



## A Message from CEO – Astor Learning Center

Astor began its reopening plan almost as soon as we stopped providing on-site services. To say that providing remote teaching has been a challenge for our population is an understatement. However, I have been so proud of the work being done by our administrators, teachers, support staff, and most importantly, students and families.

On March 16, 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo issued an Executive Order closing all schools in the State due to the COVID-19 virus and subsequently issued Executive Orders closing schools for the rest of the academic year. These closings have forever changed education in New York State and at Astor Services for Children & Families.

As we look toward our 2020-2021 school year, we continue to face uncertainties. However, our goal is to ensure the safety of the staff and students and we believe our Plan meets that goal. The goal of our reopening plan is to allow us to safely open and to react to changes that will come over the next months due to the pandemic.

We understand that this Plan needs to be flexible and that with the ever changing environment it will be important to regroup and make necessary changes to ensure we meet our goal. We will continue to fine-tune the details of our Plan by reviewing the science about COVID in our region, and responding to the direction from the Governor.

We have been very fortunate that we have been running a summer program for residential and day students, in addition to doing remote teaching. This has positioned us to learn quite a bit about what has worked and what did not go as smoothly. We have incorporated these lessons learned into our September opening plan.

Like school districts, our plan will differ from others because of the size of the facilities, the instructional programs, and the ability to effect social distancing for students and staff. Be assured that as we develop our plan further, the safety of our students, staff and families is our first priority.

Sincerely,

**Yvette Bairan**

Yvette Bairan

Astor Services for Children & Families

Chief Executive Officer

School Re-Opening Plan  
Submitted: 8/7/2020

Agency Name: Astor Services for Children & Families

BEDS Code: 131801998687

Administrative Address: PO Box 5005  
6339 Mill Street  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572

Program Site Address: 50 Delafield Street, Poughkeepsie NY 12601  
29 Willow Street, Beacon NY 12508  
136 Sheafe Road, Wappingers Falls NY 12590  
6423 Route 55, Wingdale NY 12594

Program(s) provided at this site:

- 4410 (Pre-school Special Education
  - Special Class
  - Special Class in an Integrated Setting
  - Multi-Disciplinary Evaluations
- 853 (School Age Special Education
- Other:

Contact Person (Name, Title): Kim Fragetta, Director of Early Childhood Education

Contact Phone Number: 845-452-4167 or 845-337-2517

Contact Email Address: kfragett@astorservices.org

Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted: [www.astorservices.org](http://www.astorservices.org)

## **INTRODUCTION**

This plan was developed to conform to the guidance provided by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in their July, 2020, document entitled: *Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools – Reopening Guidance*. This plan will be revised and updated as needed to adjust to changing public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 virus and all of the new requirements and regulations which may emerge over time. We solicited input and involvement from the families we serve and our staff during the original drafting of our re-opening plan. We will rely on continued input from all stakeholders as we move forward implementing this plan and as we contemplate any additions or modifications.

We know our program must be as flexible and as responsive as possible to the needs of our students, families, staff members. We will closely monitor the conditions of our community as the COVID 19 pandemic continues and the effectiveness and appropriateness of our plan. Be assured that nothing has changed our sincere commitment to our students and our determination to

provide the highest possible quality of educational programming and related services even during these difficult times.

The goal of the plan is to guide the delivery of high-quality educational services as safely as possible whether that service delivery is in-person, through a remote learning platform or a blended combination of remote and in-person services. Our focus and concerns extend to the social and emotional needs of our students, families and staff members. By diligently working together and remaining focused on the outcomes we desire, we can find solutions to the many challenges ahead.

Our plan includes all the required elements identified by NYSED and follows the structure of the guidance by addressing the following areas as they apply to our students with disabilities and their families:

1. Communication/Family and Community Engagement
2. Health and Safety
3. Facilities
4. Nutrition
5. Transportation
6. Social Emotional Well-Being
7. School Schedules
8. Budget and Fiscal
9. Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
10. Technology and Connectivity
11. Teaching and Learning
12. Career and Technical Education
13. Athletics and Extra Curricular Activities
14. Special Education
15. Staffing
16. Teacher and Principal Evaluation System
17. Student Teaching

Any suggestions, concerns and/or questions about our plan should be directed to the contact person identified at the beginning of this document.

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## **A. COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

1. *What participants involved in the Reopening Plan's creation and may be involved in any possible future revisions*

- *Identify the job titles/groups at your school who were involved in crafting the original re-opening plan and who will participate in future revisions of this plan:*

Head Start Leadership Team, including Director of Early Childhood Education & Special Services Coordinator; Health Manager, Director of Nursing, Agency Medical Director; Chief Executive Officer, Director of Operations, Chief Human Resources Officer; Teachers, Family Advocates & Food Service Staff.

- *What community-based groups or individuals were involved in your plan's creation or could become involved as the plan is modified or enhanced?*

Dutchess County Preschool Coordinator, County Executive & Department of Health; Office of Head Start Health Specialist; Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam County.

2. *Moving forward how do you plan to consistently communicate with and provide information to each of the following groups?*

- *Students:* Social stories, in-person conversation during home visits, zoom meetings, videos.
- *Parents/Legal Guardians:* Phone calls, zoom meetings, memos and fliers sent home, Remind App, Instagram posts, class dojo posts, in-person conversation during home visits, signage.
- *Staff:* Phone calls, zoom staff meetings, memos and fliers sent home, Remind app, in-person reduced size staff meetings, signage.
- *Visitors:* Agency website, Instagram and facebook posts, phone calls to community partners, signage.

3. *Describe how you will ensure that all students are taught or trained how to follow each of the following COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly*

- Hand hygiene: see below
- Proper face covering wearing: see below
- Social distancing: see below
- Respiratory Hygiene: see below

Prior to the start of school, families will be sent home educational printouts and videos to review with their child on hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene. Information will be sent home via email, remind App, and via USPS if family does not have access to electronic device. This education will be in the family's native language. Staff will be trained in hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing and respiratory hygiene. Classroom staff will instruct children daily by demonstration, practice, and repetition. Signage with visual cues will be posted throughout the building.

4. *Describe how you will use verbal and written communication to encourage students, staff and visitors to adhere to Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) regarding the proper use of face coverings when social distancing is not possible*

Program locations have displayed information from the CDC and DOH in all areas of the schools, including entrances, stairways, hallways, offices and classrooms. Flyers issued by the CDC & DOH educating families on the importance and effectiveness of face coverings will be sent to parents via

the Remind app or email. Program staff will review appropriate resources for children to encourage mask usage as well as prepare them for what wearing masks will be like prior to in-person learning.

*5. Describe how you will provide communications in languages other than English*

Program will provide families with translated information in the families' home language. If written communication is not available a staff member speaking the families' home language will provide individualized verbal or written translation.

*6. Describe how you will communicate with members of the school community with visual and/or hearing impairments*

Individuals with visual impairments will be provided with oral information regarding COVID19 while individuals with hearing impairments will be provided with written information in their preferred language.

**B. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

*NOTE: Students and staff will return to in-person instruction only when governmental authorities permit in-person education. Additionally any return to in-person instruction will necessitate that the school's leadership also determines the number of students and staff allowed to return in person based on: the ability to maintain social distancing; the availability of PPE, including the availability of cloth face coverings and face masks; availability of safe transportation; local hospital capacity according to the local Department of Health*

*Describe your plan/protocol to instruct staff to observe for signs of illness in students and staff and requires that symptomatic persons to be sent to the school nurse or other designated school staff member*

All classroom staff are trained annually on how to perform a daily health check on students entering their classroom each morning. This daily health check is used to look for symptoms of illness. Prior to the start of school, staff will be trained to observe for signs of illness, including symptoms of COVID-19 and Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C). Any child presenting with symptoms of illness will be sent to the isolation room to be evaluated by the nurse. The nurse will evaluate the child to determine if the child needs to be sent home to seek out further evaluation. If the nurse is not present, a designated staff will stay with the isolated child and parent/guardian will be notified to pick up child ASAP. The child will be referred to their health care provider for follow up.

*2. Describe your school's protocol for daily temperature screenings of all students and staff, along with a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff and periodic use of the questionnaire for students.*

The school's director and/or the nurse will be in charge of screening staff upon entering the building each day. In the absence of the director or nurse, their designee will be trained to screen staff each day. The center nurse will train the director and her designee on how to properly take a temperature and to screen staff. When arriving at the center or any Astor facility, staff will immediately apply hand sanitizer at the center entrance. Screenings will be set up immediately inside any approved entry.

Staff will be asked the following screening questions:

- Do you have now, or have you had in the last three days, a temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit?
- Over the past 7 days have you experienced shortness of breath, new cough or a cough that is not resolving, or any other symptom related to COVID-19 (such as fatigue, runny nose, etc.?)
- Do you have knowledge of having direct contact (within 6 feet or less for more than 20 minutes) with a known COVID-19 positive person in the last 14 days?

Temperatures will be checked with a no touch thermometer. Once staff has been screened, they will sign in by checking off they have been screened. If an employee answers yes to any of the screening questions or has a current temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, they will be required to immediately leave the center and contact their supervisor.

Employees who begin their day in the field will self screen. They will perform a self-temperature check and a daily self-screen by asking themselves the Covid-19 screening questions outlined in the screening protocol. If they answer “YES” to any of the screening questions, or have a temperature of 100 degrees, Fahrenheit or more, they will not begin their work day, and will immediately contact their supervisor.

All children attending school will have a temperature check completed by their parent or guardian prior to arriving at school. Any family that does not have a thermometer will be supplied one for daily temperature checks. Parents will be given instruction on how to use the thermometer to take an accurate temperature. On arrival, parent/guardian will be asked if their child has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more. Parent/guardian will be asked the screening questions (as noted above), and if all answers are “NO”, parent/guardian will sign child in and check off they have been screened. If child has a fever 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more, or parent answers “YES” to any of the screening questions, parent/guardian will be required to take child home and have evaluated by their health care provider.

*3. Describe your school's plan to have ill students and staff assessed by the school nurse or other qualified medical professional engaged by the school. Confirm that if a qualified medical professional is not available at the school that the ill student and/or staff member will be sent home for follow up with a health care provider.*

If a child is showing symptoms of illness, they will immediately be sent to the isolation room to be evaluated by the nurse. The nurse will evaluate the child to determine if he/she should be sent home to follow up with health care provider. The child's parent/guardian will be required to follow up with health care provider. If the nurse is not present, the designated staff will stay with isolated child and parent/guardian will be notified to pick up child ASAP. If a staff is showing symptoms of illness, they will be required to leave the premises immediately and to contact their health care provider and supervisor.

*4. Describe your school's protocol requiring students or staff with a temperature, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the questionnaire to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area where students are supervised, prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.*

All children arriving by school bus or parent drop off will be screened. A child presenting with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more or a shows symptoms will be immediately sent to the designated isolation area where he/she will be evaluated by the nurse. The parent/guardian will be notified and will be required to follow up with child's health care provider. If the nurse is not present, the designated staff will stay with isolated child and parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the child ASAP.

*5. Describe your school's protocol for how you will conduct health screenings of visitors, guests, contractors, and/or vendors to the school.*

Only essential visitors, guests, contractors and vendors will be permitted access to the building. Those permitted will be required to wear a mask, apply hand sanitizer and complete the health screening. Having a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more, or answering YES to any of the screening questions will result in a denial of entry into the building.

*6. Describe your school's protocol to instruct parents/guardians to observe for signs of illness in their child that require staying home from school.*

Parents will be provided with written and oral education in their native language on the signs and symptoms of illness, including COVID-19 and Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C). This education will include when to keep a child home from school. Family Advocates and teachers will review the school's protocol regarding signs of illness during initial home visits.

*7. Describe your school's protocol and appropriate signage you use to instruct staff and students in correct hand and respiratory hygiene.*

Signage is posted on the school's COVID bulletin board. Posters and instructions for appropriate hygiene will be evident in various locations throughout the building including entrances, bathrooms, hallways and offices.

*8. Describe how your school plans to ensure that all persons in school buildings keep a social distance of at least 6 feet whenever possible.*

Education will be provided to all staff, families and essential visitors prior to the building's opening. Social distancing markers will be placed in common areas such as entrances, the main office, the time clock and restrooms. Classrooms will be altered to include extra tables to accommodate children during mealtimes. Office will be evaluated with regards to appropriate social distancing and work from home patterns will be put in place. Arrival and dismissal times for staff, children and families will be staggered to reduce congestion.

*9. Describe your school's protocol explaining how your school will provide accommodations to all students and staff who are at high risk or live with a person at high risk.*

Daily health screenings, face coverings and social distancing will be in place to reduce risk to all those associated with the school. Children who are high risk or reside with a family member who is high risk will be given the option of participating in solely remote learning. Staff members in this situation will work with the Human Resources Department to create a full or partial work from home option whenever possible.

10. *Describe your school's protocol requiring all employees, adult visitors, and students to wear a cloth face covering whenever social distancing cannot be maintained.*

All employees and essential visitors must wear a face covering at all times. Cloth masks will be provided to all staff and disposable masks to all visitors. Child-sized cloth masks will be provided to all children and they will be encouraged to wear them with education and modeling.

11. *Describe your school's protocol for allowing students to take "mask breaks."*

Face coverings are encouraged for all children over the age of two. Mask breaks will be built into the day during mealtimes and periodically throughout the day when social distancing is possible.

12. *Describe your school's plan for obtaining and maintaining an adequate supply of cloth face coverings/masks for school staff, students who have forgotten their masks as well as all of the PPE needed by your school's health professionals.*

Cloth face coverings have been purchased for all staff and children to use, take home to wash and bring back each day. Disposable masks have also been purchased in case staff, children, and nurse have forgotten their masks and to distribute to essential visitors. PPE for school nurses and her designees are available and will be replenished by the Director of Operations upon request.

13. *Describe what actions your school will take if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school.*

In the event there is a confirmed case of COVID, all staff and students who have entered the building will be notified. Proper cleaning and sanitation will occur of the building as well as a 14 day closure of the building with instructions to quarantine.

14. *Describe your plan that complies with CDC guidance for the return to school of students and staff following illness or diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19 or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Include in your description how you plan to coordinate with the local health department.*

The school will follow one plan for the return of students and staff following illness, diagnosis of confirmed COVID-19 or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Astor will follow the CDC recommendations on "When You Can Be Around Others" and the Dutchess County Department of Community and Behavioral Health Guidelines for return. This includes documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, a negative COVID-19 test, and symptom resolution. The site safety monitor/or nurse will work in conjunction with the Dutchess County Department of Community and Behavioral Health to plan the return for staff and students at each center.

15. *Describe your school's protocol to clean and disinfect the school following CDC guidance.*

A detailed cleaning and disinfecting protocol has been developed which include classrooms (bathrooms/diapering area), offices, kitchen, and common areas-such as staff bathrooms, screening area, entrances and exits and all high touch areas three times throughout the day. Staff will be assigned daily cleaning duties which will be logged and monitored by the site safety monitor. Normal cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting will continue, with high touch areas having increased



cleaning and disinfecting. All staff will be trained how to properly and safely use of approved cleansers/sanitizers/disinfectant. The school will use an EPA approved cleaners/sanitizers/disinfectant.

16. *Describe how you will conduct required school safety drills (i.e., fire drills, lockdown) with the modifications which will be necessary to ensure social distancing between persons.*

All safety drills will be continued with plans amended to allow for social distancing. Fire drill evacuation routes will be modified to allow for fewer children and staff exiting in a single area. Upon arrival at the class's designated area, each class will distance themselves six feet apart from others. Lock down drills will be conducted to ensure that all staff and children are aware of their designated location should a true lockdown occur. All individuals will stay socially distant while instructions are provided as part of the drill.

17. *If your school operates before or after school care, describe your plan to implement health and safety protocols.*

N/A

18. *Identify by name, title and contact information the COVID-19 safety coordinator your school has selected to be responsible for continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.*

The school's safety coordinator is the School Nurse (Laura Robles, Renee Burris, Joy Bessinger, Myrna Perez-Lugo). The school's director is back up (Theresa Lewis & Tracey Dimmie, Ashley Webster, Lauren Montaruli, Nicole Johnson). Staff can be reached at 845-452-7726, 845-838-9904, 845-296-1892, 845-832-3331).

19. Health related considerations prior to reopening:

- a) *Identify by name, title and contact information the COVID-19 resource person your agency has identified to assist your site(s) and the community.*
- b) *The agency's COVID-19 safety coordinator is Sean McLaughlin, Assistant Executive Director of Agency Operations (6339 Mill Street, Rhinebeck NY 12572; smclaughlin@astorservices.org)*
- c) *Describe if and how your school will limit visitors to school grounds and/or buildings.*

Only essential visitors will be permitted to enter the school building. Access will be contingent on appropriate face coverings, sanitizing of hands and a successful health screening. All non-essential deliveries will be curtailed and food delivery will be made directly into the kitchen. All other supply deliveries will be met at the front door. Packages will be dropped in the hallway and sanitized or left unopened for 24 hours prior to disbursement. Parents will not be allowed into the building at drop off. Instead, staff will meet parents at the door for arrival and dismissal and children will be escorted to and from their respective classrooms following parental attestation of a successful health screening. No tours of the Center will take place but a virtual tour will be conducted for those incoming parents.

- d) *Describe the steps that will be taken to instruct parents/guardians in screening students at home for signs of illness by multiple means which may include written communication, short videos and parent forums.*

Parents will be instructed on how to conduct a health screening on themselves and their children through written instructions, Zoom meetings, individual phone calls and encouragement to contact the school nurse or the school's Health Manager for further clarification. The program will supply families with thermometers, the screening questions and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The educational materials will include advice if their children or themselves develop symptoms.

- e) *If your school's plan relies on parent/guardian screening before school should take into account the parent/guardian's ability to access internet or complete a written check list accessible in the language spoken by the family.*

The above will be in the home language of the family.

- f) *If your school's plan is to screen students before they enter your school, describe how your protocol will: meet CDC requirements for PPE and social distancing; have sufficient supplies to conduct screenings; ensure that waiting students are supervised.*

If for any reason a parent is not able to screen a child at home, the child will be screened at the door prior to entrance into the building. The child's temperature will be taken, his or her overall appearance will be assessed and the parent/guardian be asked the aforementioned screening questions. The school's director or her designee conducting the screening will be wearing a mask, gloves and socially distant themselves from the child and parent. Appropriate social distance markings will be on the ground to guide waiting parents and children.

- g) *Does your school's plan encourage students to wear a cloth face covering at all times, unless otherwise inadvisable?*

All children over the age of 2 years will be encouraged to wear cloth face coverings/masks throughout the day except at meal times. Cloth masks will be available for all children.

- h) *Does your school's plan include a requirement that school health personnel wear PPE when assessing ill students or conducting specific respiratory treatments?*

School health personnel will be wearing PPE when assessing an ill child.

- i) *Which room in the facility has been identified for isolating ill persons?*

A staff person has been relocated to convert an office into the designated isolation area of an ill child or staff member.

- j) *If your school has a nurse or other health professional, what room (separate from the isolation room) has been identified as their space to administer medication and/or nursing treatments?*

The nurse's office has been identified as the location for dispensing medications.

- k) *Confirm that your school's health office will use disposable equipment and supplies as much as possible.*

Disposable gloves, other PPE and supplies will be used as much as possible.

- l) *Confirm that your school will provide appropriate PPE to custodial or other personnel cleaning or disinfecting your site if such protection is required by the manufacturer of the cleaning/disinfecting agent being used?*

The program contracts with a custodial/cleaning company. This company will be supplying their workers with the appropriate PPE as part of the contract. All staff are responsible for cleaning and sanitizing throughout the day and will be provided with the appropriate PPE.

- m) *Confirm that your school has created a daily checklist for use by school personnel to inspect their work area and ensure that they have sufficient supplies every day (i.e., face covering, tissues, hand hygiene supplies and cleaning supplies, etc.).*

School staff will receive virtual and in-person training to ensure they are familiar with cleaning and PPE expectations prior to the start of school. A list and sign off sheet will be provided in each area to log efforts and completion. The school's nurse is responsible for supply inventory and will report any needs to the Agency's Director of Operations and the school's administrative assistant for ordering.

- n) *Confirm that the individual selected as your school's COVID-19 resource person:*

- a. *Has a health background (i.e., school nurse) or is a school administrator familiar with the reopening plan?*

The school nurse is a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse. The school's director has been a participant in the formation of the re-opening plan and received all the necessary training from the CDC, OCFS, Head Start and Department of Health to implement all pertinent guidance in the plan.

- b. *Will be the main contact upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases and be responsible for subsequent communications?*

The school nurse will be the primary contact if a person is positive for COVID-19.

- c. *Has been identified to the entire school community and that the community has contact information for the COVID-19 resource person?*

The school community is aware that the school nurse is the person charged with ensuring all COVID-19 safety mandates are implemented.

- d. *Has been involved in the development of the school's reopening plan?*

The school's nurse and director have been involved in the development of this plan.

- o) If your school has a before and/or afterschool program, do they support social distancing, PPE usage, cleaning and disinfection protocols, and the risk of COVID-19 transmission?*

N/A

- p) If your school has a before and/or after school program have they considered maintaining the cohorts students are in during the day?*

N/A

- q) If your school has a before or after school program have they considered grouping members of the same household together?*

N/A

### **C. FACILITIES**

- 1. If you have to rearrange, repurpose, modify or expand facility space to implement social distancing or other safety measures, please describe:*

Facility space has not been modified in any way.

- 2. Are all of the changes you described in response to #1 above in compliance with fire, building, child care and any other applicable codes, regulations and legal requirements?*

N/A

- 3. Have the school's written emergency plans (i.e., fire drills, evacuation, lockdown) been modified to reflect and facilitate social distancing?*

Addendums have been added to written emergency plans to provide guidance surrounding social distancing during required emergency drills.

- 4. Describe any changes to time management and schedules of facility usage which are planned to reduce congestion and promote social distancing:*

Staff arrival and departure times will be staggered to reduce congestion at entrances and in hallways. Non essential visitors are no longer granted access to the facility.

- 5. Will doors which do not have automatic closure mechanisms and/or are not fire-rated be maintained in an open position to increase air flow?*

Non fire doors may be kept in an open position to increase air flow given available staff to provide appropriate supervision.

- 6. Has your school installed plastic separators or other dividers? If so, please describe:*

A plastic separator has been installed in the front office to provide a barrier between staff and the front desk assistant.

7. *Describe your determination regarding the adequacy of hand-washing facilities. Have added additional sinks and/or mobile handwashing facilities? If so, please describe:*

Each classroom is equipped with its own bathroom which includes a sink, touch less soap dispenser and touch less paper towel dispenser. The building has multiple restrooms on each floor all of which have full sinks for hand washing.

8. *Have you installed any hand sanitizer dispensers? If so, where and are those dispensers in compliance with all applicable fire codes?*

Hand sanitizer dispensers have not been installed. However, hand sanitizing stations have been set up throughout the building with appropriate signage to encourage frequent use.

9. *Have you installed dividers anywhere in the facility to control groups and/or manage the possibility of crowding?*

Dividers are not needed as large meeting rooms will be closed and monitored through controlled access.

10. *Have you made any changes to drinking fountains or drinking water access for students in response to COVID-19? If so, please describe:*

The building is not equipped with drinking fountains. Drinking water will continue to be available to children in water pitchers, as is the program's general practice.

11. *Describe your plan for increasing ventilation and air flow (natural and/or mechanical):*

Building windows will be open throughout the day whenever possible. Exterior doors will be open for increased ventilation when staffing patterns allow them to be appropriately supervised. Fans will be installed to increase airflow as needed. Make up air will be increased on those systems that allow for it. Fans will be set to "ON" versus "Auto" and systems will be set to exhaust versus recirculate

12. *Describe your plan for enhancing and maintaining higher efficiency air filtering and any re-balancing of air flow necessitated by filtration changes:*

The program will increase the frequency of filter replacement cycle to monthly and will increase the MERV rating when possible. Air flow will be rebalanced and doors will be kept open where possible.

13. *Have you installed any new air purification technologies? If so, do those devices meet or exceed safety standards, including being listed/labeled as having been approved for the intended use by a nationally-recognized testing laboratory?*

New air purification technologies have not been installed at this time but will be considered if necessary.

#### **D. NUTRITION**

1. *Describe how you will work with the school district(s) and school food authorities (SFAs) to ensure that all eligible children have access to school meals:*

All children enrolled in center based programming will receive CACFP reimbursable meals for breakfast and lunch. If child is learning remotely, meals will be packaged for pick up on a daily basis.

2. *Describe any changes to your health, safety, sanitation and/or food-handling procedures in light of the COVID-19 public health emergency:*

Food service workers will be screened for COVID-19 daily when they enter the facility. All kitchen staff are trained annually on safe food practices, and kitchen sanitation. This training includes hand hygiene, employee illness, food safety guidelines, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting, bare hand contact, food allergens and cross contamination, safe refrigeration storage, proper cooking temperatures, proper holding temperatures, storage times for refrigerator and freezer, cooling procedures, calibration and ware washing. Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting of the kitchen will be increased and documented daily. Food service staff will wear a mask and gloves while handling and preparing food. CDC signage on hand hygiene, face coverings, COVID-19 symptoms, when to stay home from work will be posted in food prep areas. In classrooms, no family style meals will be allowed and students will be served meals individually. All meals will be served in disposable containers and disposable utensils will be used

3. *Describe how children with food allergies will be protected as meal and snack procedures are revised to promote social distancing:*

Both food service and the classroom staff will have a list of children with food allergies. These staff members are trained annually on safe food allergy practices, such as cross contamination and hand hygiene. Staff will check the allergy list before serving any children. Each child will be served individually and a substitute food item will be provided to any child with an allergy.

4. *Describe how and where food and meals for students will be served and consumed:*

Meals will be served in the classroom, as is the school's current practice. Meals will be sent to classrooms in disposable trays to maintain temperature. One staff will wash hands and wear gloves to plate each meal and serve each student.

5. *Describe how students will be located while eating :*

Children will eat in their classroom. There will be a reduced number of children at a table while eating their meal.

6. *Describe how appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted before and after serving or eating:*

Children will be required to wash hands before and after meals. Proper hand washing techniques will be reinforced by initial instruction, signage and monitoring by classroom staff.

7. *Describe how food/beverage sharing and family-style meals will be discouraged:*

Family style meals will be discontinued. Teachers will plate food for the children and will provide additional servings as needed.

8. *As applicable, confirm that your school is in compliance with the Child Nutrition Program and any other SFAs your agency works with:*

As a Head Start and a licensed daycare by the OCFS, the program participates in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All meals follow CACFP guidelines when cooking and serving food. Due to COVID, family style meals will no longer be practiced and plastic plates, flatware and serving trays will be used.

9. *Describe how you will communicate with families, including those using a language other than English, about nutrition and meal//snack issues:*

Families are provided with monthly Nutrition Calendars that includes the daily breakfast, lunch and snack menu. The calendars are sent home each month and are posted throughout the center. Menus are provided in both English and Spanish. Any family that does not speak English or Spanish are encouraged to talk to their Advocate to receive a translated menu for them in their home language.

## **E. TRANSPORTATION**

*NOTE: Transportation for students with disabilities enrolled in 4410 and/or 853 programs are provided by the school district. School programs, however, are involved in the embarking and disembarking of students.*

1. *Describe changes to student disembarking/arrival procedures and locations to promote social distancing:*

One bus will disembark at a time. Students will disembark the bus one at a time and form a socially distant line. Children will then be escorted to their classrooms by a teacher from their classroom. There are no more six children on any given bus.

2. *Describe changes to student embarking/dismissal procedures and locations to promote social distancing:*

Students will dismiss one bus at a time and be escorted to the bus by a teacher from their classroom. Students and teachers will not gather to wait to load the bus, but rather stay in their classroom. The main office will announce the arrival of the bus by bus number and children will be dismissed one bus at a time.

3. *Describe any changes made to stagger arrival and/or dismissal times:*

Buses will arrive staggered each day. Staff will not gather to wait for each bus. The main office will notify the teachers of each bus arrival by bus number. One staff from each room will meet the bus and assist children to their classroom.

4. *Discuss the impact of social distancing on the length of time required for arrival and dismissal:*

Socially distanced arrival and dismissal will take longer as buses will be loaded one at time.

5. *Discuss your plan for managing scheduling and social distancing when/if students are transported by their families by car, public transportation and/or walking:*

Those children that do not arrive by school bus will have staggered arrival and dismissal. Outdoor locations will be set up for parents to meet staff for pick up and drop off. This location will be shared with families as their meeting spot. This will ensure social distancing by families and students.

Both arrival and dismissal will be staggered by floor and classroom. Children and families will be met by office staff/advocates outside at designated classroom drop off/pick up area. Teachers will be staggered in the hallway to receive the children and will be brought into the classroom.

6. *Describe student hand-washing and/or hand sanitizer use during arrival and dismissal:*

Students will wash hands in their classroom upon arrival and just prior to dismissal.

## **F. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

1. *List any school-wide plans/policies related to student well-being and/or behavior management:*

Astor Early Childhood Programs provide experiences and environments which support the positive development of each child in care.

- Astor believes it is the adult's responsibility to ensure that each child is offered opportunities to succeed and to develop emotional, social, physical, linguistic and cognitive competencies.
- Staff are trained to understand the many factors which can influence each child and offer individualized positive and preventative methods of relationship-based guidance.
- Staff set clear, consistent, developmentally appropriate limits, use observation and anticipation to support a child's success in developing self-control and understand it is a learning process.



- Staff model respect for feelings and rights of others and foster positive social behaviors by using modeling, coaching and encouragement.
- Adults acknowledge and encourage the understanding and expression of each child's feelings.
- When a child in our Astor Early Childhood Program is a danger to him/herself, another child or staff, the behavior must be stopped without using any means which humiliate, isolate, hurt, shame or cause negative impact to a child's development of identity.
- Staff will discuss the consequences of various behaviors and redirect children without using punitive techniques or corporal punishment, withholding of food or regularly scheduled activities. Astor Early Childhood Programs provide ongoing training for all staff so that they can implement preventive discipline techniques such as redirection, modeling, positive reinforcement, realistic expectations, consistent limits, choices and problem solving – as these strategies encourage the strengthening of a child's intrinsic self-control.

2. *In light of COVID-19, have qualified professionals reviewed those plans and determined if they meet current student needs?*

Various qualified, professional school staff have reviewed opening plans and determined that the social emotional needs of staff, children and families will be addressed. Training, social stories, community linkages and a relationship based model will be used to strengthen supports and meet children's needs.

3. *As applicable, describe your plan for revising/updating your existing procedures and protocols to address student, staff and family needs in light of the pandemic:*

The Head Start Leadership Team meets regularly to discuss strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement. Policies and procedures related to illness, cleaning and sanitation, building access, the classroom environment have already been amended. Ongoing changes to the needs of children and families are expected and will be reviewed at the school's team meetings and the program's leadership team meetings.

4. *Describe your plans to form an advisory council which will include families, community members, professionals and staff members to share in decision-making and future planning regarding: sustaining a positive school climate; mental health; initiatives to promote social/emotional wellness; trauma-responsive care; restorative practices; social/emotional learning (SEL); professional development; increased family/community engagement:*

The program's existing Pyramid Team is a group of stakeholders whose focus is the social emotional health of the staff, children and families. The focus is based on relationship building and trauma informed care. The team will continue to meet monthly to discuss potential areas for professional developmental and planning around social emotional wellness for staff, children and families. Astor's Policy Council, which includes community members and Head Start families will also discuss children and families' social emotional wellness and will guide decisions for the program.

5. *Describe how your school will provide referrals for mental health, behavioral and emotional support programs, resources and services:*

Astor Early Childhood Program employs a clinical social worker who is available to children and families. The agency also has mental health clinics throughout Dutchess County. Any family that has concerns with a child's behavioral or emotional needs will be referred to Astor's mental health clinic. Teaching staff also have access to a behavior specialist if there are concerns for a child's mental health, behavior, or emotional needs within the classroom setting.

6. *Describe your plans for professional development which will enable personnel to best support students, families and staff during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency while developing coping and resilience skills in students and staff:*

All staff attended a self-care interactive webinar at the start of the pandemic. Staff have been offered and will continue to be offered various online professional development opportunities including Conscious Discipline, Managing Stress, and Trauma Informed Care. All teaching teams have worked with the Education Coordinators who have provided training and support to help teachers make the transition to virtual learning environments while supporting their emotional wellbeing. Ongoing professional Development will be a necessary focus as we reopen. All staff will have an initial first day back training on self and family wellness as well as building health and safety practices.

7. *Describe how you will communicate to all stakeholders that social emotional well-being and learning is a priority for your school:*

Astor's Early Childhood Program Director participates in ongoing meetings with the Pyramid Team. This collaboration and communication is conveyed to Policy Council members as well as to the Program Director's supervisor and board members. This focus on social emotional wellness will also be shared with families through ongoing meetings with teachers and family advocates.

## **G. SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

1. *Describe any planned changes to class hours for students or work hours for staff:*

Arrival and dismissal times for both students and staff will be staggered and class hours will be altered to allow adequate time for cleaning and sanitation.

2. *Describe how you will limit in-person presence to only those staff members who are necessary to be at school during normal school hours:*

Only required staff will be allowed into the building and within classrooms. Staff will remain in their classroom throughout the day. Virtual meetings will continue to promote social distancing.

3. *Describe how you will promote, increase and or maintain a remote workforce to accommodate social distancing:*

All staff that are able to work remotely will continue to work at home. This will allow the staff that cannot work remotely to maintain social distancing in the building. The school will continue to assess the technology needed to provide high quality remote instruction included laptops, tablets, printers and scanners.

4. *Describe how you will stagger schedules or make other time adjustments to reduce congestion in hallways, walkways and/or buildings:*

Student and staff arrival and dismissal times will be staggered to reduce the amount of traffic in the hallway. Outdoor times will be staggered and only one classroom at each time will be allowed on the playground.

5. *Describe any planned use of “cohorts” or class schedules to accommodate social distancing:*

Two cohorts will be established to reduce the number of children in the school building by 50%. Children will remain in their classroom for the entire day, including meals and spend time outside only with children in their class. Staffing patterns will be established to keep teachers working consistently in the same classroom with the same cohorts of children.

6. *Describe how you will involve all stakeholders in the school community (staff, families, etc.) in your consideration of alternative scheduling?*

Parents have been surveyed to get input about preferences on the model of teaching and the scheduling. Policy Council and staff have also provided input through Policy Council meetings and staff meetings. Leadership staff have worked with the Dutchess County Preschool Coordinator and other Dutchess County 4410 programs to collaborate on ideas and strategies for a safe return.

7. *Describe how you will communicate with families, including those who use a language other than English, and staff when schedules need to be changed/adjusted or instruction transitioned back to all remote:*

All communication including fliers, phone calls, and in-person conversation will be in the family’s home language. Translation services or assistance from family members or friends may be required if changes have to occur quickly.

8. *Describe how your scheduling decisions and instructional models promote equity and access a priority for all, including English language learners, those experiencing homelessness and students with disabilities:*

As a Head Start Program, children with special needs, those experiencing homelessness and English language learners take priority for enrollment. Those children with IEPs who require special education will be offered additional in person school days given the county’s ability to provide the needed transportation.

## **H. BUDGET AND FISCAL**

1. *Have your internal budgeting and expense reporting been adjusted and expanded to forecast, track and account for COVID-19 related expenses?*

The agency's finance department has instituted an expense reporting system to ensure accurate accounting of COVID-19 costs. The program's budget was built in April and approved in May and accounts for a projected increase in food expense, PPE costs, supplies and building maintenance. All COVID-19 expenses are tracked through the finance department on a rolling basis and reported to programs monthly.

2. *Describe any of the possible additional revenue sources you might tap into to meet the added expenses related to meeting COVID-19 related costs:*

As a dually funded NYS Education Department & Head Start program, one time relief funding has been received by the Office of Head Start. These funds will be used to offset a variety of costs and to increase the technology available for staff, children and families.

3. *Describe some of the steps you may take if your tuition reimbursement is insufficient to meet the additional costs of providing services during the COVID-19 emergency:*

Should cost outweigh reimbursement rates the program will look to reduce spending in non-academic areas and reallocate blended Head Start funds to maintain high quality education for all students. The program may offer voluntary furloughs to staff to reduce personnel costs on a short term basis.

4. *Briefly outline some of the steps you will take to maintain high levels of student enrollment:*

Student enrollment is supported by strong family engagement and collaborative relationships with the LEAs. While family's physical presence in the building will be limited, virtual tours, videos and orientations will take place via video conference. Regular phone contact, social distancing home visits and progress reporting will keep parents and guardians engaged in school and the learning process. The program has maintained consistent contact with school district chairpersons and participated in virtual meetings to ensure appropriate placement for summer and fall programming.

## **I. ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

1. *Describe how you intend to collect, document and report daily teacher/student/family engagement or attendance regardless of the instructional setting (in-person or remote):*

In-person instruction will have daily attendance recorded in ChildPlus for monitoring. For remote learning, teachers will track the children's participation via log and will submit to Center Director to input in ChildPlus. Family Advocates will continue to engage families with in-person and remote learning and will log their family contacts in ChildPlus.

2. *Briefly describe how you will develop/sustain positive relationships with students/families to promote attendance and participation:*

Family advocates and teachers will continue to work on goals for the families and each individual child. These staff will continue to build partnerships with the families based on each families' needs. Family Advocates will continue following up with parents when the child is absent via phone, email or home visit regarding absences from in-person and/or remote learning.

3. *Briefly describe your outreach efforts when students and families are not participating in remote learning:*

If a child is not participating in remote learning, family advocates and teachers will reach out to the families via phone or home visit to determine why they are not participating. Teachers will be responsible for ongoing communication regarding those families who are disengaged. Follow up from the school's director or ERSEA Manager may be warranted if absences continue.

4. *Describe how you will involve the CPSE/CSE if students are not participating in remote learning:*

When a child who is involved with CPSE and not participating in remote learning, the family advocate and teacher will communicate with the Special Services Coordinator to re-engage the family. If nonparticipation continues, the district will be notified to assist the family in participation.

5. *Describe how you outreach to families who speak languages other than English:*

Families will be provided information regarding absenteeism in their home language. If written material is not available, program staff will provide individualized translation for the families.

6. *Are your staff members periodically reminded of their responsibility as mandated reporters to contact the Department of Social Services if they suspect child abuse or neglect?*

Every staff is trained as a Mandated Reporter upon hire. Each staff is required to complete an annual Mandated Reporter prior to the start of the new school year. Family advocates will review the policy with parents at intake.

## **J. TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY**

1. *Describe how will your school initially gather and periodically update information on the level of access students and staff members have to devices and high speed broadband at their places of residence:*

The program will require each family and staff to indicate their accessibility and technology equipment via survey over the phone or internet. Each teacher will be provided with an agency issued laptop to complete remote learning with children. Parents will be routinely polled about their technology needs.

2. *Describe how you will address the need to provide devices and internet access to students and staff members who do not currently have access:*

If families do not have appropriate devices or internet access, family advocates will provide individual referrals to free internet providers. Staff will communicate need for devices to the Program Director. If staff members do not have internet access or appropriate device, the agency will provide them with appropriate equipment.

3. *What multiple means of participation might you employ so that students can participate and demonstrate mastery of the Learning Standards in remote and blended models when they may not yet have sufficient access to devices or high-speed internet?*

Parents will be encouraged to take photos, videos and provide oral feedback to the teaching staff in regards to activities that the children are completing at home. Teaching staff are able to use the Family Sharing section of Teaching Strategies Gold to provide age and skill appropriate activities to the family. Parents will be provided with these learning opportunities in written form if they cannot access the technology.

4. *Describe your plans for professional development in effective practices during remote instruction and learning:*

Teaching staff will be required to complete training and expectations of remote learning with the Education and Child Development Coordinator and Education team. Through ongoing communication, the education team supports teaching staff in continuing their professional development by providing trainings in subject areas that the staff request.

5. *Describe your plan for providing information technology (IT) support to families and staff members who are experiencing IT issues and challenges:*

The agency's Information Technology department has been assisting staff with device needs, maintenance and connectivity. The IT department will assist families if they experience hardware issues or difficulties accessing the necessary platforms for remote learning.

6. *Describe how you will ensure data privacy and security:*

Data Privacy and security will be ensured with the teaching staff using only agency issued devices to complete remote learning and assessment. Family Advocates will use agency issued devices to complete family assessments and documentation in ChildPlus. All agency issued devices will have access to the agency network for the safety of data and sensitive information.

7. *Describe how you will assess the effectiveness of the digital tools and platforms you are using/will use:*

The program will continuously assess the effectiveness of tools and platforms used for remote learning by monitoring attendance, parent and teacher feedback and any technological issues that may surface (IT intervention). Teachers record attendance and engagement during the session in order to achieve authentic feedback given by the families

about the sessions. The school's director will review documentation and support teaching staff and families should technological issues arise.

8. *Describe some ways you intend to promote equitable access and flexibility for students, staff and families during remote instruction and learning:*

Program will promote equitable access and flexibility during remote learning by providing individual support to families learning the new process of learning and by exploring different grants and resources to assist with technology needs. Families will be referred to organizations offering free or reduced internet services. Teaching staff will coordinate mutually convenient times with each family to engage in remote learning and family service staff will stay in routine weekly contact with families to assess any challenges they may be having with remote learning. Teachers will make regular contact with families to ensure they have all required materials to complete the activities during their remote learning sessions. Activities will then be adjusted or modified due to family's needs.

#### **K. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

1. *Briefly describe your continuity of learning plan should state or local conditions warrant moving to/from in-person, blended and/or all remote instruction:*

Teachers use the Creative Curriculum Studies which include 4-6 week studies. Teachers will give families at least four weeks of materials at the beginning of every study. All activities found in the curriculum are also in PDF format which allows teachers to email activities to families as well. The Creative Curriculum has a digital platform with an Application for families to use to connect with teachers. This will allow the teachers and families to stay connected and continue learning should there be changes throughout the year.

2. *Will instruction, regardless of the modality used, remain aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards?*

The Creative Curriculum is a research based curriculum that aligns to Head Start's Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) and the NYS Early Learning Guidelines. Creative Curriculum has created activities for families to do in the home that provide authentic, hands on learning activities that align with both the ELOF and NYS Early Learning Guidelines. Activities completed with the teacher are also part of the Creative Curriculum Study and allow teachers to observe and assess specific skills.

3. *Describe how your school will promote equity by making sure that all students have opportunities to access routinely scheduled instruction, interaction, feedback and support from teachers:*

Each enrolled student will be given the opportunity to participate in all aspects of program. While planning the three scenarios, we will also assess the family needs, technology, accessibility and dual language needs. Advocates will work with each family to understand their needs. Teachers will work with each family to find a time for virtual learning, even if it is one-on-one. Should a child need technology to access virtual learning

the program will work to provide those resources. Family advocates will work to connect with families weekly and be flexible with their time.

4. *Will all students have opportunities for regular and substantive contact with qualified instructional personnel regardless of the delivery method (remote, blended, in-person)?*

Enrolled students will have regular contact with their teachers regardless of the service delivery method. The Education Coordinator has created a schedule and set of expectations for both remote learning and a hybrid model, both of which require a minimum weekly contact between educator and parent/guardian.

5. *Describe how you will engage families in the teaching and learning process:*

Engaging families in their children's learning is an integral part of Head Start. The Creative Curriculum encourages families to become part of the education team and to share feedback on activities, such as sharing videos and pictures. These can be converted to assessments by the teacher. Contact will be made with families through face to face meetings, Zoom meetings or phone calls. Teachers will continue to complete conferences and home visits to discuss learning and the families' goals for their children and to review progress. In hybrid and in person learning, teachers will have a conference at least monthly with families to discuss learning progress and family concerns or ideas. In remote only the contact with families will be weekly.

6. *Describe your communication plan so that students/families, regardless of their home language(s), have multiple means to contact teachers and, as applicable, related service providers:*

The program will communicate with families through written information in the home language, bilingual staff communicating with families, family support with technology, and individualized support in all areas. The Remind App will allow families to contact teachers and family service staff in their home language, or provides a translation option as well.

7. *Describe your plan for student support and family involvement to address the specialized needs of students whose educational experiences in 2019-2020 were disrupted due to school closures and who now require additional social, emotional or academic support to be successful:*

Social emotional learning and wellness will be at the forefront of our teaching practices at Head Start now more than ever. The program's Pyramid Team will take the lead on social emotional support for staff, children and families. All children are screened at the beginning of the year to assess where the child falls academically. Educators individualize lessons and activities to meet the children's needs both social emotionally and academically.

8. *Describe how your school plans to help students to re-adjust to in-person instruction and the structure of school:*



Students will be assisted with transition through zoom meetings prior to their return to allow teachers to ease any fears and set expectations. As the school building opens to children, educators will begin in person instruction with a focus on social emotional needs and wellness. Children will be given time to re acclimate to the routine of school and learn new procedures and expectations. Parents of new and returning students will be offered video tours and zoom orientations to aid in their understanding of the school day and to provide a home-school linkage.

9. *Outline some of the things you will do to create a positive school climate of safety, comfort and routine in all program models:*

Children and families will have ample time to get used to the guidelines necessary to keep staff, families and children safe. While teaching the new guidelines children will be redirected to use new appropriate ways to stay safe and engage with peers. Staff will have had trauma informed care trainings to prepare them for interacting and supporting children and families. The classroom environment will support children and staff with signage and posters, good transition practices and positive interactions, both among staff to children and peer to peer interactions. The physical safety of the building will be continuously assessed by the school's director and nurse, as well as the Program Director and Director of Agency Operations.

10. *Describe how you will help staff members share information about individual needs and each student's responses to blended, in-person and/or remote learning:*

Astor has employed an online survey that allows families to complete to share what mode of learning they would prefer. The survey also allows for families to fill in any concerns they have. Particular questions are asked about internet, wifi and access to technology. Family advocates have reached out to families weekly to discuss specific needs and concerns.

11. *Describe how you will use diagnostic assessment to determine each student's academic, social and emotional needs:*

Ongoing assessment will be completed either in person, remotely or a blend of both by using Teaching Strategies Gold, which is the assessment for the Creative Curriculum. The assessment tool allows teachers to assess through in person observations or through family observations.

12. *Programs for preschool students (4410s) should briefly describe how they will:*

- a. *Manage meals without family-style service and with social distancing*

Meals will be plated and served by teachers instead of through a traditional family style meal. Children will be kept 6 feet apart at tables or clear partitions will be used to allow for children to be closer than 6 feet while eating.

- b. *Manage toileting and hand washing when classrooms do not have adjoining sinks and toilets*

All of the classrooms have toilets and sinks within the classroom. Children will be expected to follow a routine hand washing schedule. Staff ratios allow for a staff member to manage toileting and hand washing to ensure that safe physical distancing and hygienic hand washing is implemented at all times.

*c. Implement nap time, if applicable*

Preschoolers in Astor's Early Childhood Program do not have naps built into their schedule as the day is only five hours.

*d. Modify center time to enhance social distancing*

Lower numbers in the classroom will inherently bring lower numbers into the centers. There will be a limit of the number of children allowed in each center and tape on the floor will encourage children to stay in an assigned space. There will be fewer chairs at each table so children will not be able to sit closely together. Clear protective barriers may be implemented to ensure separation at tables during mealtimes.

*e. Avoid children having to share materials*

Children will have a caddy of their own items to use throughout the classroom. Children will have crayons, markers, scissors, glue and various other materials in their caddy to use during center time.

*f. Follow sanitation guidelines during the day, i.e., after center time*

Hand washing will be worked into the classroom routine and schedule. Children will need to wash hands before and after centers. Staff will be trained on proper sanitation and will remove any item that is mouthed. Staff will be able to close a center, or remove items if the item is contaminated during center time. Due to the low number of children in the room, closing one center should not affect physical distancing in other areas of the room.

*g. Discourage practices which encourage physical contact, i.e. partners holding hands*

To begin the year, the teachers will work diligently to teach children appropriate activities that will follow physical distancing, such as hugs from far away and elbow high fives. Teachers will also be trained on many practices that must be discontinued, such as holding a partner's hand. More importantly teachers will be given strategies to use within the classroom to support safety and supervision while still maintaining physical distancing. Visual aids and prompts will be placed throughout the room to encourage appropriate social relationships that ensure physical distancing.

*13. For 4410 Programs Only: Describe how you will balance screen time and authentic learning experiences during remote learning periods:*

During remote learning teachers will provide families with developmentally appropriate, hands on learning activities that can easily be done in the home. These activities will reinforce skills that are being worked on through interactive video lessons (zoom) with the teacher, or in a hybrid situation, in the classroom. A partnership with the families will allow the children to have hands on learning in the home and will enable teachers to take these observations and assess in Teaching Strategies Gold.

14. *Describe how your program will control/limit volunteers and visitors (including parents/guardians) and, if they are permitted, how they will be informed of requirements for health and safety*

The program will limit volunteers and visitors allowed within the classroom. Only essential visitors will be permitted access to the school building. Program staff visiting classrooms must only visit for required site visits/observations and must be screened and follow all health and safety protocols. Whenever possible program staff will avoid entering more than one classroom per day.

15. *Describe how you will maintain students in a “cohort”/“pod” for in-person and blended learning:*

Children will stay in their assigned classroom with their 3-4 teachers for the duration of their time in the classroom. Children eat meals in their classroom and will go out on the playground with only their classmates in their “cohort”. Bathrooms are within the classroom as well. The same teaching staff will stay with this cohort whenever possible.

16. *Describe some of the best practices which can inform/facilitate high-quality remote instruction?*

The Creative Curriculum allows for child led, hands-on authentic activities which engage students and teachers, as everyone is investigating and learning together. This will continue through remote instruction. Students will continue their study and investigate through their virtual learning and through additional hands on activities that the child can do with their families. Activities will be individualized for children’s specific developmental needs and the families’ needs as well.

17. *Describe how are students are assigned to a learning model and if, how and when they might be moved from one model to another:*

All children will be assigned the same learning model unless a family requests to be remote only while the rest of the class is hybrid or all in person. If a family requests to be all remote, a teacher would continue to support this family by virtual learning and providing hands on activities for the family to complete with the child. Moving from one model to another will occur at the request of the family or based on local metrics.

18. *Describe how you will make all models as inclusive and culturally-responsive as possible:*

Astor will allow flexibility in the models to allow for children and families to make decisions that are best for their family. We will support families in getting technology to ensure the child can be a part of virtual learning, which may include providing the family with a tablet.

We are including families in the decision making and will continue to include them moving forward. Any family that does not have technology access will be provided with physical copies of activities and teachers and advocates will reach by phone.

19. Describe your models for:

- a) In-person education, including details such as number of students/staff per classroom; length of session; and any other important information:

The classroom will have at maximum 12 students. The sessions would be standard five hour day. The classroom would be fully staffed with one lead teacher and at minimum two teacher assistants.

- b) Remote learning:

Teachers will provide students with a minimum of two opportunities a week for a virtual learning class for 20-40 minutes which will include a Read Aloud story, songs and rhymes, finger plays and an opportunity for discussion amongst the group. Weekly activities will be provided to families. These activities will reinforce skills practiced on the virtual learning class and be hands on and easily accessible to all families. Teachers will have weekly conversations with families to discuss these activities and to get feedback from families.

- c) Blended/hybrid learning, including days and duration of in-person services, staffing for in-person portions and typical patterns and practices for remote instruction:

Children approved for center-based CPSE services will attend school four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) with Wednesday designated for deep cleaning and remote learning. The Head Start class of 18 will be divided into two cohorts, Cohort A and Cohort B. Cohort A will attend school on Monday and Tuesday. Cohort B will attend school on Thursday and Friday. Both groups would attend for five hours a day. The classroom will consist of the standard staff which includes one teacher and a minimum of two teacher assistants. On Wednesday, the classroom will receive extra cleaning, swapping of manipulatives and virtual learning with Cohort A and Cohort B. Weekly activities that connect to what the children are learning will also be provided to families. Teachers will have at minimum, monthly contact with families to check in and get feedback on the activities provided.

## **L. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

*NOTE: CTE does not specifically apply to 4410 programs except for the basic Learning Standards which can be achieved in remote, blended or in-person preschool instructional models.*

*Any 853 programs engaged in a robust CTE programs, especially those with a “work-based” learning component should describe below some of the modifications which will be required to help students to make continued progress, especially in periods of remote or blended learning.*

## **M. ATHELETCS AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

*NOTE: While athletics and extra-curricular activities are generally not part of any 4410 program and may have only limited manifestation in an 853 program. However, should such events or activities be contemplated and permitted by governmental authorities, our agency will comply completely with the guidance and requirements set forth in the DOH Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Should facilities under our control be used at any time by external community organizations, those groups will be required to follow State and local directives and health requirements regarding social distancing, hygiene and sanitation.*

## **N. SPECIAL EDUCATION**

1. *Describe how students will receive FAPE, regardless of the service delivery model they are participating in:*

The program will continue to offer teletherapy to be consistent with the health and safety conditions that exist. If able, we will offer in person special education services. The program will offer in person, remote or a hybrid model. All of the models will continue to provide each child their special education services to continue to work on each child's IEP goals through direct or virtual teaching and therapy.

2. *Describe how parents will be meaningfully engaged in their preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of mandated services to their child:*

Parents will continue to be meaningfully engaged in their preferred language with the support of family advocates that can assist with communication, if needed. Parents also have been communicating with their child's teacher/therapist by their preferred mode, which was asked between parents/staff in March 2020. Parents signed consent for email communication, if they wish to use that mode for communication. Some teachers are using platforms that allow for communication electronically between parents/therapists (ie- classdojo).

3. *Outline how your program plans to work collaboratively and communicate with the CPSE/CSE:*

The program will continue to be in constant communication with CPSE Chairs. All of the districts have the Special Services Coordinator's work cell phone number and email address. Any question or concern that arises from a parent, will be communicated to the CPSE Chair. CPSE Chairs have received progress reports from the children in their districts as well as updates as we receive from the support staff in our program.

4. *Will your reopening plan ensure access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students?*

The program will provide the necessary accommodations/aids for any child needing that support on their IEP. If a child needs an aide; we will post for the position and interview remotely.

5. *Describe how your school will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities to their parents/guardians in their preferred language/mode of communication:*

The school will continue to document the services offered and provided through the CPSE PORTAL for all therapy. The teachers will continue to document their services on the Dutchess County Weekly log, which is submitted to parents weekly for their signatures. Then those signed logs are submitted to Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health monthly for billing purposes. Teachers are also submitting a monthly log of detailed services provided, which is monitored and reviewed by school administrators. The mode of the services are provided based on the consent parents signed in March/April 2020 specifying their preferred mode of service.

6. *Describe how you could work with the CPSE/CSE to prepare contingency plans to address a student's remote learning needs in the event of future intermittent or extended school closures:*

To prepare a contingency plan to address remote learning with school districts, we could work to obtain all consents for teletherapy, mode of communication and language preference during initial CPSE placement. We could also work on a way that children with IEP's would have access to technology through their home school district. The program could look into more digital resources that could help facilitate services via telehealth. Educational supplies were picked up by parents at their home center, which was helpful for remote learning.

7. *Describe how your reopening plan prioritizes in-person services to the greatest extent possible for high-needs students:*

Our reopening plan prioritizes in person special education services. We are working with the County to ensure busing can be safe for all children and staff, we have obtained PPE for both staff and students, we have surveyed parents to see if they would send their child to school in September and we are able to provide a safe environment to meet the needs of the children in our program.

8. *Will your program continue to monitor the progress of students, regardless of the service delivery model, and use that information to evaluate the effectiveness of the student's special education services and inform parents of their child's progress on a regular basis?*

Our program will continue to monitor the progress of children despite their delivery mode by completing quarterly reports, annual reviews and continuing to have ongoing communication with parents/guardians through their preferred mode.

9. *Describe any changes or additions to student data collection you anticipate because of the possibility of changing student needs and experiences over various instructional models and platforms:*

The program will continue to complete quarterly reports and annuals. We will continue to submit rationales to request IEP amendments, we may ask parent input, which may be included on the quarterly/annual reports.

10. Describe your plan's important considerations and approach to related service provision over the various models you are planning (in-person, remote, hybrid/blended):

Remote - Staff will continue to provide remote learning/teletherapy to children and families. Staff will continue to work on each child's individual IEP goals and offer support to parents to continue to work towards their IEP goals.

In-person- Students will attend school each day with social distancing practices in place. Materials in the classroom will be cleaned and sanitized as directed, staff will wear appropriate PPE and only essential visitors will be permitted to enter the building.

Hybrid – Children approved for Astor's center-based special education classrooms will attend four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) with Wednesday designated for deep cleaning and remote learning.

11. Describe how you will assign related service caseloads and provide related services to protect the integrity of student "cohorts"/"pods":

Caseloads will be assigned where therapists have minimal transitions into different rooms thought out the day, staff will not bring outside materials into the classroom besides pen and paper, if needed, common areas for therapy will be cleaned and sanitized as needed and familiar therapists will be assigned to returning children to help facilitate a seamless transition for children and staff back to in-person services in September.

## **O. STAFFING**

1. Will all individuals hold a valid certification/license appropriate to their service assignment?

All staff currently hold a valid certification/license appropriate to their service assignment.

2. Will certifications and licenses be verified by the school using the internet-based tools made available by NYSED?

Certifications and licenses will be verified using the online tools available from the New York State Education Department.

3. Describe any staffing changes which you might need to consider to meet instructional and operational demands during the COVID emergency period

The program will consider reassigning education staff to facilitate high quality remote instruction. Depending on the needs of the families, all staff may be asked to alter their duties to include cleaning, disinfecting and assistance with food preparation and/or delivery. Staff and child ratios will be maintained.

4. Will the school be making "incidental" teaching assignments during the 2020/2021 school year? (After extensive and well-documented unsuccessful recruitment, a teacher can be given an "incidental" assignment for no more than ten (10) classroom hours per week to allow an otherwise unqualified teacher teach a subject which is not covered by their certificate.)

Not at this time.

5. *Substitute teachers will have an important role to play upon reopening, especially if there are extensive or protracted staff absences or in certain staff intensive instructional models that blend remote and in-person learning.*

*Our school will undertake robust recruitment efforts to identify and process qualified substitutes. In the 2020/2021 school year, as permitted by NYSED, if qualified substitute teachers cannot be engaged, individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent, even those not working toward certification can first be engaged for up to ninety (90) days and then beyond the first ninety (90) day period through the end of June, 2021, as long as the superintendent documents and attests that recruitment efforts did not identify a fully qualified substitute teacher. The school administrator must attest to the shortage of qualified recruits initially and then at the end of the first ninety (90) day period. Recruitment efforts will be extensively documented.*

6. *Staff members who are requesting an accommodation from reporting for in-person work due to concerns about their own health must notify the Human Resources department and then comply with submitting requested information before the agency can determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made based on applicable law, regulation and the agency's needs and resources.*

#### **P. TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM**

*NOTE: This required section of the reopening plan is not applicable since 4410 and 853 programs are not subject to the specific laws and regulations regarding professional evaluation cited in the NYSED guidance.*

#### **Q. STUDENT TEACHING**

1. *Since NYSED permits and encourages it, will your school welcome student teachers during the 2020/2021 school year to participate in-person and/or remote instruction?*

Historically the school does not accept student teachers and will not during the 2020-2021 year.