



Ahava Early Learning Center Family Handbook Addendum

Updated June 15, 2020

COVID-19 Pandemic Response Policies and Procedures

In order to reopen Ahava ELC, it was determined that a phased reopening plan with health and safety policies in place would allow for us all to return to a new normal. Please read over and familiarize yourself with the following policies. We are always available to talk in the event you have questions or concerns about our return.

RE-OPENING CRITERIA

The school will re-open when each of the following criteria have been met:

- Georgia statewide shelter-in-place order lifted
- Atlanta citywide shelter-in-place order lifted
- Number of new cases and new hospitalizations in the Atlanta metro has decreased or stayed the same for 14 consecutive days, as reported on the AJC COVID-19 Tracking Dashboard.
- Majority support from families and sufficient number of enrollments to warrant re-opening
- Sufficient staff commitment to maintain class sizes of 8 children per class
- "Deep clean" of school facility completed
- Physical environment reconfiguration to promote social distancing, hygiene, and prepare the space for new class groups
- All necessary health and hygiene supplies obtained and on-going supply chain confirmed
- Ahava staff trained on new policies related to pandemic preparedness
- Synagogue staff trained on new policies related to pandemic preparedness
- Criteria for moving between levels of severity and re-closure finalized and approved
- Emergency communication system updated and in place

PHASED REOPENING PROCESS

The school will use a three-phase model of reopening based on the estimated level of risk of exposure and ability of the school and wider community to maintain various safety protocols.

Phase One - High Risk

When all of the re-opening criteria outlined above are met, the school will re-open to currently enrolled families.

When the school re-opens, it will do so with many new policies and procedures in place, as described in the remainder of this document.

Phase Two - Moderate Risk

Phase Two will be implemented when the school has been open under the High Risk procedures for at least 30 days without known diagnosis within the school community and the broader community has shown a steady or decreasing trend of new cases/hospitalizations for at least 14 days.

Some policies will be relaxed including resuming normal class groupings, ending daily health screenings, and relaxing requirements for preschoolers' face coverings. We will send additional information about Phase Two policy changes as the date of beginning Phase Two approaches.

Phase Three - Low Risk/Maintenance

Phase Three will be implemented when the school has been open under the Moderate Risk procedures for at least 30 days without known diagnosis within the school community and the broader community has shown a steady or decreasing trend of new cases/hospitalizations for at least 14 days.

During Phase Three, many of these pandemic policies will be relaxed or ended and the school will return to "business as usual" in many ways, with some new precautions in place.

*****Diagnosed cases of COVID-19 among students, staff, or immediate family members, or community-wide spikes in new cases/hospitalizations will result in moving from lower-back to higher-risk procedures.**

PANDEMIC RESPONSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Program Changes

Hours and Days of Operation

During Phase One of reopening, the school will be open Monday-Friday from 8:30am-5pm, with each classroom open for 7 hours of childcare and one hour for cleaning and sanitizing each day. Classes will have assigned, staggered, drop-off and pick-up times to minimize the possibility of cross-contamination between groups.

Class Sizes and Structure

During Phase One of the reopening, group sizes will be limited to no more than 10 children and two teachers per class, which will remain constant throughout each day and from one day to the next. In order to minimize contacts between classes (reducing potential cross-contamination between classes by at least three-fold), siblings over the age of 12 months will be grouped together as a family unit.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR LIMITING EXPOSURES

KEY REQUIREMENT 1: Limit Adult Contacts and Outside Contacts

1.1 Outside vendor extracurricular activities will be suspended until infection risk is much lower. In-house “extra-curricular” options may be offered to individual classes by Ahava staff with special interests/skills (e.g., movement and dance classes, cooking workshops)

1.2 No visitors, volunteers, or contractors will be allowed in the building when children are present except in emergency situations.

- a. All deliveries will be contactless whenever possible. When contactless delivery is not available, a staff member will accept deliveries in the breezeway space, with a mask and gloves, rather than allowing any delivery drivers inside the entryway.
- b. Vendors and repair personnel will generally be scheduled during designated cleaning hours, when children are not present, whenever possible. All vendors and maintenance personnel will be required to wear masks when in the building and will be subject to the same screening procedures as staff and students. They will be escorted to the piazza sink to wash their hands upon arrival at the school.
- c. Any parent meetings or conferences will be held online or by phone.
- d. Potential family tours will be conducted virtually, and new children’s start dates will be deferred.

1.3 Child drop-off and pick-up procedures will be modified to include daily health screening and minimize contact between adults.

- a. Arrival and Departure Times - Families will be assigned an arrival and departure window. Families may check their child in at any time during their designated window. If a family is not able to arrive during their scheduled time on a particular day, they should contact the school to request a different arrival time that will minimize their risk of cross-contamination with other groups of children. Similarly, families wishing to pick their child up early must notify the school in advance so that their child can be ready for departure.

Families will NOT generally be allowed into the main part of the school to retrieve their children, or for any other purposes while infection risk remains high.

- b. Arrival Process - Parents must park in designated parking spaces (i.e., NOT the emergency fire lane) and walk their child(ren) to the check-in station in the breezeway. Parents must wear a mask during the check-in procedure. Children 3 and over are also encouraged to wear masks or face shields during check-in. If another family is checking in, families must remain a minimum of 6 feet away from each other while waiting their turn. After completing a daily health screening, families will walk their children to the emergency exit door of their child's classroom where a teacher will be available to greet them and assist the child with saying goodbye, changing shoes, and washing hands before engaging with the rest of their class.
- c. Health Screening - All staff and students will complete a daily health screening before entering the building. This will include a temperature check and completion of a brief symptom/risk checklist. A staff member will check this daily screening and provide the child a "stamp of the day" before they go to their classroom. Any staff member assisting with morning check-in will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) including a mask, gloves, and glasses or other face screen. Hand sanitizer will be available for parents, staff, and children (at the parents' discretion) at the check in station.
- d. Pick-up Process - Families will be assigned pick up times. Parents will pick up their child(ren) from a designated outdoor spot during their pick-up window. In the event of rain parents will collect the child(ren) at the emergency exit door of the classroom. A teacher will sign the child out of Remini and an administrator will sign the child out on the computer.
- e. Approved Pick-Up/Drop-Off Persons - Each family is encouraged to have the same person drop off and pick up their child(ren) each day to minimize adult contacts. Families will be allowed only two regular approved adults for daily drop off and pick up. Any other adults on a family's approved list will be allowed only in emergency situations.

1.4 Staff may not transport children to or from school.

- a. Staff members may NOT assist in unbuckling or buckling children into their carseats or otherwise come into contact with families' cars/personal belongings.

1.5 Staff will limit contact outside of their individual classrooms.

- a. No in-person meetings will take place except among those teachers who share a classroom and one-on-one meetings with supervisors. All staff meetings, communities of practice, and large team meetings will continue to take place via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
- b. Only designated staff will be allowed into the dairy kitchen.
- c. Staff who do not share a classroom should maintain social distance (i.e., 6 ft apart) including in the Betty (staff room), bathroom, and on the playground. Staff should generally not enter any classrooms except their own and are encouraged to take their breaks outdoors whenever possible to avoid congregating in small enclosed areas such as the Betty.
- d. Staff may not leave campus during their scheduled work day (e.g., to get lunch).

KEY REQUIREMENT 2: Minimize Contact Between School Groups

2.1 Classroom groups will be limited to no more than 12 people total (including children and adults)

- a. The same teacher(s) will stay with the same group of children all day.
- b. Classrooms will not share toys or materials, except those gross motor materials that can be easily sanitized between groups.

- c. Classrooms will not combine for any reason.
- d. Toilets in Jack & Jill bathrooms will be designated one to a class. Sinks will be designated one to a class, where possible.
- e. Classroom spaces will not be used by any other group from the AA, the Board, or Keshet
- f. Shared spaces will be used by one class at a time and gross motor materials will be disinfected between use.

2.2. Siblings (and other family members) will be grouped together to greatly mitigate the risk of exposure to their own family and others in the school should a child in a family of siblings become infected.

- a. If either child is sick with a fever and /or respiratory symptoms, then neither child should come to school.
- b. In the case of a parent being called to collect a sick child, parents are strongly encouraged to collect both children at the same time.

2.3 Meal service procedures will be modified to limit contact between individuals and minimize risk of transfer of germs.

- a. Kosher, dairy lunch and two snacks will be served each day. Breakfast service will be suspended in accordance with changes to hours of operation.
- b. All meals will be served in covered containers, portioned for each class.
- c. Teachers will pick up their class' meals from outside the kitchen door only when notified by kitchen, using a designated classroom cart specifically for food transport.
- d. Teachers will serve children on individually portioned plates. Family-style, self-serve procedures will be suspended in all classrooms.
- e. Teachers will wear gloves and masks when serving food to children.
- f. All food will be eaten using disposable plates and utensils.
- g. Children will be seated at appropriately sized tables, with significant space between children. Tables should be limited to 3-4 children when possible.
- h. Individual children's water bottles should be kept from touching another child's bottle. Storage in the classroom or the playground may necessarily limit the child's ease of access, thus teachers should plan for regular water breaks during the day.
- i. Large group cooking experiences, including Friday challah-baking, will be temporarily suspended.

2.4 Playground, atelier, Paradies Hall and other community spaces shall not be used by more than one class group at a time. Playground times (and other spaces, as needed) will be assigned and high-touch surfaces and shared gross motor materials (e.g., Pikler climber, trampoline) will be sanitized between groups as outlined in the cleaning requirements section of these procedures.

2.5 Class groups will not be combined for any reason other than emergency situations (e.g., combining in severe weather shelters).

- a. Children will be dropped off and picked up from their individual classrooms or designated outdoor spaces as described above.
- b. Community events such as havdalah, shabbat, extra curriculars, and holiday celebrations will be conducted in individual classrooms or streamed into classrooms via Zoom or other virtual options for participation.

2.6 Support staff (including floaters, substitutes, etc.) will be assigned to only one primary classroom whenever possible. When it is not possible, schedules will be arranged so that a

single staff member does not go between multiple classrooms in a single day. If a staff member must go between multiple classrooms in a single day, when entering a new classroom, they should change their outer layer (e.g., jacket, apron, or shirt), wash their hands thoroughly, wear a mask, and minimize physical contact with children and other adults to the degree possible while still maintaining safe supervision practices.

2.7 Materials and equipment should remain in their designated spaces and may not be routinely shared between classrooms, the atelier, the piazza, the playground and Paradies.

- a. Teachers should label all classroom materials and equipment.
- b. Teachers may not enter another classroom or communal space to remove or share items. Materials no longer being used in a classroom should not be left in another space, but should be disposed of properly or cleaned, sanitized, and moved with pre-approval.
- c. If pre-approval is given to move materials or equipment, items must be cleaned and sanitized before use.
- d. Materials and equipment that belong to communal spaces such as outdoor gross motor equipment, gross motor equipment in Paradies, or materials in the piazza or atelier must remain in those spaces and be sprayed down or sanitized before use between different groups.

KEY REQUIREMENT 3: Minimize Contact Within School Groups

3.1 Staff should encourage physical distance between children, when doing so will not reasonably impair children's ability to learn or develop appropriately. Teachers will need to frequently and quickly weigh the balance of minimizing risk with supporting children's social, emotional, and cognitive needs to be physically close and engaged with one another and caring adults. For example:

- a. Teachers should encourage increased physical distance when proximity is not relevant such as setting up workstations for individual projects that are not crowded and spread out seating at mealtimes.
- b. Large groups should be avoided. Class meetings can happen in small groups or during meals, and read-alouds can happen at the beginning or end of nap time when children are on their own beds.
- c. Children should each have their own easy to clean "sit spot" to help define children's space and encourage social distance.
- d. Teachers should minimize time waiting in lines and use physical distance when waiting is necessary. Teachers should transport children in small groups rather than walk in lines, whenever possible.
- e. Cribs, cots and mats should be placed at least three feet apart or with a physical barrier between each, wherever possible. Place children head to foot instead of head to head.

3.2 Teachers and staff will greatly limit item sharing among students and staff.

- a. Teachers will create individual sensory bins/trays/bags for each child that can be thrown out after a week or two rather than use communal sensory tables.
- b. Staff and parents will clearly label classroom materials and personal items. Pens, clipboards and other office materials will be individualized rather than shared among staff.
- c. Students will not be allowed to bring toys or napping items from home to school. One small lovie from home is allowed for naptime as long as it is kept at school and stored and washed properly with bedding. A pacifier is also allowed if proper cleaning procedures are followed.

3.3 Teachers will educate children on important health practices.

- a. Each class will develop a plan for how to introduce health and hygiene topics to children in an age-appropriate way.
- b. Teachers will create, teach and regularly review with students developmentally appropriate health and hygiene routines and procedures within their daily schedule.

3.4 All staff will put increased focus on monitoring and supporting children's personal hygiene procedures.

- a. Teachers must have a specific classroom handwashing procedure (song, chant, counting, etc.) that they explicitly teach and coach (though children should be allowed to use alternate strategies as long as they meet the 20-second guideline for duration of handwashing).
- b. Teachers must have age appropriate visuals in the classroom to teach and remind students of proper handwashing techniques.
- c. Teachers must closely supervise or assist with children's hand washing for all age groups.
- d. Handwashing must happen at all the Bright From the Start intervals/activities (at least once per hour for adults and children, regardless of activity).
- e. Hand sanitizer may be used in **limited circumstances** if hand washing is not available and the hands are not visibly dirty for children age 2 years and older. **Children must be carefully monitored to avoid ingestion.**
- f. For classes where children wear face masks/shields, teachers will develop classroom routines and procedures to encourage children's use of appropriate face covering throughout the day and safe removal/storage when not in use.
- g. Children's individual water bottles will be carefully labeled and stored in such a way that they are not touching. In classes with younger children, water bottles will be kept out of reach of children except when in use. Water bottles must be cleaned and sanitized immediately if a child is observed drinking from a bottle that is not their own.

3.5 Staff, children, and families should wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect themselves and others. Individuals may choose to use more PPE at their discretion, but at a minimum must follow the guidelines below.

- a. All staff must wear a designated outer layer (e.g., apron, jacket, or oversized button down shirt) that can be changed throughout the day whenever soiled, masks or face-shields whenever interacting with other adults or children indoors or in close proximity while outdoors, and designated indoor-only shoes (or slippers/shoe covers) when inside the school building. Staff must also wear disposable gloves for diapering or helping with bodily functions, when cleaning, and when preparing or serving food. Special attention should be given to removing any soiled PPE (including gloves) in the proper way to minimize risk of contamination.
- b. Families/Caregivers must wear masks that cover their nose and mouth during drop-off/pick-up. If they must enter the school building, they must wear a mask and shoe covers (or remove their shoes).
- c. Children 3 years old and older should be encouraged to wear a face shield attached to a hat. If preferred, children over 3 may wear a face mask in place of a face shield. Parents should send their preschool aged child(ren) with one face shield to remain at school or three clean masks to school each day (to be disposed of at school or returned home each night for cleaning). Children should keep their masks or shields on as much as possible throughout the school day, except at mealtimes, in the bathroom for an extended period of time, or on the playground. All extra clean masks should be kept in a separate ziploc bag, labeled with the child's name. Soiled masks may be stored in a

paper bag and returned home at the end of the day. Face shields will be sanitized and stored at school. At families' request, toddlers under the age of 3 may be encouraged to wear face shields at school. Face masks that cover the nose and mouth are not recommended for children under 3 and may not be worn by toddlers at school.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR INCREASED CLEANING & HEALTH MONITORING

KEY REQUIREMENT 4: Maintain Appropriately Sanitized Surfaces and Materials

4.1 Staff will follow CDC recommended cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing policies for classroom high touch surfaces, bathrooms and classroom materials.

- a. Staff will sanitize and disinfect with bleach and water solutions.
- b. Toys will be cleaned and sanitized at least once daily or when soiled by a child according to CDC cleaning and disinfecting guidelines.
- c. "High Touch surfaces" should be cleaned and disinfected three times daily.
- d. Bathrooms should be disinfected three times daily or whenever it is soiled.
- e. Cots will be sanitized daily and bedding will be removed and stored separately daily, laundered whenever soiled or at least once weekly.

4.2 Staff will follow the daily disinfecting/sanitizing schedule that limits exposure to students and provides proper ventilation.

4.3 Street shoes will not be allowed inside of the school. All street shoes must be removed or covered by staff, students and visitors.

- a. Children and staff will remove street shoes and wear "indoor shoes" while inside the school and synagogue.
- b. Children's indoor shoes should be clearly labeled, must remain at school, and should be stored in a clean space.
- c. Children and staff will change out of indoor shoes before going outside and going home.
- d. Any visitors to the school must either remove their shoes or wear shoe covers including maintenance workers and parents.

4.4 All items that cannot be cleaned must be removed from classrooms and items that cannot be easily sanitized must be limited.

- a. For classrooms housing students over two years old, items that would require daily laundering, with the exception of naptime bedding, must be removed from the classroom.
- b. Classrooms housing children two and under may have a limited supply of soft items as long as they are laundered after handled or soiled by children.
- c. Any reasonable accommodations that make pillows and other soft items easier to clean and sanitize will be made.

KEY REQUIREMENT 5: Identify Potential Infections and Respond Appropriately

5.1 All staff and children will complete daily health screening before entering the school.

- a. Upon arrival at school and before entering the building (or in the entryway, before entering the main part of the school, in the event of inclement weather for outdoor check-

in), all staff members and students will complete a daily health screening including having their temperature taken and completing a brief symptom and exposure checklist.

- b. No person will be admitted into the school who has:
- Any one of the following symptoms:
 - A fever over 100.4° F according to the school thermometer
 - 2 or more instances of diarrhea
 - Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
 - Loss of sense of smell or taste
 - Red, swollen or itchy toes
 - Two or more of any of the following symptoms:
 - Cough that is new or of unknown origin
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
 - Headache
 - Appears unusually fatigued
 - Poor feeding or appetite
 - Unexplained, persistent crying in infants
 - Diarrhea
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Taken fever-reducing medications in the previous 24 hours
 - An immediate family member (in the same home) with a fever or new respiratory symptoms
 - Been knowingly exposed to someone with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the last 14 days

5.2 All staff and children will be monitored for new symptoms frequently throughout the day. Any staff member or child who develops any of the symptoms listed above throughout the day will be sent home immediately. Children will be isolated from others in a designated space with a single staff member to await their caregiver.

5.3 Children and staff who have been absent due to illness or COVID 19 exposure must meet the following readmittance criteria before returning to school:

- a. In the case of a known exposure to COVID 19 within the family there shall be a 14-day quarantine period in which any symptoms are monitored and reported to school.
- b. In the case of new symptoms of illness, without known exposure to COVID 19 within the family, the child or staff member may return to school after 72 hours being fever free (without fever-reducing medication) and no onset of any new symptoms. The child or staff member may return to school sooner if they provide a doctor's note approving readmittance on the basis of a sound alternative diagnosis.

5.4 A modified PTO and sick leave policy will be implemented immediately to support staff members' ability to take necessary health and safety precautions.

5.5 The school will close temporarily to maintain the health and safety of students and staff in the circumstances described below and at the discretion of the administrative team.

- a. If any staff member or child is confirmed to have COVID-19, the school will immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help determine a course of action. The school will close for a minimum of 1 day for deep cleaning and will likely stay closed for 1-4 additional days based on local health officials' recommendations. Ahava will work with local health officials to determine all appropriate next steps, including whether an

extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or spread of further slow the spread of COVID-19.

- b. In addition, school administration may elect to close temporarily in the event of new executive stay-at-home orders at a state, county, or city level; lack of adequate staffing or enrollment due to illness; supply chain issues for essential items (e.g., diapers, food, soap); or under the advisement from the Ahava COVID-19 Task Force or in concordance with other community business and local schools.