

Monica Ros School

Back to School Plan

We can't wait to be back together again on campus with our students! Please find a description of protocols, procedures, and policies that will be in place for the 2020-21 School Year to help guide all of us through the reopening of school. We will continually be implementing new practices designed to keep everyone as safe as possible. Our goal is to return to school safely, stay in small groups, and have in place remote learning plans for our school-age students who are sick, isolating, or in quarantine. Please make sure you and your student(s) understand and are willing to follow these safety protocols.

Changes may occur if we receive additional guidance from federal, state and local authorities.

UPDATE: Friday, July 17, 2020: Per the California Department of Public Health, and as communicated via California Governor Gavin Newsom, schools may only open for in-person instruction if they are located in a county that has not been on the state's "watchlist" within the prior 14 days. Ventura County is one of the California counties that are on the state's COVID watchlist currently. Monica Ros School is watching Ventura County's status and exploring the feasibility of a waiver which can be issued to an elementary school by a local health officer when certain criteria are met. Local community epidemiological data for Ojai is unique from other municipalities in Ventura County, and Monica Ros School has demonstrated our ability to meet all guidelines presented by Cal OSHA and CDPH for schools. Our preschool falls under state licensing as childcare and is thus subject to different parameters. We will continue to discuss as a staff and keep our families abreast of our findings. Thank you for your support and love for our program.

UPDATE: August 2020: Please find our application for a waiver to issue in-person instruction for our students here: [Waiver 8-21-20](#)

UPDATE: September 2020: Here is our final approved waiver: [MRS Waiver September Update](#)

Promoting Healthy Behaviors

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that all institutions respond to the current health situation by promoting healthy behaviors, establishing a healthy environment, and conducting healthy operations.

Promoting healthy behaviors begins with staying home when we are sick. Healthy behaviors include washing hands, social distancing, responding appropriately to sneezes and coughs, and wearing masks and/or face shields. Monica Ros has numerous other protocols in place (that you will read about below) to establish the healthiest environment for students and staff, and ensure our operations are also held to the highest health standards.

First Things First: Kinsa Thermometers

- We will be using the Kinsa Smart thermometers so that daily temperatures and health checks can take place at home before school starts.
<https://www.kinsahealth.co/products/>.
- Every morning before arrival at school, parents will use the Kinsa thermometer and app to take and record student's temperature and to answer simple symptoms questions. If the information indicates our student is healthy, the app will register a green thumbs-up.
- At the gate, the parent will show the App's "all clear" thumbs-up or another fever-free signifier on their phone.
- MRS has purchased a Kinsa oral thermometer for each household and staff member.
- Every family will commit to keeping their child at home when recommended.

When Must Students Stay Home?

Please refer to the [Student Symptom Decision Tree](#) when suspecting exposure and/or symptoms. In considering family activities, please refer to the [Coronavirus Riskiest Activities](#) infographic.

Students must stay home when they:

(1) Have a fever or another COVID-19 symptom listed here (cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea),
or

(2) Have had prolonged contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes per CDC definition) with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19,

and be tested (twice if the medical community recommends) and share the test results with the school. If cost is an issue, we will help.

If a child is not tested, or their COVID test is positive, they are required to stay home for 14 days. A doctor's note will be required for the student to return to school.

Any time that a child has an exposure as defined above in (2), they will be asked to stay home for a minimum of 4 days (typically 14 days) and to obtain a negative COVID test before returning to school. Their class/grade will be notified while awaiting test results.

Any time that a student has COVID the entire school will be notified.

When May Students Return To School?

Throughout the school year, if students DO NOT HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS but have a known COVID-positive exposure they are permitted to return to school once they have quarantined for a minimum of 5 days (typically 14 days) from the known exposure and then obtained a negative COVID test result. Their return to school is at the discretion of school administration. The student's pod may remain at school; they will be notified of a suspected exposure in their pod. If a child is not tested they are required to stay home for 14 days. If the test results are positive they may return to school after 14 days AND their COVID test is negative.

If students DISPLAY SYMPTOMS they need to stay home. Students should consult with a healthcare professional to decide on COVID testing. A student with a doctor's note or negative COVID test results, who are symptom-free for 24 hours, may return to school. If a student tests positive, they may return to school after 14 days AND their COVID test is negative AND they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.

As newer/other testing approaches become viable, changes to our protocols may occur.

All faculty and staff will follow the same procedures.

What About Travel? Playdates? After school activities? Sports?

Families will need to weigh their need for travel and various activities, whether for work or pleasure, against the needs of our school community. Our community work is to minimize the risk. Our daily behaviors have been clearly shown to minimize risk: wash hands, cover our faces, social distance, stay home when you're sick. Every family must consider Monica Ros School's procedures/protocols and make sure they are comfortable adhering to them. We have posted, and regularly refer to, the [Coronavirus Riskiest Activities](#) infographic when considering families' extracurricular activities.

Practices for Creating a Healthy Environment and Establishing Healthy Operations

By establishing the following practices for families, students, staff, and our organization, we will be promoting health behaviors, a healthy environment and healthy operations. All around

campus appropriately designed signs for each age group have been posted to help enforce our healthy practices.

At School Entrance

- School arrival and drop-off times will be staggered.
- School personnel will be at both gates monitoring arrivals and departures.
- Students will arrive at school wearing a mask.
- Students will be dropped off in the parking lot with school staff or walked to the gate respecting social distancing guidelines.
- Adults will show the Kinsa App all-clear indication (see above about the Kinsa thermometers.)
- The waiting spaces will be 6 feet apart.
- Parents who get out of the car will wear a mask.
- No parents will be allowed in the gate. Children with a separation issue at the gate on the first day of school may be accompanied by their parent to the classroom and the parent will be allowed to separate there.
- Students will go straight to their classrooms and wash hands at arrival.
- Younger students will be accompanied to class by staff as needed.
- Students who arrive after school begins will come to the office with an accompanying adult to share the Kinsa App all-clear indication.

In Classroom

- Everyone washes hands upon entering the classroom throughout the day and before and after eating.
- All students will wear masks at all times besides eating/drinking. If problems arise for individual students, solutions will be discussed.
- Gradeschool students will social distance at all times indoors. Their seats will be placed 6 feet apart.
- Preschool and Kindergarten students will socially distance during eating times and table-project times where practical. Distancing among small children is not proving to provide substantial risk reduction.
- Door knobs, flat surfaces, heavily touched items, light switches will be sanitized at regular intervals during the day by wiping with disinfectant.
- Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected after school to prepare for the following day with an electrostatic disinfectant sprayer.
- Cough protocols will continue to be taught. Everyone will wash hands after coughing or sneezing.
- All indoor classrooms and offices will have open doors and windows whenever possible, even when HVAC is running, to ensure fresh air flow. All HVAC units have scheduled, ongoing maintenance and air filters are cleaned and replaced frequently.
- Classes will be held outside whenever possible.

School Day Safety Measures

- Each student is assigned a pod of up to 12 students/day in preschool, or up to the number of students who can successfully distance in a classroom for gradeschool (this varies based on buildings but ranges from approx. 7-15)
- Preschool pods will have two teachers assigned, Kindergarten and grade school pods will have one teacher assigned.
- K and GS teachers will travel between pods and will wash hands between leaving one pod and entering another.
- Playgrounds are split into use areas and use is staggered. Use will be scheduled and calendared. Areas are cleaned between each group's use.
- While on playgrounds, students will be required to wear masks, because we will not be strict about the students socially distancing themselves. We are concerned, however, about high temperatures and mask-wearing. We also know that the playground population is diminished greatly by the pod system. This is a policy that may change. Any policy changes will be reported.
- Playgrounds will be sanitized after each group's use.
- Each pod on campus will have a bathroom assigned for its sole use and the bathroom will be disinfected every day. Any bathroom that is shared by different groups will be cleaned after each use.
- Lunch is served in separate areas, outdoors. In case of rain there may be very occasional days where students eat indoors, at least 6 feet apart. Our current food service practices match new protocols. We will still offer hot lunch twice a week
- In gradeschool, and preschool to a certain extent, school supplies are not shared.
- Disinfectants are listed on the EPA list N for use against SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19). We have currently selected Simple Green d Pro 5 EPA REG # 6836-140-56782.

End of the School Day Safety Measures

- Classes will be dismissed at staggered times and/or through separate monitored gates to avoid mingling of pod populations.
- Parents will stand in designated areas 6 feet apart while they wait.
- Gradeschool parents will be encouraged to simply drive through the parking lot and their student will be excused to them at their car by a staff member.

Personal Protective Equipment

- All adults on campus will wear a mask and/or a face shield.
- Preschool and gradeschool children will be asked to wear a mask and/or face shield.

- Masks or face shields will be expected outdoors, but temperature may be a factor and the school will monitor. Because small groups of students will be on a designated playground at any given time, social distancing is more likely to occur.
- The school has gloves, masks, and face shields in both adult and child sizes available when needed.

How Will Pods Work?

Keeping small groups separated from each other during the course of the school day is considered an effective method to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Groups of up to 12 for preschool students, and approximately 7-15 students for kindergarten/gradeschool (school-age) will be formed into pods.

By using the pod system, we increase the likelihood of keeping everyone on campus for the year with as many students in school as possible.

The school at its discretion may send a class home for distance learning or shorten the school day. Our goal is to remain together and learn in person, but we have to be ready for circumstances that arise.

Some of our gradeschool teachers will move between pods. If one of those teachers tests positive for COVID-19, those pods will have to stay at home and test for COVID-19. Also, if a student in the gradeschool tests positive, their grade will transition to Distance Learning and both pods will stay home.

For kindergarten or gradeschool students who are feeling well enough to learn but are absent from school awaiting test results or waiting to return to school after illness, a staff member will be assigned to connect remotely with each student to help them keep up with school work.

Stay N Play

Early morning drop off begins at 8:00 and Stay N Play afterschool care will be available as needed and when possible. We'll make every effort to make sure we can serve our families. A sign-up will be sent through Parent Square asking parents to identify their needs. The price will increase to \$9 per hour. Pods will not mix before or after school.

Additional Costs

We have maintained our contracted tuition and fee schedules. However, we will be charging an additional monthly charge ranging by class from \$50 to \$80 per month to cover part of the additional staffing, cleaning and material costs associated with COVID-19. Details to follow.

What if School Closes?

If a preschool pod has to stay home due to exposure to COVID-19 or the school is required to close by the local authorities, preschool families will receive a tuition credit of up to 6 weeks pro-rated for 3-, 4-, and 5-day programs. Preschool activities to enjoy at home will be available as a subscription for a small cost.

Kindergarten and gradeschool students will begin Demote Learning. No credit will be offered. We ask that parents provide an area for working where the student can sit up straight at a desk or table, have all their materials organized around them, use headphones, a background screen, and a webcam on a flexible arm so the teacher can see what the student is writing. Our teachers are preparing for remote learning before school starts and we will also take time at the beginning of school to instruct the students regarding online materials.

Questions and Comments

We welcome questions and comments. Please contact Susan Hardenbergh, shardenbergh@monicaros.org, 805 646-8184 (school) or 805 746 5398 (cell). We will adjust any of our policies and protocols as allowed or required by local, state and federal agencies.