

ANS FAQs as of June 15, 2020

The guidelines we are using are from the L. A. County Dept. of Public Health (DPH) and the California Dept. of Social Services (CDSS).

Is ANS discussing plans for the 2020-2021 school year?

Absolutely! The staff and the school Board are meeting regularly to discuss a wide variety of topics and developing a plan for next year. Most importantly, we are discussing the recommended health guidelines and their impact on our school's teaching philosophy and the benefits and risks to the children and our teachers.

Will ANS have a summer program this year?

No, we are unable to provide camp this summer.

Is ANS starting school as scheduled in September?

The teachers, Board and Director have made the hard decision that school will not open in September. We have a target reopen date of January 4, 2021.

Is ANS laying off its teachers?

Since closing in mid-March 2020, ANS has continued to pay our teachers and will retain staff regardless of our plans for next year.

Will my child have to wear a mask to school?

The DPH recommends children over the age of 3 wear masks at school with adult supervision. ANS is undecided at this time.

Will my child's teachers be wearing masks?

The DPH recommends all adults wear masks at school. The teachers are in favor of wearing masks to protect themselves, their families and others. However, they also have concerns about mask safety for young children and the impact on their ability to communicate verbally and non-verbally and in forming relationships while wearing a mask. We are interested in and have researched clear masks and face coverings as an alternative.

Will ANS practice social distancing and how will this look for the children and teachers?

Yes, we would implement several strategies to support this practice with the understanding that our expectations need to be realistic with what young children are able to understand and accomplish. Children and teachers need to socialize, connect, communicate and play together. We do not believe maintaining the current guideline of 6 ft apart is achievable in a preschool setting.

How will separation be handled?

The teachers will continue to show care and physical affection to children and take whatever amount of time a child needs to separate. We are still discussing this important topic and will have a better vision of the logistics once we know which children are joining us when we start school.

What are the changes needed to adhere to social distancing at ANS?

In general, we would make changes to how we use the classroom, play yard, to curriculum, the separation process, parent workdays, drop off and pick up routines and community events. The following are some specific changes that may take place as we move closer to school re-opening.

- *Possible elimination of parent workday commitments or parents working exclusively in their child's classroom.
- *Much more time spent outdoors similar to what we do for summer camp.
- *We would need to divide the current classrooms into groups/cohorts of 10 children maximum with 1-2 teachers per group. These may need to be divided into smaller groups for snacks, indoor activities as well as outside activities.
- *We would not be able to provide a mixed-age, open-play session in the first half of the morning. Instead, use of the play yard would be scheduled for each group.
- *Our teachers would be responsible for a particular group of children and would not interact with other groups or teachers.
- *Each group (10 children max) would play exclusively with each other.
- *Groups would alternate playing in the yard or other areas of the facility.
- *Large group celebrations like Stone Soup, parades, Winter/Spring parties, field trips etc will have to be down-sized and celebrated by each group.
- * Back To School Night, parent ed events, Board, staff, Orange Sale meetings will take place on Zoom.
- *We would follow the DPH guidelines for pick up & drop off, adults entering school and for signing in/out.
- *We would not share a communal snack but instead children and teachers would bring their own individual daily snacks.

How will teachers console my child when they are upset/scared/hurt/sad if they can not hug them or hold their hand?

Our teachers are opposed to social distancing measures if it means they cannot touch, hug or comfort the children in their care. Those actions of empathy are essential to what we believe in at ANS.

What are the other measures ANS would take to reduce the risk of the virus spreading?

- *Routine hand washing and use of hand sanitizer by children and teachers.
- *Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs, banisters, countertops, toys, faucet handles, physical education equipment and manipulatives, and phones.
- *Provide adequate supplies for good hygiene including easy access to clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The DPH does not recommend the use of gloves for teachers.
- *Staff training on COVID-19 prevention, symptoms and transmission.

What are the benefits of sending my child to school with these health guidelines in place instead of waiting until they have been lifted or modified?

The benefits will vary depending on your child's age, prior separation experiences, their temperament and their ability to adapt and communicate with others.

- *Children will still develop their social and emotional skills by attending.
- *Some children will enjoy a smaller student body and class size.
- *For children who are set to go to kindergarten the following year their experiences next year could be valuable.

What will communication from ANS look like during the summer? Who do we contact if we have questions about the coming year?

- *We will hold a membership Town Hall Meeting Wednesday, June 24th @ 8pm.
- *Membership will receive an update every 2 weeks on Fridays from our Director Janet Ann
- *Board members will receive a weekly update from Barbara Livolsi- Board President.
- *Questions regarding tuition, reimbursements, scholarships or refunds should be directed to Quyen Nguyen-Treasurer quyenanhnguyen@gmail.com
- *Enrollment questions or referrals directed to Janet Ann director@outdrsgal@gmail.com
- *Bi-weekly ANS community update email from Johanna

Will ANS be raising tuition for the 2020-2021 school year?

No, but we are planning on our usual tuition increase for the following 2021-2022 school year.

How is ANS doing financially?

Overall, ANS is stable due to the emergency fund we've been shoring up for the last ten years. We qualified for the SBA's Paycheck Protection loan, which will likely qualify for forgiveness and not need to be repaid. However, we have experienced a significant loss of tuition income this spring, and regardless of the plan we move forward with we will be operating at a deficit next year.

How can families support ANS at this time?

ANS is always grateful for any monetary donations that we receive and we have the option to donate on our website.