

2020-21 California Montessori Project Re-Opening Plan



Introduction

The California Montessori Project (CMP) is home to approximately 2,700 students and 500 staff members. We are a community that cares deeply about our collective well-being.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, CMP ceased in-person schooling on March 16th and began offering Distance Learning to our students immediately. Nine out of ten CMP students participated regularly in Distance Learning, more than 600 Chromebooks were distributed, and CMP teachers provided a high quality, well rounded education to our students despite the challenges of the COVID-19 closure.

Still, we know that Distance Learning is no replacement for a high quality, in-person Montessori education. For the past several months, CMP has been planning how to safely bring students and families back to school.

We also know that we must adhere to federal, state, and local guidelines to keep our students and staff safe. This plan outlines how CMP intends to follow public health guidance while also providing the high quality, in-person Montessori education our students and families come to CMP to receive.

This plan also takes into consideration feedback from eight surveys of CMP families and staff from May, June, and July.

Public Health Guidance

Throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic CMP has been guided by public health guidelines. Our reopening plans are consistent with the most recent federal, state, and local guidance. There are three anchor documents that CMP has used to craft its plans: the California Department of Education “Stronger Together Plan”, the California Department of Public Health “COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs”, and the Sacramento County Office of Education “School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19”.

What CMP Families can Expect when School Starts on August 12, 2020

Please note that these plans are current as of July 13, 2020 and subject to change pending further public health guidance.

When the 2020-21 school year begins, on-campus school will look much different than previous years due to new health and safety measures.

CMP will open with both distance learning and in-person options designed to meet the diverse needs of our students and families.

If a student is attending school in-person families can expect the following:

Screening at Home and School

- Families are recommended to take temperatures daily before going to school. Anyone with a fever of 100.4 F or higher should not go to school.
- Fever screening will also occur prior to the start of school by staff via touchless thermometers.

- Students and adults should also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath prior to coming to school each day. Students and adults experiencing those symptoms should not attend school.

Arriving at School

- Staff will be wearing face coverings.
- Parents, volunteers, and visitors will have limited access to the school campus (i.e. access only to the front office and pre-scheduled, essential meetings).
- Arrival and dismissal times may vary depending on grade level to limit group size at car loops.
- Arrival procedures will include fever screening.

General Safety Precautions Throughout the Day

- CMP will follow disinfection guidelines developed by local public health and the CDC
- Physical barriers will be installed in each school's front office.
- All students and staff will be encouraged to wash and clean hands regularly
- Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer will be made available in all classrooms.
- Teachers shall ensure all students wash their hands using hand sanitizer or soap and water whenever entering and leaving the room.
- Students shall be taught and prompted to wash their hands using sanitizer or soap and water prior to eating, after coughing or sneezing, and before and after using the restroom.
- CMP will limit sharing of supplies and disinfect between uses when sharing is unavoidable.
- School facilities will be disinfected each day with CDC approved cleaning solutions and deep cleaned between cohorts (if in Hybrid Model).

- All drinking fountains will be turned off, and students will be encouraged to bring a water bottle that can be filled at a classroom sink or water bottle filling station.
- HVAC systems will be set to maximize circulation of air from outside buildings.
- Windows and doors will be kept open to the extent possible to keep fresh air flowing through indoor spaces.

Other Safety Precautions

- Face coverings will be worn by staff and students, unless the staff member or student has a medical condition that would preclude them from wearing a face covering. Students and staff that cannot wear a face covering will wear a face shield.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own washable and reusable face covering. If a family does not have access to a face covering CMP will provide one.
- Gloves are not recommended for use by students.
- All members of the public entering school offices are required to wear a face covering.
- Community snack will no longer be provided and birthday circles will be celebrated without food.

Social Distancing

Local public health departments are requiring that schools maintain six feet of social distancing between students and/or staff. To do so they recommend modifying schedules, limiting visitors, keeping students in smaller groups, serving meals in small groups, spacing desks or student work spaces further apart, keeping student cohorts from mixing, staggering lunch/recess/transition times, not holding large assemblies and dances, and identifying a sick area for students that are not feeling well to minimize contact.

2020-21 Instructional Models

To meet the diverse needs of CMP families, CMP will offer both full time Distance Learning and in-person learning (the scale of which will be dependent upon public health guidance) during the 2020-21 school year.

Distance Learning

From our surveys we have seen that ten percent of CMP families would like to remain in Distance Learning during the 2020-21 school year. CMP has developed a program to meet the needs of these families.

CMP students participating in full time Distance Learning will continue to be a part of the CMP community they have come to know and love. We will provide virtual learning to students whose families would like their children to remain at home. They will participate with their classmates in Distance Learning lessons five days a week from home.

We have improved upon our Distance Learning program from this past spring by providing more physical textbooks and workbooks that lend themselves well to Distance Learning, purchasing more internet equipped technology devices, providing teachers and teaching assistants with additional Distance Learning training, enhancing our virtual extracurricular offerings, and providing live support to students by their teacher or teaching assistant during regular school hours.

Please reach out to your school principal if you are interested in participating in full time Distance Learning.

In-Person Hybrid Model

CMP surveyed our staff and families and determined that if we are not able to maintain the six feet of social distancing we would implement a hybrid model that limited the number of students on site each day. If CMP were required to choose a hybrid model 71% of our

campus administrators, after discussing with their staff, said they would prefer a two-day rotation. If CMP were required to choose a hybrid model, 67% of families said they would prefer a two-day rotation. After multiple discussions and surveys with staff, families, and the CMP Board we selected a model that prioritizes both in-person learning and safety. The model allows students to attend two full days of school, participate in three days of at-home learning, and provides CMP with a full day to clean and disinfect our schools between cohort groups.

Full Time In-Person Learning

A CMP school site(s) may be able to offer Full Time In-Person learning five days a week if enough families select full time Distance Learning and there is sufficient space to comply with the six-foot social distancing requirements.

CMP family responses to our end of the summer survey will provide us with the information we need to determine if Full Time In-Person Learning is possible.

Considerations for Complete Closure and Return to Distance Learning

In the event that a COVID-19 case is confirmed on a CMP school site, the County Department of Public Health will be immediately contacted by the Superintendent or a designee for guidance regarding the need for closure.

Options for closure may range from 3-5 days to indefinite. A closure may impact single sites or all of CMP. Again, the County Public Health Department will direct CMP's actions.

In the event of a closure, teachers will be prepared to shift to providing Distance Learning that incorporates a combination of direct instruction and independent learning activities.

The precautions we are taking now, with your assistance, will help ensure that CMP does not have to close and disrupt student learning.

Special Education and Students on a 504 Plan

CMP continues to be committed to meeting the needs of students with disabilities who are on a 504 plan or receiving special education services and offering a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Parent and staff input through meetings and surveys will help CMP identify the best way to execute the services, regardless of the reopening model selected. The Special Education Department is currently reviewing this information and student paperwork to support campuses in creating schedules and service offerings to help students continue to make progress. In addition, the following will be taken into account:

- Accommodations that may be needed in the distance learning environment
- Assistive technology that may be needed during distance learning
- A review of services that lend themselves better to a virtual environment
- Continued assessment of progress and possible regression of skills

As special education staff start the new school year, parents of students with disabilities who receive services will be contacted by the case manager to discuss service details and more global information will be sent through ParentSquare.

Student and Family Resources

Social Emotional Well-Being

- CMP has school counselors and school psychologists ready to lend a hand at every campus.
- CMP has a robust social emotional curriculum that can be taught in person or virtually at each campus.
- CMP has developed a bank of resources for families in need of support.
- CMP has developed a website dedicated to social emotional learning.

Field Trips, Sports, and Extracurricular Activities

- Public Health Departments are not recommending field trips.
- CMP will provide virtual field trips to students and will monitor guidance to see if field trips will be recommended in the future.
- Public Health Departments are not recommending assemblies, dances, and rallies.
- CMP will work to find ways to bring students and families together virtually or in-person in a safe socially distanced manner.
- CMP has historically offered sports during the school year. Two of our most popular sports (i.e. Volleyball and Basketball) are not recommended. CMP will review guidelines to see when Volleyball, Basketball, and other sports may be able to be brought back and will investigate offering other permissible sports (Tennis, Cross Country, Track and Field, etc.)
- In-person music instruction is not recommended. CMP will seek to provide virtual music enrichment.

Club M

- CMP will be able to offer limited Club M opportunities during school day hours.
- Spaces will first be made available to children of essential workers (including CMP Staff).
- Daily rates will remain the same as they are for our school day intersession program (\$22 a day).
- The hours will be from 8:30am to 3:00pm.
- There is a registration fee of \$45.
- Participating families that have credits or punch cards will be allowed to use already purchased time.

Draft

CMP's Ten Commitments to Learning During the 2020-21 School Year

1. We will ground our approach in Montessori methodology and equity to take a tailored approach to meeting the individual needs of each student.
2. We will prioritize student, staff, & community safety.
3. We will support the physical and mental well-being of students and staff and integrate social-emotional learning into our instructional core.
4. We will measure student engagement; seek to keep students engaged, motivated, and healthy; and take immediate action when we see students not fully engaging.
5. We will continue student learning by teaching new content across a well-rounded curriculum.
6. We will focus instruction on the mastery of essential standards.
7. We will provide "live" class instruction every day.
8. We will provide feedback on student work through the use of rubrics and/or grades.
9. We will authentically engage and collaborate with each other in all phases of re-opening planning, implementation, and communication.
10. We recognize that families have different circumstances and commit to meeting families where they are and providing support to the best of our abilities.