



# Bethel Highlands Preschool

Where children grow in the name of Jesus.

July 28, 2020

Dear Bethel Highlands Preschool Families:

Thank you for your patience as our board of directors has prayed, researched, and discerned the options for the opening of preschool this fall. We know this is not an easy time for anyone, and we have seriously considered the overall well-being of our students, families, and staff.

To mitigate the risk in our facility, we are working to keep each classroom fairly “self-contained” with their designated group of 10-13 kids, with their designated teacher, in their designated classroom environment. In order to continue providing social opportunities for students within their classrooms, we feel this is an important part of our process.

One of the most difficult realities with COVID-19 decisions is the constant evolution of guidelines. We are continuously receiving directives from multiple sources; including the Dept of Children and Families (our licensing body), the Hudson School District, Bethel Lutheran Church, and the state and federal regulations. While we do not expect things to change prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, our plan will likely update as the fall progresses.

**As of this week**, this is our plan with more details to follow:

## OPENING AND SCHEDULES

- **We plan to open for preschool on September 1<sup>st</sup>, with class schedules as advertised when you registered!**
- There will be a Blessing of the Backpacks on August 19<sup>th</sup> at Bethel Highlands, which will be an outdoor worship with masks and social distancing.
- Meet the Teacher/Open House will happen in some format, which is still being developed. We know that this is an important part of helping you and your child feel comfortable in a new environment.
- In the event the Hudson School District determines they will close their facilities and switch to 100% virtual learning, BHP hopes to remain open. We understand the importance of the social/emotional connection for students and teachers, as well as the need for parents to have trusted care in place. 4K classes may have some adjustments due to district requirements, but we plan to offer some form of in-person time for students whose families would choose to do so (there may be additional costs associated with the additional time). We will work to provide the best option for our families and staff in the event of a district closure or local outbreak in cases.
- For students enrolled in the Hudson District 4K classes: per the district’s Back to School Plan, if you prefer NOT to have your child attend in-person preschool this fall, and instead do all five days of 4K through a virtual option, please let me know.



## FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

- 4K Classes - Masks are being required by the Hudson School District during the 4K time. This means that for 4KAM, 4KPM, and the hours of 9-11:45 in our 4K+ (five full day) classrooms, masks will be required on all children and staff when social distancing is not possible. We have plenty of physical space in our 4K classrooms, with the ability to self-contain each group, and only 10-13 children per classroom, therefore we expect that children will frequently be able to go without masks if they choose.
- Private, tuition-based classes (and 4K+ care beyond 11:45) – we are encouraging the use of masks for children, but they are NOT required in the classrooms. We ask that all children bring a mask with them each day, and wear them in the common spaces (i.e. during arrival and departure in the hallway and in the Sanctuary). We will be doing a lot of teaching with children on taking care of masks, how to wear a mask, and understanding why we might see people in masks. Social stories for teaching are provided for you at the end of this notice.
- Teachers – teachers are expected to wear school-provided face shields during the school day. Some teachers may opt to add another mask during certain times of the day. We want to make sure our families and teachers feel protected, but also understand the importance of children seeing their teachers' faces and facial expressions.
- Other adults and children in the building – during drop-off and pick up times, we ask that parents wear masks in the building. Any other visitors and Bethel church staff/visitors are expected to wear masks in the building.

## CLASS TIMES AND SCHEDULES

- We will be staggering class start times slightly, to reduce the number of parents in the building at any one time. The details of the start and end times have not yet been determined.
- Parents will be dropping children off at their classroom doors, but will not be entering the classrooms. This is pretty similar to what we've done in the past.
- BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE: We need to determine the specific student numbers, times, and needs for Before and After School Care prior to making decisions. If your student is eligible (enrolled in a full day class) and hope to use Before and After School Care, please follow this link to take a very brief survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZWBPL8Z>. Taking this survey is a very important step in helping us determine the plan for Before and After School Care when we open on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

## PROGRAM CONTENT

- Students will have daily large motor time on the playground and indoor spaces when the outdoor large motor time is not possible due to weather. We will be scheduling designated times for each class to be in those spaces, with class-specific bins of large motor equipment available every day.
- In the past BHP has provided a communal morning and afternoon snack. However, in an effort to reduce the potential for spreading of germs, we ask that students now bring their own snacks from home. We will continue to require full day students to also bring their own lunch. Families are responsible for including snacks/lunches for their children that are NUT FREE, and easy for children to open independently. We will have individually wrapped packages of crackers in the case a child does not have a snack.

- Each child will bring a water bottle with his/her name on it. These will be kept in the separated lockers/backpacks. Children will be able to access their water bottles as needed and at snack/meal times. Water bottles will be handled similar to lunch boxes - sent home each day for disinfecting. Access to classroom drinking water will be with disposable cups.
- For full day students: rest time is an important part of overall health. We will continue to have rest times with each student assigned to a designated cot appropriately spaced. Children will be provided with a cot sheet, a zippered rest bag, and can bring ONE washable blanket to use for rest time. The rest bags will be sent home each week for washing.
- For the immediate future, we will be canceling Soccer Shots, field trips, and 4K Lunch Bunch. We are still working on determining the method of delivery for specials such as music, chapel time, yoga, and our therapy dog.

#### SUPPLIES AND SANITIZING

- We are pleased that we've acquired a Clorox 360 Machine to assist in sanitizing procedures. In addition, students and staff will be washing hands upon entering the classroom and between transitional times. We will also have hand sanitizer available, which until recently was prohibited by our licensing regulations. Each classroom will be deep cleaned every evening, and high-touch spots will be disinfected throughout the day.
- There will be no pets allowed in classrooms, or on site.
- In the past we have collected supplies for school-wide, shared use. This year each student will have their own list of requested supplies and they will be kept in a separate, labeled box. The supply list will be coming soon, and we will be glad to help purchase those items if finances are limited for your family.

#### EXCLUSION FOR ILLNESS AND QUARANTINE

- We are trusting families to be very diligent in watching for symptoms and reporting cases among close contacts. I'm sure you all have been inundated with documents listing the statistics and symptoms. Later today I will have links on our website that you can access as needed.
- Any child displaying symptoms of illness will be immediately excluded from the class and will need to be picked up within 20 minutes. Depending on the symptoms and the flow chart we have received from the health department, we will determine the case-specific, healthy re-entry.
- Families will be notified of confirmed cases within the school, but classes will not be required to quarantine unless the specific case warrants such action.
- Teachers will be required to quarantine if an immediate family member tests positive for Covid-19, or if they are displaying symptoms.

#### ENROLLMENT AND CHANGES

- We understand that our changes may not work for your family, or that you prefer to provide alternative opportunities for your child. If you would like to withdraw or change your class selection, please email Kari Jo Fore or Cheri Monette.
- If you would like to put your enrollment on "hold" to see if things may change as the year progresses, you may do so. However, monthly tuition will still be due beginning on September 1<sup>st</sup> to hold your spot.

- Monthly tuition rates remain the same throughout the school year (9.3 months). Any absences due to illness, vacation, or quarantine are not subject to a discounted rate.
- Preschool and 4K is not mandatory in Wisconsin. While we value the importance of preschool, we know this year's priorities may be different for families.

The board will continue researching and responding to questions as we're able.

We fully comprehend the impact these changes have on children and families. And we understand that some families will not agree with our decisions. We do ask for your kindness. Please trust that we've made decisions to mitigate risk as much as possible for our environment and population of students and teachers. The board will continue to monitor the situation. These guidelines are subject to modification as conditions change.

A few additional notes:

- We have an open position on our Board of Directors. If you are interested in being part of this important volunteer ministry, please let me know. It is a two-year commitment and involves at least one evening meeting per month (more during times of increased need for discussion). The board oversees the development of policy, staffing, mission and vision, and budgetary decisions.
- Paperwork is requested by August 1<sup>st</sup>. However, we have learned that the BHP parking lot will be getting resurfaced that week. You may mail in your paperwork, or scan and email to me. You may also drop it off at our downtown location (920 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Hudson). We appreciate your help in allowing time for student file review.

We appreciate your support and prayers during this time. Know that we are praying for YOU, and all of the difficult decisions and transitions that your family is making. One of the best things about our unique program is our goal to support the families of our students, and we know that impacts every child's ability to learn and grow. Any families who are experiencing financial, emotional, or spiritual challenges are encouraged to reach out to me or Bethel Lutheran Church. We are happy to provide resources.

Thank you for your understanding. Wishing you health and peace,

Kari Jo Fore and the BHP Board of Directors



Kari Jo Fore, Director and Administrator

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#### RESOURCES (more available upon request):

Social stories for kids (visuals for face masks, doctor visits, etc):

<https://www.autismlittlelearners.com/2020/03/free-coronavirus-social-narrative-for.html>

Hudson School District's "Back to School Plan":

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mLwwhwgN\\_EefinJwQtAQ3S8PYZZCF5Gy/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mLwwhwgN_EefinJwQtAQ3S8PYZZCF5Gy/view)

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, Information for Families:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/childcare/families>