



## **Return to School Plan – Spring 2021**

During this pandemic we especially hold the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff with the highest regard. Much work goes into adapting our Waldorf education to the current world we live in, but we are doing it with energy and with a focus on meeting the needs of all our children and community members. We rely on the information and rules from the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the City of Milwaukee Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control to determine the best practices for a safe learning and working environment. This plan spells out how we will operate during the 2020–21 school year in adherence to the requirements and recommendations from these authorities. As always, we are driven by our Mission Statement and our Guiding Principles that are central to Waldorf education at our school.

### **Tamarack Waldorf School Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide a pre-K through 8th grade Waldorf education to develop independent, critical thinkers with a strong sense of social responsibility.

### **In all that we do we take the following as our Guiding Principles:**

- We recognize that children’s needs, interests, strengths, and challenges evolve from their early childhood years through 8th grade graduation. Our curriculum is consciously designed to best meet each developmental stage as children grow, providing the right experience at the appropriate time.
- We seek to work together in ways that increase the diversity of our school community and promote equity and inclusion for all community members regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, financial means, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender, or disability status. This includes ensuring that we have a continually evolving curriculum that meets all of our students.
- Relationships are what make our work possible — between students and teachers, among classmates, among faculty members, between all community members — and we consciously strive to foster and support healthy relationships in all areas of our community.
- Human beings are individuals with their own personal strengths, challenges, and interests. We seek to meet each community member with love and care, ensuring that there is flexibility and support in our classrooms, policies and practices, and community expectations.
- Children are best supported when there is partnership between home and school. We seek to provide parent support, education, and engagement and we ask that parents collaboratively work with teachers in the same way.
- Each community member is a whole human being: body, soul, and spirit. Our faculty and staff members draw insight and inspiration from the work of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy.
- Through our curriculum, policies, employment agreements, community expectations, and services beyond the classroom we strive to fully engage all community members and create a culture of purposeful activity and joy.
- Through our community life we respect and support the inner development and growth of our community members, sharing the celebration of festivals, athletic competition, artistic work, and study.
- Collaboration and shared responsibility are the foundations of our school governance and leadership model. We work with consensus within all governance groups. We are committed to a transparent and cooperative process for all significant decisions in the school.

On the following pages you will find a condensed version of our health and safety plans for our return to in-person instruction. Our full COVID-19 Return to School Plan 2020-21, which has been approved by the Milwaukee Health Department, can be found on our website.



## Community Coordination and Response

- Tamarack Waldorf School's COVID-19 Coordinator is the school Administrative Director, Lora Poulos.
- The coordinator and other staff members will compile information on absences, tracking illnesses and identifying potential COVID-19 clusters.
- School employees and families will need to report symptoms, positive tests, or exposure to COVID-19 to the school office.
- The coordinator will monitor guidance from state and local officials, along with the CDC.
- If an employee or student is diagnosed with COVID-19 we will notify the Milwaukee Health Department. The school community will be notified of a confirmed case, with identifying information kept confidential.



## Communication

- School-wide communications will go out through ParentSquare, our school's communication system.
- Administration will call families directly when there is an individual situation at hand.
- Social media and website posting will be used to move important information out to our school community.
- Teachers will use Google Classroom and email to contact their class families.
- Teachers will make individual phone calls or text messages as needed.



## Preventative Methods

- No student, faculty or staff should come to school if ill or displaying any respiratory illness symptoms.
- No student, faculty or staff should come to school if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes.

If a student, faculty or staff member has come in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, please contact Lora Poulos, Administrative Director: 414-277-0009.

- Any student, faculty or staff traveling to domestic locations designated as COVID-19 "hot spots" by the CDC or traveling outside the United States may be required to quarantine for up to 14 days before returning to school.
- Faculty and staff will continually reinforce students' hygiene requirements, including washing hands or using hand sanitizer, maintaining social distancing, and wearing a face mask.
- Faculty and staff will continually reinforce students' social distancing, which means keeping a safe space of six feet between individuals who are not in the same classroom.
- Signage will be added to the hallways and classrooms to remind students, faculty, staff and visitors of proper precautionary procedures.

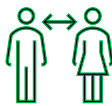


## Personal Protective Equipment

The CDC states the following: "Wearing a cloth face covering will help protect people around you, including those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and workers who frequently come into close contact with other people. Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings. The spread of COVID-19 can be reduced when cloth face coverings are used along with other preventive measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, and the cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces."

- Face masks will be required for all students, staff and visitors in the school building.
- Face shields or other alternatives may be identified as acceptable only for student or staff with documented special needs or health conditions, requiring advanced written approval by the Administrative Director.
- The Administrative Director and Leadership Team will use the [CDC face covering adaptation guidance](#).

- All faculty, staff and students will be required to wear a face mask throughout the school day.
- Masks can be homemade or disposable masks.
- Faculty, staff and students are asked to provide their own mask, but Tamarack will also provide two cloth masks and will have extras available if someone forgets to bring one.
- Faculty, staff and students are asked to bring a fresh mask to change into after lunch daily and to take them home daily to wash.
- Masks will be removed to eat snack and lunch.
- Students will be allowed a mask break when outside and socially distanced more than 6 feet. Students will either be sitting or standing during this time, there will be no play allowed during a designated mask break.
- Our Distance Learning Plan is available for families who do not want their student to wear a mask.
- Face masks are not required in private offices or classrooms when occupied by a single person.



### Social Distancing

- Individual classrooms have been adjusted and reconfigured to maximize social distancing, including removing unnecessary furniture.
- Classroom arrangements will allow instruction to occur in a socially distant configuration when students are seated at their desks. Students' desks will be arranged in forward facing rows to maximize social distancing. Shared tables, circle set ups and grouping of desks will not be permitted in classrooms.
- Teachers will maintain seating assignments to ensure accurate contact tracing abilities in the event a student tests positive for COVID-19.



### Protective Barriers

- Protective plexiglass barriers have been installed at the main office reception window and desk. All

transactions with the office will take place through the reception window.

- Barriers have also been placed in areas that require direct personal contact or close student interaction, as with tutoring, the learning support room, and teacher workstations.
- Classroom teacher desks have a plexiglass barrier to provide a barrier when close contact is needed to work with a student.
- Face shields may be worn during speech tutoring sessions as long a plexiglass barrier is also in use.



### Hand Hygiene

- Faculty, staff, and students are required to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times:
  - Upon arrival at school (use hand sanitizer if there is no sink in the classroom), and prior to leaving school for home.
  - Upon entering the classroom and before leaving the classroom.
  - Before and after being outside for recess or another reason.
  - Before and after snack and lunch.
  - After sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose.
  - Students will be trained and told to wash their hands before leaving the restroom.
  - Hand sanitizer will be expected to be applied by students upon returning to the classroom after using the restroom.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be readily available throughout the building and in classrooms.
- All sinks have been outfitted with no-touch soap and towel dispensers. The main student restrooms have no-touch faucets.
- All classrooms have been outfitted with no-touch trash cans where students and staff can properly dispose of tissues, disinfecting wipes, and disposable cleaning cloths. Hand hygiene should be followed after disposal of these items to the trash.

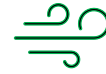


## Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC Guidelines: Coronaviruses on surfaces and objects naturally die within hours to days. Warmer temperatures and exposure to sunlight will reduce the time the virus survives on surfaces and objects. Normal routine cleaning with soap and water removes germs and dirt from surfaces and lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19 infection. Disinfectants kill germs on surfaces. By killing germs on a surface after cleaning, you can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

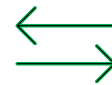
- We will have cleaning staff on site during the school day.
- Our cleaning staff will clean, disinfect, and sanitize daily.
- Some areas will be cleaned multiple times a day – including the restrooms, health room (isolation room), and high-touch surfaces such as handrails, light switches, and doorknobs.
- A logging and accountability plan will be required for cleaning.
- Deep cleaning will occur weekly or at the frequency required by health authorities.
- Deep cleaning will also occur between cohorts of students when an A/B schedule is used.
- The frequency of cleaning may increase in circumstances of increased absences due to symptoms and/or if a positive COVID-19 case is identified in our building.
- All cleaning supplies used are CDC and EPA approved to kill COVID-19 and stored securely away from children.
- Teachers, students, custodians and staff will have responsibility for cleaning and sanitizing their personal spaces throughout the day.
- Disinfecting wipes will be provided to each student and each classroom will be stocked with cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- Teachers will incorporate cleaning and hygiene regimens into their daily classroom routines.
- In the event classroom materials need to be shared, under direction of the teacher they will be cleaned in between use by students.
- The school office will also be provided with cleaning and disinfecting supplies.

- Staff members sharing the office space and materials will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting their space and the high-touch areas within their space regularly throughout the day.



## Ventilation and Drinking Water

- Most classrooms are equipped with ceiling fans and they will be positioned to draw the air up.
- Classroom and office doors and windows will be kept open to ensure there is ample exchange and flow of fresh air.
- Windowsills will be cleared of all items to allow for unrestricted air flow. Curtains that are restricting airflow will be removed.
- All classrooms will be equipped with a HEPA air cleaner unit.
- Drinking fountains will be turned off as they are high touch surfaces that are hard to keep sufficiently sanitized.
- The water bottle filler function will be accessible, and students will be able to fill their own bottles.
- In the Kindergarten each room will continue to have filtered water available, and teachers will help with water bottle filling.
- Students need to bring a refillable water bottle to school for their personal use.
- Personal water bottles brought to school will need to go home each day for cleaning.
- Disposable cup dispensers will be installed at each hallway sink.



## Hallways, Stairways, and other Building Spaces

- Floors, stairways, and walls will be labeled with walking routes to direct students to keep to the right at all times in the hallways and stairways.
- Grades 3 through 8 will use the west stairway (driveway) to exit and enter the basement.
- Kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 will use the center stairway (office) to exit and enter the basement.
- Only Kindergarten classes will use the main stairway.

- Grades 7 and 8 will go through the gym to use the west stairway. Grades 7 and 8 may use the main stairway if exiting the building at the main door.
- The east stairway will be for emergency use only to eliminate exposure between first and second floor classes.
- To limit exposure between student groups, classes will remain in their classrooms for instruction or work outside in a designated area.
- The community hall and kitchen will be used for different small group functions throughout the week. Small groups will be from the same classroom and will not mix with other classes.
- The community hall will have partitions available to create tutoring areas with some privacy.



### **Parking Lot and Other Outdoor Spaces**

- We are encouraging teachers to teach outdoors as much as possible.
- The parking lot will be closed to parking during the school day to allow for outdoor class space.
- Tables and chairs will be available for this purpose.
- Other outdoor areas will also be used for class time and we will create a schedule to make sure class groups and recess groups do not overlap in the spaces.



### **Student Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

#### **Morning Drop-off**

- Parents will not be permitted inside the building during drop-off or pick-up times. Classroom days will be extended slightly to allow for staggered arrival/dismissal.
- Drop-off will begin at 7:45am.
- Cars can pull up to the drop-off zones on Franklin Pl. or Brady St.
- Students who walk to school will check in with an assistant in the drop-off zone to have a symptom and temperature check completed. There will also be a checkpoint in the parking lot for those who walk to school.

- Assistants will be stationed in these zones to perform symptom and temperature checks on students before they are permitted to go to the parking lot lineup area.
- Those who exhibit symptoms or a temperature above 100.4 will be sent home.
- Each class will have a designated place to meet in the parking lot to line up socially distanced.
- Face masks and social distancing will be enforced while students are waiting to enter the building.
- Class teachers will be stationed at their designated class spot to help usher their class students into the school building and to the classroom.
- Class entry into the building will be staggered, as classes must enter through the basement door to hang up coats and change into indoor shoes.
- Seventh and eighth grade students will enter through the main doors and go directly to their classroom.
- Students will go up their designated stairwell to class as a group with the class teacher and assistant.

#### **After School Pick-up**

- Pick-up begins at 2:45pm for Kindergarten and 3:00pm for Grades 1-8.
- Pick-up will take place outdoors, with students lining up in their designated area in the parking lot, with their class teacher.
- Families will be asked to pick up at their oldest child's designated time.
- In order to keep the pick-up line moving, you may be asked to circle around if you arrive too early to pick up your student.
- Class assistants will be stationed on Franklin Pl. and Brady St. to assist with pick-up.
- Cars can pull up to the pick-up zones on Franklin Pl. or Brady St.
- Parents on foot will check in at the pick-up zone to ask for their student to be sent over. Parents may also enter the parking lot from the driveway and pickup from the parking lot zone.
- School end times will be staggered to allow for distance between the classroom groups.
- Classes must use their designated stairwell to move to the basement for building exit.
- Face masks and social distancing will be enforced while students are waiting to be picked up.



### **Snack and Lunch**

- Students will eat snack and lunch outdoors every day, unless weather or scheduling does not permit it.
- Students will be socially distanced 6 feet while eating.
- When eating indoors classes size will be reduced with some students eating in the community hall or basement.
- Students will need to bring a snack and lunch each day in a lunch box. Lunch boxes should be cleaned and sanitized at home each day.
- Any school-provided snack will be prepackaged or individually wrapped.
- Our pizza and burrito lunch fundraiser will be cancelled this year, as will Friday morning bagels and Thursday afterschool popcorn.
- There will be no classroom cooking or baking.



### **Restroom Breaks**

- Restroom breaks will be scheduled during snack and lunch times.
- Early Childhood and Grades 1-6 will be given a designated time to use the basement restrooms so that only one class is in the restroom at a time.
- Students will also be allowed to use the restrooms as needed during the school day, avoiding other classes when possible.
- Grades 7 and 8 will use the third-floor restrooms, restricting them to only one student at a time.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the day.



### **Recess**

- Tamarack students typically have two recess times per day that take place at a park within walking distance of our campus.

- Recess times will be staggered to limit students in hallways and basement as they exit the building and walk to the park.
- Each class will have a designated area in the park to use, with teachers marking off their area with cones.
- Class groups will not be allowed to mix during recess time.
- Classes also have the option of taking a nature hike instead of gathering at the recess park.
- We will work to create a schedule of park use and other areas to be used near school so that gathering limits can be followed.



### **Visitors**

- We will restrict all nonessential visitation including volunteers for classroom activities, guest speakers, and parents. Access will be limited to students and necessary faculty and staff. Visitors permitted inside will be screened before entry, must wear a face mask, maintain physical distancing, and restrict their visit to the location designated by the school. Vendors will follow appropriate predetermined processes to ensure safety.
- Families or caregivers picking up students will wait outside for students to be dismissed. Parent visits with school staff will require an advance appointment. Parent visitors will be required to complete a daily self-check health screening and are required to wear a face covering.
- Contractors may need to enter the building to perform repairs or routine maintenance and will be scheduled on non-school days or at times when students are not in the building. If this is not possible, contractors will be required to wear a mask and have their temperature taken before they are granted access to the building.





## Music, Physical Education, Field Trips, and Other Activities

- We will suspend in-building activities that potentially increase exposure – i.e., singing, use of wind instruments, and physical education. We will move activities outdoors as much as possible.
- Classes can sing outside with masks on and physically distanced. Flutes and recorders will not be played at this time.
- We will suspend activities which create more exposure including after school events, sports, clubs, assemblies, and field trips.
- Field trips that need help from additional chaperones or transportation will be canceled. Walking field trips with teacher and assistant are possible, as long as students do not come in contact with people outside their class group.



## Extended Care

- We will not be able to offer an extended care program this year.
- The bringing together of students at the beginning and end of the day after our strict adherence to a cohort structure will undo all of the careful work we have done to keep children from passing any infection along.



## COVID-19 Symptom Screening

- A daily screening protocol will be provided to each of our families. Families will be asked to conduct the screening protocol prior to leaving for school in the morning to ensure their child is symptom free of COVID-19 and has a temperature in normal range (<100.4).
- Health screenings will be done daily at drop-off. Staff will administer health checks and any students exhibiting symptoms will be sent home. Staff performing health screenings and

administering temperature checks will wear PPE including a mask, gloves, and optional face shield. Thermometers are no contact but will require staff to be within six feet of a child for an accurate reading.

- We may conduct a health screening, including a temperature check, of students at any time during the school day to check for potential illness symptoms.
- Students who display symptoms or report feeling ill during the school day will be immediately taken to a designated isolation space until they can be picked up.
- Students who report flu-like symptoms will not be allowed to return to school until 24 hours after symptoms are no longer present.
- School staff will follow up with families of students who are ill, will record and track symptoms, and provide academic support for students while out of school.
- For reporting COVID-19 related illness, please see Communication of Positive COVID-19 Cases section.



## Attendance and Illness

- If a student becomes ill or reports symptoms, they will be required to go home. Parents must pick up their child within 60 minutes of receiving a phone call from our Main Office staff. Students will remain in our designated isolation space until parents arrive.
- Students should not return to school until 24 hours after symptoms are no longer present. School staff will follow up with families of students who are ill, will record and track symptoms and provide academic support for students while out of school.
- Students missing school due to illness may be provided their assignments through Google Classroom.
- For reporting COVID-19 related illness, please see Communication on Positive COVID-19 Cases section.
- All attendance policies will be revised to encourage students showing flu-like symptoms to refrain from

attending school. See our full Return to School Plan for attendance policies during COVID-19.



### **Protocol for Positive Cases**

Tamarack will work closely with the Milwaukee Health Department to follow necessary protocols and procedures in the event of a COVID-19 positive case. We may revise self-quarantine policies based on updated information from the CDC and the Milwaukee Health Department.

#### **Positive Cases of COVID-19 of a Student, Faculty or Staff Member**

If a student, faculty or staff member is confirmed positive for COVID-19, Tamarack must be informed immediately. Please contact Lora Poulos, Administrative Director at 414-277-0009. The student, faculty or staff member must quarantine for 14 days and may only return to school with a release from doctor or case management.

#### **Positive Cases of COVID-19 of Tamarack Household Members**

If a student, faculty, or staff member is living with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is quarantined because of COVID-19, Tamarack must be informed immediately. Please contact Lora Poulos, Administrative Director at 414-277-0009. The student, faculty or staff member in the household must quarantine for a minimum of 14 days from date of symptoms first appearing and be symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

#### **Close Contact with a COVID-19 Positive Individual**

If a student, faculty, or staff member comes into close contact with a positive COVID-19 individual, Tamarack must be informed immediately. Close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 cumulative minutes in a day. Please contact Lora Poulos, Administrative Director at 414-277-0009. The student, faculty or staff member will be asked to quarantine for 14 days and not return until they are symptom free for a full 24 hours.

#### **Contact Tracing of COVID-19 Cases**

Tamarack will work closely with the Milwaukee Health Department when notified of a positive case in our community. Tamarack will assist health officials in contact tracing by interviewing the student or their parents to determine close contacts among our school community.

Families of students who may have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual will be contacted by Tamarack.

#### **Return to School after COVID-19 Testing**

Students, faculty, or staff who are quarantined because they came into close contact with a positive case may elect to seek a COVID-19 test. If a student, faculty, or staff member is asymptomatic and has received a negative COVID-19 test, they may return to school with a release from a doctor or case management. The decision to allow an asymptomatic student, faculty, or staff member with a confirmed negative COVID-19 test to return to class will be made on a case by-case basis by Lora Poulos, Administrative Director, in consultation with officials at the Milwaukee Health Department.

#### **COVID-19 Symptoms and Testing**

Students, faculty, or staff who display COVID-19 symptoms, such as cough, fever, chills, muscle pain, shortness of breath or a sore throat, fatigue, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea must quarantine from school and seek a COVID-19 test. Students, faculty, and staff who receive a negative COVID-19 test, have not had a potential exposure, and have been symptom free for 24 hours may return to class.

#### **School Closure Due to High COVID-19 Cases at Tamarack**

In coordination with the Milwaukee Health Department, Tamarack may be forced to close school if positive, unlinked cases of COVID-19 are reported. In the event of a full school closing, Tamarack will immediately transition to our distance learning program for students during the closure.

#### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

Tamarack will take every reasonable measure to provide our families, faculty and staff confidentiality and privacy regarding COVID-19 positive cases. No names will be published or communicated when the community is being advised on positive cases.

#### **Covid-19 Vaccine**

All staff has had access to the COVID-19 vaccine. While we are encouraging our staff to get the vaccine, it is not mandatory. HIPAA Privacy Laws prohibit us from disclosing staff vaccine information.





## Instructional Phases

We will move between these educational modes in response to the City and State Phases and will be actively reviewing the [City of Milwaukee COVID statistics](#) and [MHD Gating Metric Review](#), closely following state and city announcements and the orders of the Governor and Mayor, all of which will help us in anticipating upcoming changes in the Phase so that we will be as ready as possible to respond.

### **Phase A: Distance Learning**

We will be in distance learning phase when the City of Milwaukee Health Department identifies that the City of Milwaukee is in any of the Phases 1 - 4.

### **Phase B: Hybrid Low-Density Instruction**

We will be in this mode when the City of Milwaukee Health Department identifies that the City of Milwaukee is in Phase 4.1 and we have an approved re-opening safety plan. We will be able to be on campus, but not have our usual class sized groups of students together. Instead, we will be operating at 50% of our school capacity. We will not be able to bring groups of more than one class together, have groups of students mix between classes, or have parents and other community members gather with students. We anticipate continuing in Phase B until a vaccine is developed and implemented, and upon MHD approval to move to Phase C. Any alterations to our plans will be submitted to MHD for approval prior to implementation.

### **Phase C: Full Capacity**

We will be in this mode when the City of Milwaukee Health Department identifies that the city of Milwaukee is in Phase 5. This phase will allow us to return to full capacity in-person instruction. We will return to this approach as soon as we can do so and stay in compliance with the orders from the State of Wisconsin and City of Milwaukee. We will operate with caution and continue with all our health and safety measures in place.



## Technology

- Through a generous donation we were able to provide laptops to families who needed them. Tamarack does not maintain these laptops but does offer troubleshooting and replacements as needed.
- Tamarack has adopted Google Classroom as its universal learning management system which will serve as a single comprehensive platform for on-line learning for all classes. Zoom or Google Meets will be used to conduct live virtual classes and meet with individual students.
- Tamarack will offer trouble shooting for online platforms as needed.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our COVID-19 Return to School Plan, please contact you student's class teacher, or Tamarack's Administrative Director, Lora Poulos at 414-277-0009 / [lora.poulos@tamarackwaldorf.org](mailto:lora.poulos@tamarackwaldorf.org)