

Fall 2020 Reopening Plan

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Pinewoods Montessori School



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Overview of Fall Reopening

We are pleased to outline our plans for Pinewoods Montessori School's reopening amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. **We will also be sending a Parent Handbook for 2020-2021 in August**, which will have additional policies for families related to the upcoming school year.

This document outlines the current plans for the 2020-2021 school year at Pinewoods. As you read through these plans, please keep four points in mind:

1 . Expect Changes and More Information

We recognize that families need to plan for the fall. Our decisions are based on a variety of factors related to COVID-19, as well as input from schools locally and across the country. Things will continue to change quickly – both in the few weeks before the start of school, and once the year begins – and we will continue to update our plans and do our best to keep families informed.

2 . We Rely On Guidance and Best Practices

The decisions and plans outlined herein have roots in guidelines and recommendations from the NC Department of Health & Human Services. Our decisions and plans have been formulated based on what we have learned during our 2020 Summer Camp as well as what we have learned from other Montessori schools that have reopened.

3 . We Continue to Prioritize Safety

Pinewoods is at its best when teachers are able to work in close partnership with our students and families. This document outlines several measures aimed at risk-mitigation during the pandemic. Full buy-in and adherence to these new protocols by all constituents will be required to make in-person learning successful this year.

4 . Our Mission and Values will Continue to Guide Our Work

While much will look different at Pinewoods this year, we continue to place our mission of providing an authentic Montessori education in a safe and peaceful setting at the heart of our decision-making. We have always prided ourselves on our individualized educational approach and strong family partnerships.

Start of the Year

Pinewoods will follow state guidelines for opening in-person for the 2020-2021 school year. According to the latest guidelines (as of 07/24/20), we have determined that the school is prepared to open safely in our PWMS Plan B with significantly reduced class sizes and **staggered re-entry by level (see below)**.

That being said, we have made the decision to start all Lower and Upper Elementary (grades 1-6) Students with Remote Learning for the first two weeks of the 2020-2021 school year (August 17-August 28). The elementary-aged child depends on a strong social foundation for motivation, learning and development. Starting our Lower and Upper Elementary communities in the virtual classrooms will allow our teachers to establish consistent expectations and schedules and build motivation and relationships, prior to cohorts separating and some students returning to In-Person Learning. **After August 28th, we plan to have our in-person elementary learners back on campus.**

The first day of school is August 17th for Elementary students (as stated above, all Elementary students will be remote for two weeks to start the year) and new Primary/Kindergarten/Toddler students. All Primary/Kindergarten/Toddler students who have elected In-Person Learning will start the school year on campus. The first day of school for returning Primary/Kindergarten/Toddler students is Wednesday, August 19th. Parent Orientation for all levels will be held via Zoom with your teachers.

Please take note of the following dates/times:

- ❖ **Aug. 13 at 6:00 pm** - Toddler and Primary Orientation for new and returning families (Virtual)
- ❖ **Aug. 14** - New Family Meetings (*Primary and Toddler only*) - These will be individually scheduled with each family and conducted virtually
- ❖ **Aug. 14 at 4:00pm** - Elementary Orientation for new and returning families (Virtual)
- ❖ **Aug. 17** - First Day of School for Lower/Upper Elementary Students (Virtual)
- ❖ **Aug. 17-18** - Orientation Days for New Toddler/Primary Students (Mornings Only)
- ❖ **Aug. 19** - First Day of School for all Toddler/Primary Students
- ❖ **Aug. 31** - Planned In-Person first day of school for Elementary students whose caregivers opt for In-Person learning (see below)

Additional information and links will be provided by classroom teachers in August.

Two Scenarios for Fall

Terms

Please review the following terms for this section:

- ❖ **(Plan A) Regular School Year** - operating at full capacity, with class sizes similar to years past, minimal social distancing and all students on-campus without remote/distance offerings. Plan A is not an option for us for reopening this Fall.

- ❖ **(Plan B) In-Person Learning with a Self-Selected Distance-Learning Option**
 - **Self-Selected Distance Learning** - when a student or group of students are participating in distance learning through Pinewoods while their class is offered an in-person option at Pinewoods. Parents/guardians are responsible for [formally selecting this choice](#), partnering with teachers, and supporting children at home (see below).
 - **In-Person Learning** - when a group of students are coming on-site at Pinewoods for instruction in our normal facilities and following strict [risk-mitigation Measures](#). Parents/guardians are responsible for [formally selecting this choice](#), partnering with teachers, and supporting children at home as normal and should the class need to transition to remote learning at any time (see below).
 - **School-Mandated Distance Learning** - when a child/family is required to stay home for an extended period due to COVID-19 exposure, symptoms or a positive test. School-Mandated Distance Learning may be imposed and/or requested by families on a case-by-case basis. This option is not intended for single-day absences, family vacations, etc.
 - **Temporary Distance Learning** - when an entire class of children has transitioned to distance/remote learning temporarily due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., positive case of COVID-19, recommendation to quarantine, not enough staff present on campus, etc.)

- ❖ **(Plan C) All-School Remote Learning** - When 100% of the school transitions to remote learning.

Plan B: In-Person Learning with a Self-Selected Distance Learning Option

Self-Selected Distance Learning

We are excited to be able to offer a robust educational option for families who wish to be enrolled at Pinewoods Montessori School without being on campus. We are providing a Self-Selected Distance Learning option for families who consider this to be their best choice at this time.

Our Pinewoods Montessori curriculum has always been deeply rooted in authentic experiences for children in all aspects of their development, while guiding learners to fulfill their own unique potential in an ever-changing world. We believe deeply in the power of giving students real-life experiences so that they can learn, grow, and take on whatever lies ahead. The pandemic has brought to light realities we never anticipated - more working from home, virtual learning spaces, connecting with others over the internet, savoring the bonds we have with those we care about, and so on. Self-Selected Distance Learning not only provides a space for individualized, Montessori off-campus learning, but also gives our students the powerful experience of guided education and practical life learning in an evolving society.

While our Distance Learners may be at home, they will have plenty of opportunities to interact with others, have individualized lessons, one-on-one time with teachers, and learn through self-directed and family-supported at-home projects. This option will also give parents a “window” into their child’s Montessori education and learning style.

We understand that distance learning may not be the ideal option for our youngest learners, but we are committed to teaching all Pinewoods children and serving our families in the option that best fits your needs at this time. We received significant positive feedback from our remote learning programs from the Spring, and we know many families would like to continue with Distance Learning this Fall.

Particularly for elementary-aged students, the virtual classroom provides a fantastic medium for an individualized and authentic Montessori education within a safe and peaceful setting, while also providing flexibility and real-life learning opportunities. We are committed to making Self-Selected Distance Learning a robust Montessori educational experience for the families who select this option.

The schedule and structure of the Self-Selected Distance Learning day will vary greatly by grade level (daily schedule, amount of screen time, workload, etc.) and will be planned by the classroom teacher(s) with support from school Administrators. Please know, participating in the Self-Selected Distance Learning option will require a strong partnership between home and school with open lines of communication. As this is the first time we have ever balanced simultaneous in-person and off-campus learning, we

appreciate your patience, as we meet your needs and expectations while balancing our in-person classes.

We have created a page on our website summarizing our [Spring 2020 Distant Learning Programs](#) by level with testimonials from families. Prior to the start of the school year, Pinewoods will release a Parent Handbook specifically for Distance Learning, with more information about schedules and program enhancements. As we did in the Spring, we will “follow” your family and child through this process, providing frequent check-ins and opportunities to give feedback, while making accommodations and adjustments as needed.

In-Person Learning

Utilizing our Risk Mitigation procedures, we are pleased to be able to offer - at this time - small classrooms of in-person learning under Plan B for families that want or need on-campus instruction. **Even for families who opt for In-Person Learning, we have made the decision to start all Elementary Classes/Students with Remote Learning for the first two weeks of the 2020-2021 school year (August 17-August 28). Following that date, we plan to have our in-person Elementary learners back on campus.**

We have also made the decision to dismiss all Primary and Elementary in-person students by mid-day every Friday for the first semester of the school year. At the mid-year point, school Administration, in partnership with teachers, will make a decision about whether to continue this schedule for the remaining portion of the year. Dismissing early on Fridays will allow our teachers much-needed time for planning and will provide dedicated times for parent communication. Because of our modified COVID-19 drop-off and pick-up procedures, direct interaction with teachers during the week will not be as frequent as we are accustomed to. One important aspect of the early dismissal will be flexible, virtual “office hours,” where teachers can contact parents (and vice versa).

Self-Selection

It is vital that we obtain information on whether families are choosing In-Person Learning or the Self-Selected Distance Learning option for the fall (starting in August). The form can be found in the [Fall Program Self-Selection](#) section of this document. All families must return the [Fall Program Self-Selection](#) Form by August 3, 2020, to Jessica White Winger at jessica@pinewoodsmontessori.com.

If, at any time, a family wishes to transition from Self-Selected Distance Learning to In-Person Learning (or vice versa), we request four weeks of written notice. After October 16th, 2020, families can request a return to In-Person Learning at any time with four weeks of written notice by contacting Jessica White Winger at jessica@pinewoodsmontessori.com.

School-Mandated Distance Learning

Students who are [required to stay home](#) for an extended period due to COVID-19 exposure, symptoms or a positive test; or any other illness that requires an extended leave of absence can participate in School-Mandated Distance Learning. Should it become necessary to pursue this option, parents should contact Jessica White Winger at jessica@pinewoodsmontessori.com. This option is not intended for single-day absences, family vacations, etc.

As with Self-Selected Distance Learning, the exact structure of the School-Mandated Distance Learning day will vary by grade level, student capacity, and the amount of notice prior to the absence. The child's learning will be planned by the classroom teacher(s) with support from school Administrators.

Temporary Distance Learning

There may be times in the school year when an entire class of children (or a few classes) will transition to Distance/Remote learning temporarily due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., positive case of COVID-19, recommendation to quarantine, not enough staff present on campus, etc.). In such a case, the class(es) will transition to Temporary Distance Learning, providing the teachers are well enough to provide remote instruction (see below). This program will mirror [All-School Remote Learning](#) on a smaller scale.

Plan C: All-School Remote Learning

Pinewoods has also prepared a contingency plan, for transitioning to 100% Remote Learning (Plan C) if (a) it is mandated by the Governor; and/or (b) the Administration/ Board of Directors determines this to be a prudent course of action given local conditions, based upon factors such as: recommendations from local public health officials as well as our expert consultants, the health/attendance of the Pinewoods staff, the health/attendance of Pinewoods students, and/or number of cases within the Pinewoods community.

If In-Person Learning becomes infeasible, Pinewoods will remain committed to fostering the education and well-being of each student while promoting engagement, community, and individualized support.

Parent Contract: Risks and Responsibilities

Having all constituents understand and adhere to all protocols and policies is a key component of a safe return to campus. We all have a role to play in this.

Unfortunately, due to our tight budget and projected deficit for the 2020-2021 school year, Pinewoods will be unable to give any refunds/discounts this year, including for families who opt for Self-Selected Distance Learning. When COVID-19 was thought to be a temporary inconvenience, and things would bounce back, we were able to provide discounts. However, now that more is known about the virus and experts project this to be a long-term pandemic, we no longer have the safety net of our savings to be able to incur major financial set-backs. At this time, our operating budget for the 2020-2021 school year will be operating in the red; therefore, in order for us as an organization to survive this pandemic, we need your complete understanding of this matter in times of Remote/Distance Learning.

Having students and staff return safely to campus relies on our individual and shared commitment to protect and preserve the health and well-being of our community. This means honoring and abiding by the expectations and protocols established to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at Pinewoods and throughout our community. We are creating Community Safety Guidelines in our 2020-2021 Parent Handbook to help frame this shared commitment.

Once Pinewoods has released the Parent Handbook for 2020-2021, all families will be presented with a Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form to sign virtually. Families participating in In-Person Learning at any point during the school year will need to sign a Legal Waiver and Acknowledgment of Risk (similar to what was required for Summer Camp 2020) prior to the first day of In-Person Learning.

Risk-Mitigation Measures

Social Distancing, Class Size, and Cohorting

We feel it is paramount to limit children moving between classrooms and mixing groups next year. For Fall 2020, classrooms will operate as small cohort communities.

Social distancing will be practiced to the extent possible for each level at Pinewoods. Social distancing will be taught and encouraged throughout the day, in an age-appropriate way. In preparation for this, the following changes have been made for the time-being:

- ❖ Toddler classes will have a maximum of 12 students each.
 - Toddler classes will not combine into one nap class in the afternoon.
 - Toddlers will eat lunch and nap in their morning classroom.
- ❖ Primary (including Kindergarteners) classes will have a maximum of 13 students each, depending on the size of each classroom. If necessary, we will add a 5th Primary class in one of our additional spaces to accommodate additional families.
 - Primary classes will not be moved into different classrooms in the afternoon (Previous years combined afternoon students into napping/non-napping/kindergarten classes in the afternoon).
 - These smaller Primary classes, in keeping with the Montessori philosophy, will continue to be multi-aged, balancing younger students and older students.
 - Each morning class/cohort will stay together all day in the same classroom.
 - In the afternoon, rest will be provided for our nappers within their classroom environment. Primary students who are not registered to nap will have an afternoon work cycle with age-appropriate lessons and activities.
 - Lead teachers will provide the kindergarten experience for the oldest learners throughout the day. The kindergarteners from across the different primary classes will not be combined into one group due to cohorting.
- ❖ Lower and Upper Elementary classes will have no more than 12 students per classroom.

- The smaller In-Person Learning classes will stay together all day for lunch, recess, and any extracurricular activities.

*While specific classroom capacity is tied to size, no class at Pinewoods will exceed 13 students at the start of the school year. If at any point it is deemed safe by the Pinewoods Administration and Board of Directors, Pinewoods will increase enrollment.

Additionally:

- ❖ Class cohorts will not share spaces with other cohorts, including bathrooms. We will be installing seat lids for all toilets in all bathrooms.
- ❖ Floor markings offering a visual of “six feet apart” will be placed near sinks and bathrooms in classrooms and hallways.
- ❖ During lunch and rest times, students will be spaced 6 feet apart.
- ❖ Before/ After School programs will be temporarily canceled until further notice.
- ❖ Outdoor spaces will be utilized as much as possible and our playground schedules will be adjusted, limiting exposure between classroom cohorts and allowing time for cleaning.
- ❖ As we deeply value parent partnerships and the special relationship between a teacher and child, returning students will not be moved out of a classroom they have been previously enrolled in, unless an agreement has been made between the family and Administration.
- ❖ PE will take place outside whenever the weather permits. Other specials teachers will come into the classroom or teach virtually, instead of students traveling to different rooms.

Masks & Face Coverings

All Elementary Students, Teachers/Staff, and essential visitors to campus will be required to wear a mask that covers both their nose and mouth **at all times*** when inside, and also when outside, if engaged in an activity that places them within six feet of others. This will be very new for our students and staff members, and we request patience and compassion as we adjust to these new routines and procedures.

**except when eating/drinking, in which case 6 feet of distance will be required and masks worn again when eating/drinking is finished.*

Should a student or staff member have documentation from their doctor specifying that due to a medical condition they cannot wear a mask, Administration will handle reasonable and safe accommodations on a case-by-case basis.

Primary students are **encouraged** to wear masks/cloth face coverings IF the child is comfortable and has practiced wearing it, can put it on and take it off safely, isn't prone to touching their face more frequently with the mask on, **and is over the age of 2**.

Pinewoods reserves the right to make changes to our mask/face covering requirements and other health and safety procedures and protocols based on information from DHHS and other trusted sources.

Additionally:

- ❖ All Elementary students need to bring at least two extra masks to school and keep them in a sealed, labeled bag.
- ❖ Teachers will organize "mask breaks" as needed, where students are outside and socially distanced
- ❖ Parents and caregivers should take the next couple of weeks to find masks that their children find comfortable, and also work to build "mask stamina" in their children.
- ❖ We understand the importance of visual cues, particularly for Toddler/Primary, and we are investigating masks with a clear panel for some or all of our teachers. We may pass along suggestions to parents as we learn more.
- ❖ Pinewoods will keep a supply of disposable masks as a back-up, but we request single-use masks not be used frequently so that we can maintain a necessary supply.
- ❖ Teachers/Administrators will be discouraged from handling or helping with masks near students' faces (taking them on/off) unless absolutely necessary.

Daily Health Screenings

Families and all teachers/staff will be asked to complete a daily health screening. We are investigating apps that provide an appropriate level of privacy to help facilitate this process. Families will receive information about this new process before school begins. This will include questions about potential household exposure, and students and staff will report any occurrence of the following symptoms:

- Fever (defined as 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills
- Shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing
- New cough
- New loss of taste or smell

Anyone experiencing one or more of these symptoms will not be allowed to attend In-Person school. Protocols for a student's return to school can be found under [Exposure Protocols](#).

In addition, all students, teachers/staff, and essential visitors will undergo a temperature check before entering school each morning. With a reading of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, families may request a second reading after 10 minutes. A second reading of 100.4 or higher will result in the child being sent home.

Personal/Hand Hygiene

Students will be directed to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, and specifically before/after eating, using the bathroom, or using shared materials. Hand sanitizer will be readily available as a hand sanitization option when hand washing is not possible.

Additionally:

- ❖ Students will have frequent, age-appropriate lessons on proper handwashing and the importance of hand hygiene (upon arrival, before and after eating, in-between activities, and after coughing/sneezing/blowing noses).
- ❖ Signs have been posted to offer visual reminders about hand hygiene and proper handwashing.
- ❖ Bottles of hand sanitizer will be placed in each classroom.
- ❖ We are investigating installation of touchless sanitizer stations inside and outside the building.
- ❖ Elementary students may bring their own personal bottles of hand sanitizer.

Cleaning and Sanitization

Cleaning and sanitization have always been a priority at Pinewoods. We will be utilizing effective cleaning/sanitization practices more frequently to provide safe and healthy environments. Further, we have collaborated with our nightly cleaning crew to ensure a deeper, more thorough cleaning of our facilities each night.

- ❖ Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized frequently throughout the day, using mostly bleach and/or CDC-approved cleaning solutions.
- ❖ We have a generous supply of cleaning supplies on campus and will continue to purchase additional supplies as needed throughout the year to ensure a robust supply.
- ❖ Frequently touched surfaces and any shared equipment will be sanitized multiple times throughout the day. Materials will be sanitized daily and in-between uses whenever possible. Each child will have a designated work rug/mat, instead of using communal rugs.
- ❖ Water fountain use will be closed except in cases of emergency.

- ❖ Doorknobs and other high-touch surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the school day.

Parents/Guardians/Visitors

Access to our building will be limited, both during and outside of school hours. Only visitors deemed “essential” will be allowed to enter, and they will need to pass a health screening and temperature check, and wear a mask. We understand that this represents a significant change, particularly for parents who are accustomed to coming into school and conversing daily with teachers, and we appreciate everyone’s help with this risk-mitigation measure.

At Pinewoods, we truly value our partnership with families, and we appreciate frequent and timely communication. That being said, our parent-teacher communication will look differently this year as we are limiting in-person contact between parents and teachers/Administrators for risk-mitigation purposes. Almost all parent communication will be accomplished through calls, Zoom, and other contactless methods, unless there is an emergency. Through it all, we are committed to working with each and every one of you to form the same strong partnership through Zoom meetings and phone calls as with in-person dialogue.

The need to minimize in-person conversations between parents, teachers, and Administration was a large factor in our decision to close In-Person Learning early on Fridays. Our teachers will need time to check in with families and reach out if something needs to be addressed.

Time Outside

As stated above, teachers will prioritize time outside when it makes sense to do so for all levels, according to the parameters of our playground schedules. We will be limiting each playground to use by one cohort at a time. We are investigating options to divide the large, primary playground into two sections. Surfaces/equipment will be sanitized between uses.

We are also investigating additional purchases for our outdoor spaces (tables, equipment, etc.) to allow for more outdoor activities throughout the school.

We are thrilled to have a fully grassed field that is available for cohorts.

Improved Air Quality

Despite our small size, Pinewoods has ten HVAC units in our building (air compressor and air handler). Pinewoods has purchased improved MERV 13 air filters for our units, which will be installed and replaced by professionals every two months. We are also investigating additional free-standing air purifier systems for our spaces.

When the weather permits, we will open the windows of our classrooms during times when the students are indoors to increase air flow.

Sharing of Materials

The sharing of materials will be restricted for all levels, but the level of restriction will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. While there are many things we can do to limit sharing and mitigate risks associated with frequent sharing, we feel it is important in the Montessori classroom for students to still participate in self-selected and individualized work, with frequent movement built into the routine.

Additionally:

- ❖ Supplies such as pencils, colored pencils, scissors, etc. will not be shared and will be stored individually for each student.
- ❖ Toddler teachers will immediately remove items from the shelves that have been placed in the mouth or otherwise contaminated. Those items will be sanitized before continued use.
- ❖ Each Primary/Elementary classroom will have a “reset” shelf, where students can place materials after use, to be cleaned by an adult before the next use.

Technology

Access to technology and reliable internet are very important for remote/distance learning.

Pinewoods, with support of our phenomenal Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is committed to making additional purchases to increase access to technology for our K-6 students.

Additionally, if a student has any kind of hardship in procuring a device to use during remote/distance learning, Pinewoods laptops can be checked out to those students.

Larger Gatherings and Field Trips

In adherence with public health guidelines, we will begin the year with a policy that excludes large, in-person gatherings, in-house presentations and field trips.

Currently, we are not planning off-campus experiences or in-person events during the fall semester.

In partnership with the PTO, we are considering how to remake other events to conform to health guidelines while keeping the spirit and community feel. We welcome input from our community in this endeavor!

Changes to Procedures and Programs

All of these risk-mitigation measures will require changes to our procedures and programs. These changes will affect how you prepare your child(ren) for their return to school and how to pack for school each morning.

Preparing Children for School

The following procedures will require additional preparation at home:

Belongings

All students must come to school in comfortable clothes and shoes, suited to outdoor activities for the weather that day. Primary/Elementary students should wear shoes that can be independently taken on and off. Confirming that students are wearing suitable attire will be part of the initial screening procedures each morning.

All full-day Toddler and Primary students and all Elementary students should come to school with a backpack that can be worn independently. Your child's lunchbox, water bottle, and any additional required items should fit easily inside of the child's backpack. Backpacks should be the right size for your child to carry independently, and should be big enough to carry their belongings to and from school every day without being too cumbersome.

Half-day Toddler and Primary students should bring a small lunchbox that can hold your child's snack and water bottle.

More information about what to bring to school for each level will be sent before the start of the year.

Social/Emotional Support

We have all been acclimating to new habits and practices in our daily lives in response to the situation with COVID-19. At Pinewoods, we want to be mindful and intentional to help prepare our children for the new routines they will experience at school this year.

For our youngest students, we will be sharing a short, illustrated social story that you can read with your child. It describes who they will see, how excited we are to see them, and what will be the same and different at school.

When talking with your child about the return to in-person school, it is important to discuss the concept of “social distancing”, which takes on unique challenges in groups of young children.

For our Toddler and Primary students, we will be encouraging the children to give one another “some space” when it is possible and appropriate, and using the concept of “space bubbles” to help our young children understand the concept of social distancing in a more concrete way. Of course, there will be times during the day when the children will be following their natural inclination to interact with one another and their teachers in close proximity. We will do our best to gently and lovingly encourage space bubbles, while honoring and respecting the ways in which groups of young children naturally interact with one another and seek comfort and closeness with their trusted grown ups.

Schedule Changes

In order to better achieve social distancing and complete temperature checks/screenings, we need to stagger our morning routines and adjust how our parking lot functions each morning. We will take siblings at different levels into account when planning how students arrive each morning.

We will also need to strictly regulate arrival times and our tardy policies, ensuring an Administrator is present and available for a daily screening. With the exception of children participating in outside-of-school therapies, mid-day arrivals will be disallowed next year. Our tardy policy will be updated to reflect a strict drop-off window.

As noted above, we have made the decision to dismiss all Primary and Elementary in-person students by mid-day every Friday. This will allow our teachers much needed time for planning and parent communication. One important aspect of the early dismissal will be flexible, virtual “office hours,” where teachers can contact parents (and vice versa).

More information will be coming soon about these new procedures.

Lunch/Snack

Shared school snacks will not be available in the Fall for Primary students. All students will bring a snack and water bottle from home each day. Full-Day and Elementary students will continue to bring lunch each day. We will be discontinuing MyHotLunchBox delivery for the Fall. Plastic silverware will not be provided. Please plan to send your child with utensils from home as necessary. The microwaves will be off-limits this year for student use, until further notice.

During meal/snack times, students will be seated 6 feet apart. When possible with scheduling and the weather, classes will eat outdoors.

Recess

It remains vitally important for all children to have plenty of opportunities for free, unstructured play. Students will have the opportunity to play with other children from their cohort.

Determinations about playground/recess schedules will be made closer to the start of the school year.

Exposure Protocols

Exposure Protocols are determined in conjunction with the most updated version of the [NCDHHS guidance for schools](#). While guidance suggests a 10 day observation period in most cases, we have chosen 14 days as an extra precaution.

Please note: Regarding all of the following exposure protocols, communication with the community will be provided, as deemed necessary by the OC Health Department and School Administration.

Preventive Exposure Measures

Please note: The following preventative exposure measures will be part of our daily screenings for students/staff members.

All families will be required to notify Pinewoods immediately if a member of your household has been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

All families will be required to notify Pinewoods immediately if a member of your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

If you, anyone in your immediate family, your child, or someone outside your family with whom you have had [close contact](#) is confirmed to have COVID-19, families are required to notify Pinewoods immediately. Your child(ren) will not be allowed to return to school for a minimum of 14 days (even with a negative test), and that is only after the person infected has confirmatory testing that proves they no longer have the virus.

Children **MAY NOT** attend school if a parent/guardian/member of their household:

1. Suspects they might have COVID-19,
2. Has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 21 days, or
3. Is awaiting results of COVID-19 testing, or
4. Has been in close contact* with anyone in the three categories above.

If anyone in your household is experiencing the following COVID-19 symptoms, the child(ren) **MAY NOT** attend school until:

1. The individual is **72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medication**,
2. **14 days after the onset** of one or more of the [COVID-19 symptoms](#) listed below,
3. **3 days after [COVID-19 symptoms](#)** below (including cough and/or shortness of breath) have begun to resolve.
4. The family receives confirmation of alternate diagnosis from a medical professional that would explain the COVID-like symptoms and being fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) and symptom-free for at least 72 hours.

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever (100.4 F or higher)
- Diarrhea/constipation
- Chills
- New cough
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle Weakness/Lethargy
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (please seek medical assistance)

Symptoms Developing at School

If a student or staff member develops one or more [COVID-19 symptoms](#) during the school day:

- Staff members for the exposed cohort will go home immediately.
- Parents/Guardians of the cohort will be notified and immediate pick-up will be required.
- Students in the cohort will be moved into an isolation area (outdoors, if possible) and wait there, while supervised, until parents arrive.
- Parents/Guardians/Staff Members will receive follow-up communication from school Administration.

Close Contact

***CDC criteria for close contact** (As of 6/17/2020):

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes.
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils.
- You may have gotten respiratory droplets on you.

Absences

Families with children participating in In-Person Learning at Pinewoods must alert the school of absence for any reason as soon as possible.

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in Our Community

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (either a student or staff member), Pinewoods Administration will contact local public health authorities and will follow their instructions for notification and any necessary class or school closure. It is likely that some levels would need to transition to Temporary Distance Learning as areas are cleaned. A determination as to whether an entire class needs to quarantine will be reached in cooperation with health officials.

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a student's household(s), the family is

required to report this to the Pinewoods Administration.

All health-related information will be kept confidential to protect your privacy, but we will ensure our own measures remain sufficient to maintain a safe and healthy environment.

Parents/Guardians will be notified should the positive case affect any potential exposure. We will err on the side of caution when it comes to necessary communication regarding a COVID-19 diagnosis. *As medical information and Health Department guidelines are updated, this policy is subject to change.*

School Calendar for 2020-2021

We have updated our calendar for the [2020-2021 school year](http://www.pinewoodsmontessori.com/calendar.html), which can also be accessed here: <http://www.pinewoodsmontessori.com/calendar.html>. This calendar removes many days off, prioritizing instructional days in our schedule.

The extended break from in-person instruction between Fall/Winter holidays will allow families to more safely spend time during the holiday season with loved ones. It also aligns more closely with the scheduled winter break for a number of local universities.

Our experience tells us that November and December are usually the months when sickness ramps up at Pinewoods and throughout the community, and we took this into account when planning this extended break.

Thank You For Your Partnership

This pandemic has been challenging for our small school in many ways, and will continue to be a challenge in the year ahead. We thank you for partnering with us in your child(ren)'s education.

We encourage everyone to find solace in the fact that we are all in this together and we wish to do everything we can to continue your child(ren)'s education in these difficult times.

This year is going to look different and it is going to take tremendous effort and flexibility on everyone's part to make it work. We are continuing to learn alongside the community and new information is likely to emerge throughout the year. We appreciate your patience, compassion, time, and most of all, your partnership.

Fall Program Self-Selection

***** All Families must return this form by August 3, 2020 through TADS or to Jessica White Winger at jessica@pinewoodsmontessori.com.**

Student Name: _____

I would like to enroll my child in:

- Self-Selected Distance Learning *through at least October 16th with the option for extension*
- In-Person Learning*

*I understand that there is a high likelihood that my child(ren) will participate in remote/ distance learning at some point in the upcoming school year due to risk-mitigation measures and community exposure. If my child is an elementary student (1st-6th grade), I understand those classes will all be starting the year [remotely](#).

I understand that tuition will not be discounted should remote/distance learning be deemed necessary and/or mandated at any time.

I understand that the School endeavors to follow the school and program guidelines as described in the PWMS Fall Plan and other school documents. However, Pinewoods reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to alter any aspect of the School's program, including itineraries and/or planned activities, as needed, to address changing conditions, or for the health and well-being of students/staff.

If, at any time, a family wishes to transition from Self-Selected Distance Learning to In-Person Learning (or vice versa), we request four weeks of written notice. After October 16th, 2020, families can request a return to in-person learning with four weeks written notice by contacting Jessica White Winger at jessica@pinewoodsmontessori.com if a transition is requested at any time.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____