



Community Nursery School

Dear CNS Community,

Uncertainty can be enormously challenging, and I know we are all holding **so** much of it right now. Maintaining an informed community is integral to persevering through all that lies ahead, especially in a program like ours, with roots deeply planted in collaboration, trust, and partnership. This document is a first step in informing the CNS community about reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year. It is our intention to keep you updated in full transparency as developments unfold.

Our mission at CNS is to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment where each child, parent, and teacher feels safe, productive, and valued as a unique individual and a respected member of the community. Throughout every step of this process, we are committed to remaining true to that mission while prioritizing the health and well-being of our community members. Our focus is on ensuring:

- **Health and safety** by following expert guidance to maximize the possibility that members of our community (within and beyond the walls of our school) stay safe.
- **High-quality early education** steered by the principles of Reggio Emilia, play, and the natural environment, and realized by teachers who exhibit steadfast dedication and commitment to the children they love.
- **The emotional well-being** of children, parents, and teachers alike, with the belief that being together--even if together looks different--is both valuable and necessary to enduring a global pandemic.

Together with the CNS Board of Directors, and with input and guidance from our exceptional group of CNS staff, public health experts, alumni advisors, and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), we remain committed to making the best possible decisions for our children during these unprecedented times. The reopening plan that follows was formulated and approved by the Board, holding all of the aforementioned points in the highest degree of consideration.

Program Structure

Based on data-driven principles, along with the rationale that outdoors is safest, CNS will pursue a modified reopening model for the 2020-2021 school year.

Key Points:

- School will open in mid-September, close down fully after Thanksgiving for the majority of winter (cold & flu season), and optimistically plan to reopen after February break for the entirety of spring.
 - ◆ In this unusual year, we stand behind the belief that running a program with an intentional winter pause is necessary to mitigating the spread of illness in a preschool environment.
- The program, as much as possible, will operate outdoors. Creative innovation drives us forward to maximize the use of our magnificent grounds. We plan to utilize the indoor classroom spaces each day, but in a limited way, with increased safety measures in place.
- We intend to open 3-day, 4-day, and 5-day programs running simultaneously in designated classrooms from 9 AM - 12 PM every week. Each classroom will maintain a cohort of children and teachers, enrolling a maximum of 10 students per class with 2-3 teachers. This meets or exceeds EEC minimum ratios, which are currently 1 adult per 10 children in preschool classrooms.
- At this time, due to health and safety mandates and scheduling limitations, we are unable to offer a Lunch Bunch or Afternoon program.
- All of this is contingent upon obtaining additional bank financing (in process), fulfilling minimum enrollment requirements, and finalizing the availability of our current teachers. We are committed to forming classroom cohorts that meet the scheduling needs of our teachers affected by DESE/Public Schools, while providing consistency and familiarity for our children.
- This reopening scenario is also contingent upon the ongoing monitoring of positive Covid cases both in Massachusetts and our community. If we realize that a "safe" reopening is no longer viable for any reason, we will close, and refunds will be issued.

Tuition, Fees, and Enrollment Contracts

Tuition supports CNS in many ways. Not only does it compensate our dedicated teachers and staff, but it also sustains our beautiful grounds and related building costs. We are one of the few schools in our community with an expansive outdoor space that we plan on maximizing to its fullest potential.

The tuition breakdown looks different this year given all the uncertainties around COVID-19 and possible unexpected closures. In our commitment to transparency and understanding the needs of our community, the Board opted to align tuition similarly to past years and pursue financing to make up the shortfall. This will allow us to weather this reopening, while continuing to provide our community with the student/teacher ratios and experiences that define us.

Amended enrollment contracts will show tuition broken into two parts with a COVID fee added to annual tuition for this year. The COVID fee accounts for some of the additional expenses incurred to meet health and safety regulations in 2020-21. In order to offer refunds - if needed - next year and still meet the fixed expenses of the school, the Board has instituted a 25% non-refundable administrative fee based on total tuition. A tuition refund, less deposit, will be issued to anyone withdrawing before amended enrollment agreements are provided.

The financing we are pursuing includes a loan, fundraising efforts, and a possible capital campaign. The extent to which these efforts are successful will allow us to pay down whatever debt we may incur.

2020-2021 Tuition and Fees

[CNS open September-November, closed December-February, reopened March-June]

Days	Hours	Annual Tuition	COVID Fee	Non-Refundable 25% Administrative Fee (retained if school closes unexpectedly)	TOTAL
3	3 (9 AM - 12 PM)	\$4950	\$450	\$1350	\$5400
4	3 (9 AM - 12 PM)	\$6600	\$600	\$1800	\$7200
5	3 (9 AM - 12 PM)	\$8250	\$750	\$2250	\$9000

Parent Responsibilities

Parent involvement remains a central component of a CNS education. Although parent-helping in classrooms cannot happen due to EEC guidelines, we will continue to embrace our cooperative spirit in other ways. We are in the process of re-envisioning parent jobs in order to flexibly and responsively adapt to circumstances that will inevitably evolve over the course of the school year. As we solidify enrollment in the weeks ahead, our Parent Participation Chair will be in touch to coordinate those roles and responsibilities.

Curriculum

As has always been the case at CNS, children will engage in open-ended play and learning opportunities where they will build relationships, follow their emerging interests, and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Together with the teachers, we are in the process of reimagining material use and considering how to innovate indoor and outdoor spaces to support “distanced” interaction and joyful peer engagement. This year and always, children at CNS will PLAY!

Health Policies

We are developing policies that meet EEC and CDC guidelines and will share updates as they come together. A comprehensive COVID Health Policy for 2020-2021 will be provided prior to the start of school and updated on a regular basis as needed.

In order to keep everyone at school healthy and safe, mask-wearing will be expected of all members of our community. We understand that each child will respond to mask-wearing in their own way, and will work with families to support this routine in a nurturing manner. Our focus will be on building positive relationships and this includes our approach around the personal protective equipment (PPE) which will be necessary for a safe return to school. Parents will submit a daily health screening for their child at the start of each school day, and children will **not** be permitted to enter school if they do not meet screening criteria upon arrival. Additional measures such as increased hand-washing, enhanced sanitation protocols, and classroom modifications will be implemented.

Considering the variety and uncertainty of COVID-19 symptoms, it is expected that we will **all** collectively lean on each other in trust, compliance, and support to uphold the adopted health policies. With any symptoms of illness, including those related to COVID-19, we will follow direct guidance from our local Department of Public Health.

Updating our Community

We are committed to keeping all members of the CNS community informed about reopening plans and will send periodic updates over the next several weeks. A forum for questions and discussion regarding this plan will be provided at the All-School [Annual Meeting](#) this coming Monday, July 20th at 8:00 PM. We are in the process of drafting new enrollment contracts which will be available for your review and signature soon. It is our expectation to receive these signed contracts back from families shortly following the meeting, which will allow us confirmation of meeting the minimum enrollment necessary to move forward with reopening, identify the need to pursue enrollment off our waitlist, or, with too few students, pivot to closure for the year.

An Invitation

Ultimately, this reopening plan is for our children. These precious little humans are the life force behind everything. None of us know what the future holds. But if we come together against all odds and give our children the opportunity to experience CNS as a beautiful, joyous, safe-as-possible place this fall, we are willing to take the leap. On behalf of the CNS Board, administration, and staff, it is our hope that you commit to taking this leap with us. We believe we can see it through, together.

With love,

Kayla Piskuliyski, President of the CNS Board of Directors, 2019-2020

[Written in partnership with Sisy Thomas, CNS Director, and all members of the CNS Board]

