaluated the Educational Continuity Plan and “lessons learned” in implementing it during the Spring. For instance, TRCS conducted an audit of Remote Learning student schedules and used the audit results to identify a need to increase “live” Zoom instructional sessions, which it did beginning on April 14 and which it will continue to do in 2020-21. The Reopening Plan and this addendum will continue and improve upon TRCS’ effective policies and practices.

Equity: TRCS is committed to ensuring that all students have equitable access to excellent instruction in its Remote Learning program. TRCS distributed Chromebook computers to students and families prior to and during Spring 2020, and it has purchased additional Chromebook computers and instructional technology to ensure that all students participating in remote learning have the equipment they need to succeed.

TRCS is also committed to providing students with disabilities (SWDs) and students with IEPs participating in remote learning with all of the instruction and services they would receive in an in-person on site learning environment. TRCS has established a policy detailing how its wide range of services to SWDs are being maintained in its Remote Learning program, how TRCS continues to address student needs identified in IEPs and how TRCS is continuing to adhere to all federal, state and local guidelines to the maximum extent possible. This policy was distributed to TRCS' parents and families in a letter and posted on the TRCS website.

<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/files/ParentLetterSWD3-2020.doc> ;

<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/files/ParentLetterSWD-Espanol.doc>

TRCS remains committed to the promises contained in this policy. TRCS also conducted an audit of special education services in its remote learning program that confirmed that TRCS' special education instruction and services delivered remotely are equivalent to those delivered in its school building. The Special Education audit included an analysis of the number of minutes that special education services were delivered during the early stages of remote instruction that resulted in expansion of services. The results of the Special Education audit will be compiled into metrics that can be shared with the TRCS school community in a manner that protects the privacy of each student and the confidentiality of all student records. TRCS will continue to collect data to maintain the high quality of its remote special education instruction and services.

TRCS is also committed to ensuring that the needs of English language learners (ELLs)/Multi-lingual learners (MLLs) are met in its Remote Learning program, TRCS established a policy detailing how it has maintained its supports for ELLs and MLLs in its remote learning environment. These supports include co-planning meetings, creation of scaffolds to support ELL learning, modification of materials, small group "live" instruction through videoconferencing and immediate online feedback on assignments. TRCS remains committed to the promises contained in this policy. The policy was distributed to TRCS' parents and families in a letter and posted on the TRCS website.

<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/files/ELLMLLRemoteLearningPolicy.doc>

<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/files/ELLMLLRemoteLearningPolicy-Espanol.doc>

Accountability/School Improvement: TRCS is committed to accountability and transparency as it continues to implement its Remote Learning program. To this end, TRCS has conducted a series of audits during the Spring to determine how well various aspects of the Remote Learning program were being implemented and how effective they were in supporting student learning and growth. Among the audits conducted by TRCS were: a) an audit of teachers' remote lesson plans for academic rigor which has resulted in the collection of Exemplar Teacher Lessons that will be

updated on an ongoing basis; b) ongoing audits of teachers' live lessons—i.e. virtual “walk-throughs;” and c) an audit of AP student preparedness during remote learning.

TRCS has also implemented both student-focused and teacher-focused initiatives to promote sustained academic excellence and school improvement as it has engaged in remote learning. Among the student-focused initiatives are: a) implementation of online small group targeted reading; b) reinstatement of ANET Assessments of 2nd-8th grade ELA and Math; c) continuation of TRCS' College and Career Office's Support and Leadership Programs via remote learning; d) continuing extra-curricular and enrichment activities; and e) remote Parent-Teacher Conferences.

TRCS' teacher-focused initiatives include: a) Daily Digests—i.e. resources, announcements and reminders for staff, sent out each morning and stored in a shared drive, along with a compilation of useful links for staff; b) ongoing targeted professional development to improve teachers' capacity to provide effective online instruction and support; and c) ongoing Cluster meetings for collaboration and support.

As part of its commitment to accountability and transparency, TRCS has documented and posted on its website a series of Remote Learning policies, schedules and resources. These policies include its Remote Learning Attendance Policy (<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/parents.html>) and its Remote Learning Elementary, Middle and High School Grading Policies. (<http://www.renaissancecharter.org/parents.html>). TRCS is also posting its online class schedules, professional development schedules and documentation of its accountability procedures and practices. TRCS has also distributed and posted Online Learning Parent Guides (Elementary, Middle and High School) and Online Student Schedules (Elementary, Middle and high School). In addition, TRCS maintains phone logs of parent outreach activities performed by school-aides and teachers. TRCS will continue to make available its policies and related documents on an ongoing basis.

Social and Emotional Support: TRCS understands that its Remote Learning program is being implemented in a time of tremendous stress and upheaval and that all aspects of the program must consider and support the social and emotional health of TRCS students, families and staff members. TRCS is continuing its Social-Emotional Learning resources and guides for parents and staff through online means. These services have included and continue to include counseling via phone from TRCS' social worker and ongoing outreach and communication by teachers and staff members to students and parents, including targeted outreach in cases where students have been absent from remote classes, where students or family members are ill and/or where students or families are experiencing trauma. TRCS may also provide counseling services via Zoom and other videoconferencing technologies. Also, TRCS is addressing the needs of students and families by administering digital surveys regarding food insecurity, digital equity (e.g. access to the internet and electronic devices), illness, etc. and making appropriate referrals.

TRCS is committed to providing students, families and staff with information and resources to support them, including weekly Parent Digests that compile links for parent resources such as social services, enrichments and academic help for students, and notices of upcoming events and

supportive meetings. TRCS has conducted and continues to conduct monthly virtual Parent Association meetings in English and Spanish. TRCS also regularly provides students, parents, families and staff with Covid-19 Guidance, references and DOH Updates, along with presentations explaining COVID-19 for families with young children.

COVID-19 Testing

TRCS will employ the measures described below to screen all students, staff and visitors to the school building. TRCS will coordinate its efforts with those of DOE, DOH, SED and other appropriate agencies to maximize the health and safety of its students, families, staff and visitors. TRCS' COVID-19 testing procedures and protocols include:

- 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 will be conducted under the supervision of TRCS staff per U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and/or DOH guidelines. TRCS expects to use appropriate technology to facilitate temperature screenings. 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. 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:
 - 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;
 - Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
 - Has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days; and/or
 - 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 that 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:
 - 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;
 - Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
 - Has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days; and/or
 - 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 actions described in this Plan.
- Returning to School After a Confirmed Case—TRCS will work cooperatively with DOH and SED 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.

Contact Tracing

- ***Metrics***—TRCS will follow DOH and SED recommendations to identify clearly defined measures that will serve as warning signs (triggers) that the level of COVID-19 transmission is increasing in the school setting beyond an acceptable level, as defined by state and local health departments.
- ***Notification***—TRCS will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors.
- ***Tracing Support***—In the case of an individual testing positive, TRCS will develop plans to support local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. TRCS will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts.
- ***Quarantine Isolation and Return to School***—State and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of COVID-19 infected or exposed persons, including isolation or quarantine. 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 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.