

# Montessori School Re-Opening Plan

Background Information: Classrooms at Montessori are multi-age and operate in a three-year cycle. As a result, class size cannot be adjusted however, classrooms at Montessori are large and many are twice the square footage of a traditional classroom. All classrooms have been set with the required 6-foot distance between desks and placement in the fall of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders was based on the square footage of the classroom to ensure a safe distance can be maintained. All phases will allow for a two-week alternating schedule to allow students to learn the Covid safety requirements and adjust to returning to in-person learning. Upper Elementary and Middle School will remain hybrid alternating days at this point. Lower Elementary class size needs to be 21 students or fewer. Based on the number of families who opt to transfer to the virtual academy we may need to move Lower Elementary classrooms to a hybrid model to achieve this class size. If you are planning to transfer to a virtual option for the remainder of the school year, please let me know so we can be proactive in our planning and I can help you with the transition.



## **Timeline**

### **Lower Elementary**

<b>January 20th</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>January 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>B</b>
<b>January 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>A</b>
<b>January 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>B</b>
<b>January 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A</b>
<b>January 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>B</b>
<b>January 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A</b>
<b>January 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>B</b>
<b>February 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>All</b>

### **Upper Elementary**

<b>February 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A</b>
<b>February 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>B</b>

**Upper Elementary will continue to follow hybrid schedule with district guidance.**

### **Middle School**

<b>March 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>A</b>
<b>March 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>B</b>

**Middle School will continue to follow hybrid schedule with district guidance.**

**A/B groupings will be created based on keeping siblings together and once finalized sent to you from your classroom teacher.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

- 1. I am not sure I am ready for my child to return to in-person learning. What are my options?**

**Every family will have a different level of comfort in returning to in-person learning and we want to support all of you. Spokane Virtual Academy (SVA) will accommodate families who wish to stay virtual. You will remain in our enrollment, class rosters, communication, etc. Your child will have their spot reserved in their classroom and we will welcome you back in the fall of 2021. You can register for SVA at <https://www.spokaneschools.org/domain/2523>**

- 2. How was the decision made to return students to in-person learning?**

**In December, the Governor released guidance to open schools across the state based on each district working with their local health department. Spokane Public Schools updated plan to return students to in person instruction involves multiple phases and a set of criteria that must be considered prior to moving forward with each grade. This includes:**

- School transmission trends**
- County case trends**
- Contact Tracing Effectiveness**
- Fidelity of cleaning standards**
- Substitute capacity**
- Compliance with OSPI and DOH safety regulations**
- Compliance with Labor and Industry regulations**
- School-based testing program**
- Vaccine distribution status**

**You can access the updated reopening plan at this link: <https://www.spokaneschools.org/Page/4925>**

### **3. Why can't we remain virtual with our child's teacher?**

**The classroom teacher will be returning to in-person learning with their students and their contract does not allow them to teach both in-person and virtually simultaneously. We do not have additional resources to staff a virtual Montessori option. All Option programs throughout the district have access to SVA for a virtual option.**

### **4. Will my child have to wear a mask at school?**

**YES! Children will always wear their masks in the building, during meals, on the bus and on the playground. Please have your child practice wearing their mask and ensure they have at least two masks that fit well and stay over both their mouth and nose. We have disposable masks available if their mask becomes soiled and they do not have additional masks. From my experience students need more masks than you think you will need!**

**😊 Students will pull the mask down for taking a bite or a drink and back up for chewing. All staff will wear a mask and potentially a face shield at all times. We will offer student mask breaks outside. Our experience both in the building with kindergarten and students in our special programs have been positive and we have no issues with students wearing masks. You can learn more about mask wearing in schools at the link below:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdT-FfJxxYc&feature=youtu.be>**

### **5. Where can I find the safety protocols in place at school for students to return to in-person learning?**

**Safety is our highest priority in returning students to in-person learning. You will find information on the hygiene practices, face coverings, what the process is if there is a potential or confirmed case of Covid and other information for re-opening at the link below:**

**<https://www.spokaneschools.org/Page/4564>**

**6. What about the student health check? How does that work?**

**Every morning by 8 a.m. you will have to complete the student health check to attest that your child is healthy and without symptoms or exposure to Covid. It takes just a few minutes and helps us maintain safety in our building. We have prepared QR code cards for each child to make the process fast and simple each morning. If your child's health check is not completed by 8 a.m. we will pull them upon entry to the building, check their temperature and call you to answer the questions so we are sure they can be in class safely. All staff are required to complete the health check as well.**

**7. What will the school day look like? 8:30-2:25**

**Students will arrive at 8:25. The playfield will not be open in the morning so drop off or walking students will enter the main building at 8:25. Please do not send your child early to school. Bus riders will enter the West Gym. Upon arrival all students will go directly to their classrooms. Student drop off will be at the front door and walking your child to their classroom will not be an option however, we have staff available to help support your child as they travel to their classrooms the first few weeks.**

**Breakfast and lunch will be served in the classrooms. All students qualify for free meals this year. Students will be a cohort with their classroom in the building at all times not crossing or mixing with other classrooms.**

**Students will have an individually assigned desk with their own supplies spaced 6 feet apart. Desks and surfaces are sanitized multiple times a day. Montessori materials that can be sanitized will be used and rotated according the guidelines for material sanitization. Frequent handwashing protocols are in place and teachers will walk through these routines with students the first two weeks of school.**

**Specialists will be in the regular classroom except for PE which follows specific safety protocols for use of equipment and the space. Students in strings will play 6 ft apart and a plan is still being worked on for Band. Students in Resource Room or intervention programs will be following the small group safety protocols to receive their services.**

**The day ends at 2:25. Students will leave for the bus zone or be brought to the playground for you to pick up at 2:25.**

**You can register for the bus beginning Monday January 11<sup>th</sup>. You will need to register each of your children who will be riding the bus. The link for bus registration is <https://www.spokaneschools.org/busing>**

**A schedule will be sent outlining the hybrid days for the remainder of the year for Upper Elementary and Middle School.**

**Bathroom social distancing will be taught to students and although the health department requires, we have working drinking fountains we ask that you send a water bottle to school with your child to fill at the fountain.**

**On the off day, your child will be working on their priority list, follow up work from their lessons, Dreambox, Lexia, and research and inspired work. We also encourage those practical life homebased lessons that I am sure they have worked on over the last 9 months at home as well.**

#### **8. What about school supplies?**

**We are working on a final list for each level, but you will need to bring the same materials you prepared for your child to start the year virtually, their laptop, charging cord, headphones. Two masks packed in a plastic bag or case will be needed and a water bottle. Although we will have several sanitization stations and hand sanitizer in the classroom a personal desk size bottle will also be helpful.**

#### **9. What about lockers?**

**We are still working on a plan for locker use. Because students will have to be socially distanced and supervised the lockers may not be able to be accessed this year. We will communicate the protocols for locker use once it is finalized.**

#### **10. What will recess look like?**

**Students will wear their mask at recess and stay with their class only in the zone they are assigned to for the day. Zone 1 is the play structure; Zone 2 is the blacktop and Zone 3 is the play field. Classes will rotate through the Zones to ensure they have equal access, and each classroom has their own supply of playground equipment to use in their zone.**

**11. What will the Montessori prepared environment look like?**

**Our classrooms look very different and it is good to prepare your child for the difference they will notice when they return. Due to the Covid safety protocols we have had to adjust our practices and material use. We have collaborated with our Montessori colleagues around the world who have been in-person for months to find the best way to meet the safety guidelines and remain as true to our Montessori philosophy. We want you to keep in mind that these adjustments are not permanent, and they are in place to keep children and staff safe. When we can return to our typical practices our classrooms will look like they did before the pandemic.**

**12. What about after school activities and clubs?**

**Right now, we have not had approval for any in-person after school activities or clubs. If this guidance changes, we will communicate the options to you. We do have some plans for some virtual opportunities for students to engage in some social and school events virtually.**

**13. Can I volunteer in my child's classroom?**

**Although we typically welcome volunteers in the classroom at this time, we need to limit the number of people entering our building and our classrooms. We cannot allow volunteers in the classroom at this time.**

**14. This information is great Shannon, but I still don't know if I am comfortable sending my child to school or I still have more questions. What should I do?**

**Please feel free to call or email me. I am happy to listen, offer any information and support you as you think through this decision.**

**I am also hosting a Q & A session on Wednesday January 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. You can access this session via Zoom.**

**Meeting ID is 976 578 4014 Password is Montessori.**