

# MMS Parent Town Hall

We will begin at 8:05 pm.

# Key Updates

Racheal Adriko, MMS Head of School

# Starting School

- We will begin school on September 9 to ensure the building is ready for school. We are updating the HVAC in addition to moving and reorganizing nearly every space in the building.
- Please look out for school reopening plan document coming later this week.
- We will have in-person and remote options, which are designed to be as similar as possible, though we will work to limit screen time particularly with our youngest students in Children's House. Combines synchronous and asynchronous opportunities
- Classrooms will be equipped with an owl camera controlled by the teacher to allow for Zoom lessons for remote learners.

# Requesting Remote Learning

- The New York Department of Health guidance has stipulated that schools “should prioritize efforts to return all students to in-person instruction at this time.” Given this preference, our default option is in-person, but parents can request remote learning.
- While we are prepared to switch quickly from in-person learning to remote learning—on a school basis or class basis—we will not be offering a hybrid learning model up front to parents. Of course, if a student who normally attends school in person becomes ill, their regular teacher will accommodate their at-home learning, and as a small school, we will work to be flexible to families’ unique circumstances.
- Please look out for a letter from your divisional head that will include pertinent information for the year ahead, as well as a waiver for remote learning.

## Opening Meeting Faculty Schedule

August 24th and 25th

- New Faculty Orientation (Virtual)

August 26th -28th

- Opening Meetings for all Faculty and Staff

August 31 - Friday, September 4

- Classroom set-up / Divisional Meetings

September 9

- First Day of School for all students

## Day School Schedule for Children

### **Children's House** (*5 Days Per Week* )

Arrival: 8:40 p.m. -9:00 am (*Monday to Friday*)

Half-Day Dismissal: 12:15 pm (*Monday to Friday*)

Full Day Dismissal: 2:50 p.m. -3:10 pm (*Monday to Thursday*)

Early Dismissal - 1:00 p.m. (*Friday*)

### **Lower School** (*5 Days Per Week* )

Arrival: 8:20 a.m. - 8:40 am

Dismissal: 3:15 pm

Early Dismissal: 1:15 pm (*Fridays*)

### **Upper School** (*5 Days Per Week* )

Arrival: 8:00 a.m. -8:20 a.m;

Dismissal: 3:30 p.m.

Early Dismissal: 1:30 p.m. (*Fridays*)

# Agenda

- Key Updates/Submitting Questions (Racheal Adriko)
- Introduction (Dr. Shirley Tilghman, Preeti Gureja)
- Health Screening and Sickness Protocols (Dr. Fabio Stefanini, Dr. Jillian Parekh)
- Quarantining and Testing Upon Return to School (Dr. Magdalena Cerdá)
- Masks and PPE Policy (Dr. Kelli Stidham Hall)
- Social Emotional Learning and Learning Supports (Dr. Monica Zweig)
- Community Guidelines and Expectations (Dr. Shirley Tilghman)
- Transportation (Dr. Luana Fioriti)
- Q&A (15 minutes)

# We Are All In This Together!

- There are things we can control at 85th Street and at home.
- We cannot control what is happening in the city, much less in the rest of the country.
- All the evidence, particularly from Europe, suggests that it is possible to safely open schools, but only in schools with strict guidelines and in communities where the virus is under control.
- As a Health Advisory Committee, we will be guided by facts and research. Science is moving fast, and we are learning new, valuable information every day. We are prepared to be nimble, and to adjust the plan when new research becomes available.
- We at MMS will need your help to keep our community well and to see to it that our children are benefiting from high quality instruction in the classroom setting.



# Health Screening and Sickness Protocols

**Dr. Fabio Stefanini**, Physicist and Neuroscientist, Columbia University

**Dr. Jillian Parekh**, Physician in the Division of Academic General Pediatrics at Children's Hospital at Montefiore and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine

# Health Screening and Sickness Protocols

Keeping our eyes open, reacting quickly: We follow NYS and NYC guidelines on plans for monitoring, containment, closure

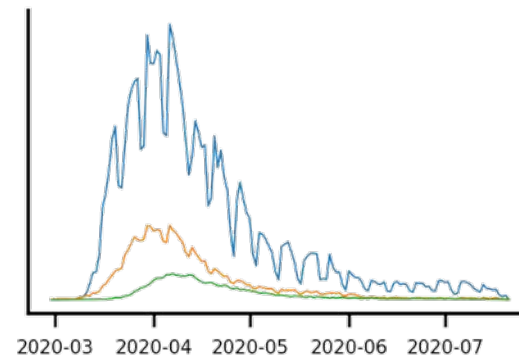
## Knowing

Screening for admittance into the building, monitoring the health of our students, faculty and staff.



## Tracking

Active policies for early detection and prevention of spread in our community.



## Acting

Plan of action when someone gets sick.



# Daily Screening

The MMS Health Advisory eyes on COVID-19

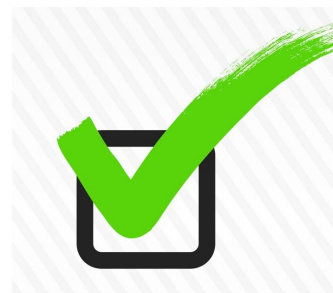
At home:

- Online screening questionnaire
- Home temperature check (< 100.0 F for clearance)

At school:

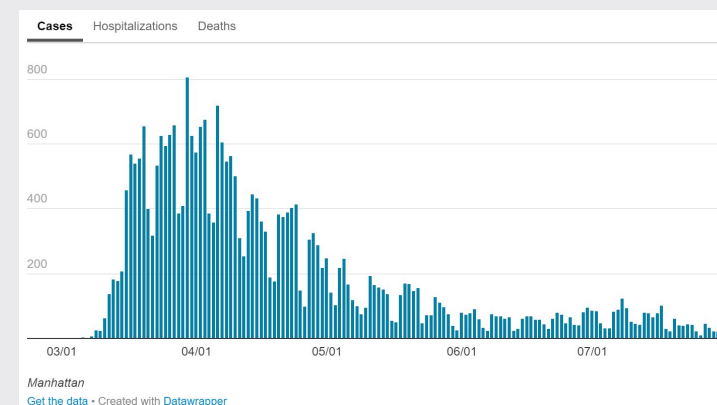
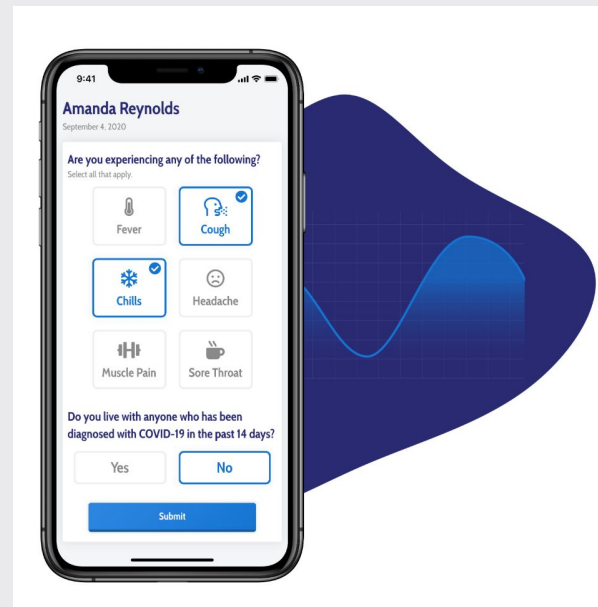
- Greeter verifies temp, questionnaire
- Nurse will follow-up on absences
- Teachers will be aware to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- Tracking cases, tests, absences within our community
- Careful monitoring of community spread COVID-19

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## Stop the spread in your school

Remarkably intuitive COVID-19 screening, tracking, and notifications for K-12 schools and districts.

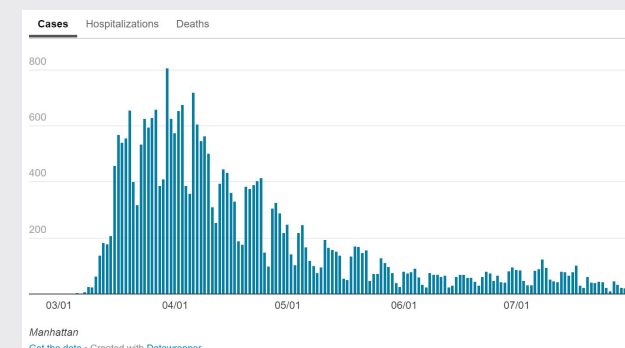
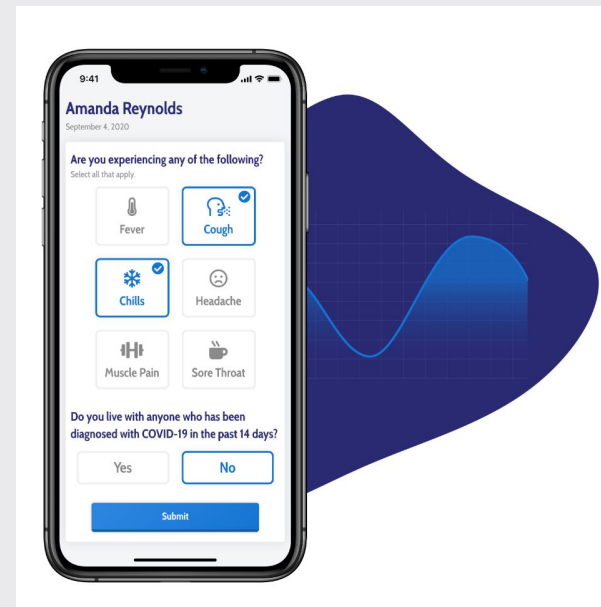


# The Daily Ruvna Questionnaire

- Updated periodically following CDC and/or DOH guidelines
- No information retained apart from “clear”/”not-clear to enter.”
- The questionnaire will ask if your child has:
  - Knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19
  - Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days
  - Have a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, or any of the following symptoms: cough/shortness of breath, shaking chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell that day
  - Has traveled internationally ([per CDC](#)) or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 ([per the New York State Travel Advisory](#)) in the past 14 days

## Stop the spread in your school

Remarkably intuitive COVID-19 screening, tracking, and notifications for K-12 schools and districts.



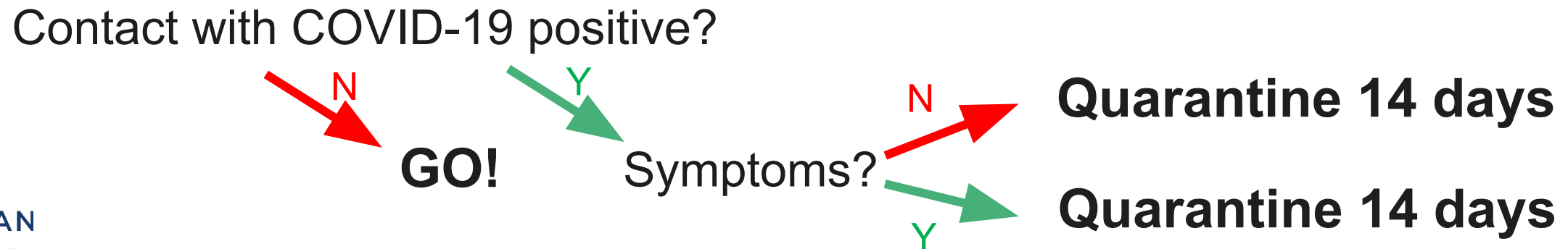
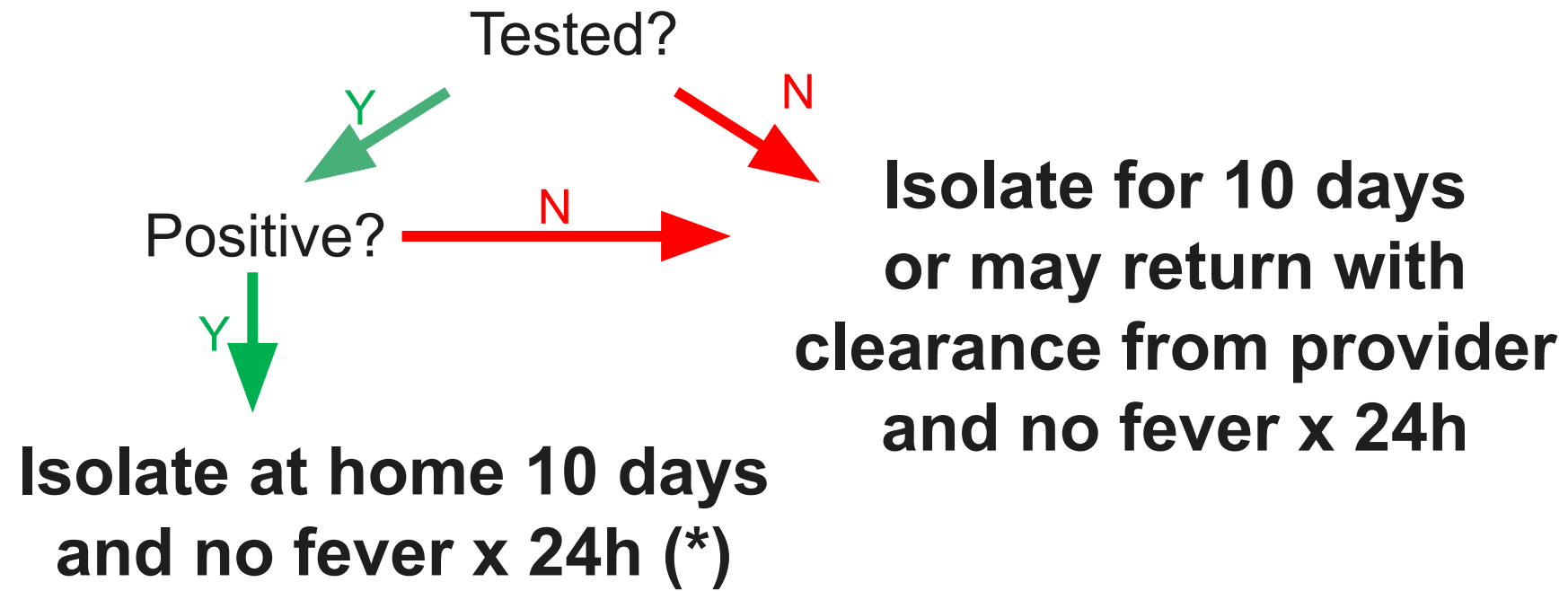
# Quick Intervention

When someone gets sick:

- Staff/faculty: sent home with instructions
- Student: separated from the class and supervised by the nurse
- If the individual is COVID-19 positive, state and local health departments are contacted
- The state works closely with the school to monitor and contain the spread
- More on quarantine, testing and learning later

# When can a sick child return to school? (simplified scheme for explanation purposes only)

- (\*) In case of positive test:
- Pod is closed
  - Siblings stay home
  - Siblings' pods are open



# Pods and School Closing



## Keeping COVID-19 at bay

The MMS Health Advisory Committee, together with the Head of The School, will mandate pods and school closing by following these guidelines.

- If a positive case is identified, the corresponding pod must switch to remote learning for 14 days.
- Siblings of a positive case must be kept away from school for 14 days.
- The school may switch to remote learning:
  - if 2 or more pods are in quarantine
  - if children quarantined at home reach 15%, depending on the rate of positive tests in NYC
  - if the school has more than 10% of MMS Staff/Faculty absent
  - if infection rate in 7-days rolling average in NYC rises above 8%  
(NYS mandates 9% infection rate, NYC 3% percent positive tests -- we are at 1%)

Testing and doctor  
clearance are crucial!

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# Planning for the Start of School: Travel and Testing

Dr. Magdalena Cerdá, DrPH MPH

Associate Professor, NYU Grossman School of Medicine



# Planning for the Start of School: Travel

**The following groups need to wait 14 days after arrival in NYS to enter MMS:**

- Those coming from another country
- Those coming from states on the New York State Travel Advisory List (see: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>; there are exemptions for “passing through” for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours).

## **Why do we have this proviso?**

- Protecting our community from risk of exposure and potential asymptomatic infection.

## **Can't I just get tested and skip this process?**

- Testing is important to identify positive cases, but may miss cases at early stage of infection.

# Planning for the Start of School: Testing

## **We encourage all families and staff to get tested before school starts:**

- Faculty and staff are asked to be tested prior to start of school and then monthly; MMS has secured testing for teachers that can be conducted at school.
- Students are encouraged to get tested prior to start of school
- By getting tested, we can all help to keep our community healthy
- But remember: one test is a snapshot in time, so we should still maintain all other precautionary measures (distancing, masking, handwashing)

## **What happens if my child gets a positive test before school starts?**

- Child will be required to quarantine for 10 days according to DOH guidelines
- MMS will not divulge the name of a child who tests positive to either faculty or other students/families.

# Testing: Where? How?

## Molecular tests (PCR tests)

- Highly accurate: ~96% of true positives identified within 5 days after symptom onset
- Results can take ~7 days
- MMS provides free access to tests for faculty and staff
- Free testing available for families: Find a location close to you at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page>
- At home options exist, but are costly (LetsGetChecked, Vault)

## Antigen tests

- Company reports Sofia SARS Antigen FIA Test accuracy on par with PCR
- Results available in 1 hour or less
- Available in NYC: Medical Offices of Manhattan, Statcare, Urgent Care of NY
- Negative test should not be sole basis to determine whether patient can end quarantine

# Masks and PPE

Kelli Stidham Hall, PhD MS

Associate Professor, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

# PPE Requirements

## For Children:

- The mask is the new shirt—you need one every day!
- Each child should have a clean mask and backup for each day.
  - Cloth masks are effective and reduce environmental waste.
  - Masks must be labeled with the child's name or initials.
  - Ensure your child has **at least 1 backup mask** at school every day.
  - School will have a supply of disposable surgical masks for use at no charge if/when needed.

## For Adults:

- N-95 masks *OR* surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose in addition to face shields or goggles.
  - Face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection against COVID-19.
  - The school will provide this PPE.

# Who Must Wear Masks and When

- **General rule:** ALL people (students including Children's House, faculty, staff, others) in the building who are not maintaining a social distance of 6 feet must wear masks indoors.
- When entering "public areas" such as hallways, stairwells, bathrooms, etc.
- Have masks on hand at all times to put them on as needed.

# Exceptions to Mask Wearing

We understand that mask-wearing might not be second nature for all students. Teachers will approach mask-wearing with care, affection, and compassion and opportunities for breaks:

- Early Childhood students may be given “mask breaks” at the discretion of the teacher.
  - Teachers will provide areas (classroom or terrace) where social distancing is possible.
- Older students may independently take mask breaks.
  - On school terraces or in classroom where social distancing possible.
  - While working quietly at their desks when proper social distancing.
- Students of any age learning or playing outside in low-risk activities
  - Activities that do not involve prolonged close physical contact
  - Except when they are not able to socially distance.
  - Teacher can determine when it’s safe for students to take off a mask.

# Exceptions to Mask Wearing (Cont.)

- Students playing “high risk” activities (defined by DOH, e.g., contact sports) must wear masks, even outside.
- A student having difficulty breathing will immediately be given mask break. If difficulty continues, will be evaluated by the nurse.
- Masks removed while napping or sleeping, even in the nurse's office.
- May remove while eating in an area determined to have the appropriate capacity for social distancing during mealtimes.
- A teacher has discretion in determining if a child is safe or not to remove their mask, as all teachers will receive training on COVID-19 specific hygiene.



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# Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Learning Supports

Dr. Monica Zweig

School psychologist at Metropolitan Montessori School

# Social, Emotional, and Psychological Supports

## For teachers:

- Establishing staff reflection support groups and affinity groups to meet virtually.
- Mindfulness and stress management zoom meeting
- Mental Health resources shared with all faculty; self-care packs
- School wide professional development training:
  - Positive Discipline (an SEL Trauma informed practice)
  - Teaching Tolerance (Transformative SEL practices)
  - Daily Mindfulness using Inner Explorer App- guided meditations

# Social, Emotional, and Psychological Supports

## A Three Tier System for Students:

A selection of the following approaches will be integrated into every division (Tier 1):

- Daily practices of mindfulness exercises
  - SEL instruction, morning meetings/circle time, and Positive Discipline, a SEL trauma informed practice
  - Self soothing kits for students
  - In-person or virtual social gatherings/support groups, such as Lunch Bunch, Circle Time, Friendship Groups, affinity groups (elementary division)
- 
- Students who are struggling to readjust will be invited to ongoing small group counseling and there will be increased communication with their parents. (Tier 2)
  - Students with the greatest need will receive ongoing one-on-one counseling and there will be increased communication with their parents. (Tier 3)

# Social, Emotional, and Psychological Supports

## For Parents:

- Parent education and resources to help families understand and prepare for school reentry (coming in reopening plan)
- Orientation and preparation for parents with students transitioning to in-school learning
- Virtual parent book group— reading *Embracing Uncertainty* by Dr. Susan Jeffers—with school psychologist
- Parent workshops with experts in SEL
- Individual consultations with school psychologist as needed

# Academic Supports for In School and/or Remote Learning

- Continuity of Care meetings and Child Study Team meetings
- Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).
- Academic screenings, formative and summative assessments along with teacher observations
- Differentiated Instruction; accommodations and modifications in the classroom
- Online academic supports: Lexia, IXL, RAZ, ALEKS
- Coordination with DOE and outside of school providers (speech pathologists, SETSS, occupational therapists)

# Community Guidelines

Dr. Shirley Tilghman

Professor of Molecular Biology and Public Policy and President Emerita of  
Princeton University

# How can you help?

- As a community we need to follow CDC guidelines by wearing masks and maintaining at least 6 feet between ourselves and others in public.
- Avoid unnecessary travel
- Abide by New York State Travel Advisory Quarantine guidelines and protocol: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>
- Avoid large gatherings
- Outdoor playdates or gatherings should maintain at least 6 feet of distance between participants not from your household
- If you learn that you or a family member has been exposed to COVID-19, please contact the MMS nurse immediately.

# How can you help?

- Keep your child at home if he or she has a temperature above 100.0 or is feeling unwell.
- Provide your child with with a fresh face mask every day and ensure that the school always has a backup mask on hand. Face masks must be washed, disinfected or replaced after each day's use and must not be shared.
- Please bring a spirit of generosity, patience, and understanding.
- Thank your teachers. They are working in an unprecedented situation to meet your needs.



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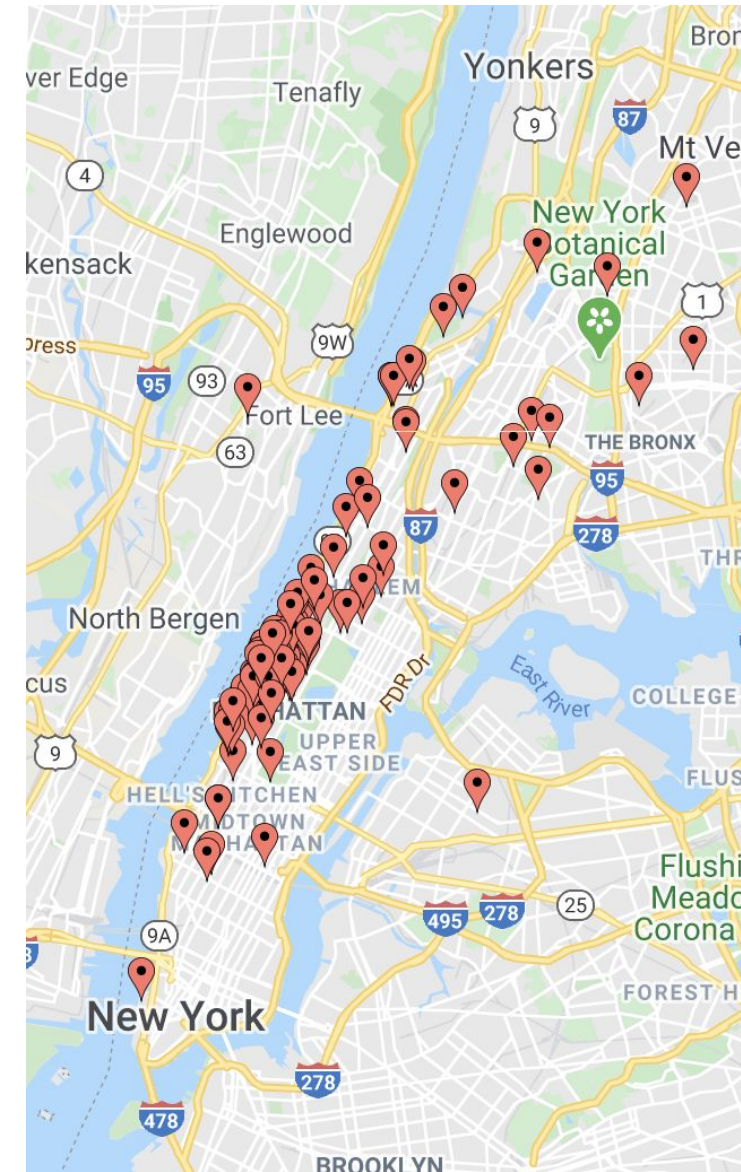
# Transportation

Dr. Luana Fioriti

Columbia University, Department of Neuroscience

# Transportation Solutions for Families Beyond MMS' Neighborhood

- Our goal is to bring **all** students safely to school for in-person education.
- Plenty of MMS families live outside MMS' immediate UWS neighborhood, in places like Harlem/Morningside Heights, Upper Manhattan, The Bronx, and Midtown/Downtown.
- In a normal year, many of these families take the subway to school. A group from MMS is working together to coordinate some possible alternatives:
  - Parent Melissa Naple (Sadie, grade 4)
  - Lori Joachim, MMS Registrar
  - Health Advisory Board



# What is safest? Subway, carpool, rideshare, or bus...

- The Health Advisory believes that a bus service, carpool, or rideshare (Kidshare, Uber, Lyft) is a more controlled environment than a Subway car.
- The Health Advisory will create transportation policy to mitigate risks associated with group transportation (for example: Riding in cars with windows down and masks on)
- Look out for a survey later this week inquiring about these options. Please fill it out if you're interested in participating in a collective solution and do not have the option to travel to MMS in open air (i.e. walking, biking, scootering)
- This option will be paid for and coordinated by parents. though MMS is supporting with research of potential transportation providers. If you're interested in participating, please consider becoming a coordinator.

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# Question & Answers

(15 Minutes)