

Heath School Proposal

WHO: The Hilltown Youth Performing Arts Programs and Recovery Theatre. We are thrilled to be writing this again after the successful summer we had in 2020.

WHAT: *We propose running a physically distanced summer workshop at the Heath School, as well as bi-weekly aerial silks club and outdoor script writing workshop leading up to the summer program.*

The Summer Theatre Workshop will be nearly identical to last summer. The silks club would be a small group of students and staff using the gym, the outdoor space, and the b/g bathrooms every other week.

Along with a space to let the kids practice their skills and prepare for the summer, these would be, to paraphrase internationally known experts in infectious disease epidemiology Michael Osterholm, PhD, MPH and Dr. Erin Bromage, a way for children to maintain *both* safe physical distancing *and* healthy social connection. Both are critically important for developing strong mental health and healthy immune systems.

(Dr. Osterholm is Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota and served as interim Director of the CDC. Dr. Erin Bromage, Faculty at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth since 2007 where he teaches courses in immunology and infectious disease.)

WHERE: The former Heath School, 18 Jacobs Road

WHEN:

Bi Weekly Silk + Script Writing Workshops (2 additional sessions over April vacation)
WE's 4/3 & 4, 4/17 & 18; 5/8 & 9; 5/22 & 23; 6/5 & 6; 6/19 & 20; 7/10

Summer Workshop: July 12 - August 4, Monday - Friday 9:30AM - 3:30PM, with select evening and weekends. NOTE: *will need an hour for set up prior to students arrival. And will be phasing in campuses and times (e.g., We may begin with half days and have a shorter first week.)*

Post-Workshop Recovery Theatre Summer Intensive: August 6 - August 10 (half days 10 - 1:30PM).

WHY: As you know, this pandemic has mobilized our program to be nimble and, most importantly, to keep showing up for our community members. Our hope is to use the bi weekly workshop as a way to stay connected regularly leading up to the workshop as well as to start generating material for the workshop, like writing a script. From the standpoint of recovery and public health, we are **cultural first responders**. What that looks like has changed slightly from last summer, but not by much. We are still working to provide meaningful connection as a respite from online school and physical separation. As the country opens up and, hopefully, the pandemic eases as we go into the summer, we are committed to providing a space and structure for our kids to safely move and connect in person.

Heath School Proposal

HOW:

Bi Weekly Workshop: These workshops would have no more than 14 participants attending at once, with 2-4 staff members. We would have up to 9 people in the gym at once (including staff members, who are in the process of getting vaccinated currently and would be by the start or very close to the start of the meetings). The rest of the people who were there would be outside with another staff member working on the script or doing another activity. The groups would switch part way through the afternoon, so everyone got a chance to do both. See our safety plan below for exact practices on social distancing, handwashing, and building and equipment sanitizing.

Summer Workshop: Our plan involves capping our numbers at 40 (1/2 of a typical summer workshop) and utilizing two sites.

We are going to offer families/students the option of participating virtually and/or a combination of in-person and virtual work (we don't want to set it up such that the "courageous" come in person and others participate online, families will participate based on their own comfort levels);

Families with a parent or household member who work in a hospital or extended care facility that treat or provide care for COVID-19 patients (e.g., nurses, doctors, hospital staff, etc.) will only be permitted to participate in person if their parent/household member has been vaccinated. Unless that person agrees to live elsewhere during the workshop and their child(ren) are tested and quarantined.

The max number allowed on campus will be 49. This includes our faculty and student staff (approx 14), all who will be vaccinated by the time of the workshop. Participants will be separated into three groups of 7, one group of 6 (max) Littles & Middles (ages 7 - 9) and one group of 5 (max) in a week-long Digital Intensive during the second week of the workshop (**max 32 students on campus total**). **Participants will remain in those groupings.** We understand that this is an increase of 7 students on campus from last summer (and, potentially, 12 during week 2), but feel that we can make it safe for several reasons. We felt that we had no problem with social distancing and utilizing the outdoor space so all the groups were distanced, and in fact could have been equally as safe with a few more kids. Additionally, all of our staff and interns will be vaccinated for our workshops, and summer camps have received approval to open by the state. As a non-covid facing behavioral health care organization, many of our staff have either been vaccinated already or are in the process of getting their shots. This, the sense of spacing we got from last summer, and that our plan is in compliance with state reopening guidelines, make us confident that having up to 50 people on campus will be a manageable number.

NOTE: *Even if the regs or phase were to change these protocols won't.* In other words, the max number of students on campus at any one time will remain 33 to make it easier to supervise physical distancing, mask wearing and hand washing.

Heath School Proposal

NUMBERS

- One group of **7 students inside the gym** (max) and an **additional 5 in a classroom during week 2 only**);
- Two groups of **7 students and one group of Littles & Middles outside** the buildings (20 max)
- The **groups don't cross-pollinate**, they remain in the same groupings throughout the Workshop;
- **All activities, except aerial fabric lessons, will be held outdoors whenever possible, and we will have an outside aerial fabrics rig to use as well.**
- Up to 3 additional adult artists and/or parent volunteers will be permitted on campus working at least 12' away from any large group activity. No activities can have more than 10 participants at a time (including supervising adults).

AGES

- 10 - 18
- Littles 7 - 9 year-olds will participate half days (9:30 - 12:30). *Max # 6 that will stay in their own grouping.*

SPACES (Indoors)

- We would use the same rooms in our lease agreement from last summer except for the art room being used by the wire company and would like to request one additional classroom if available (not to be used for art).
- **Max number of students allowed in cafe at one time is 3** plus one staff (e.g, working on art and props);
- Max numbers indoors includes every space in use (i.e., **no more than 15 participants inside the building at one time**);

SPACES (Outdoors)

- Soccer field (*Trapeze*)
- *Four Square Area (Music)*
- Island inside circle driveway (*Poetry & Writing*)
- Area Behind Art Room (*Art & Set Design*)
- Outside Tent In Parking lot (*Dance & Yoga and general training area*)

HEALTH & SAFETY

- Temps taken at the beginning of each day;
- Hand washing hourly;
- Hand sanitizer and paper towels will be available at every station at all times;
- Bathrooms sanitized hourly in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidance and best practices;

Heath School Proposal

- Physical distancing maintained at ALL times indoors and out;
 - Mask wearing required indoors at ALL times;
 - Mask wearing required outdoors except during lunch time and a specially designated activity where participants are 12 - 20' apart.
 - Lunch and snacks all take place outdoors;
 - No shared food or drink
 - Water bottles only, the water fountain will be off limits if it's not already closed (**we will provide bottled water to refill or use**);
 - Cafeteria, gym and stage floors mopped w/disinfectant daily;
 - When inside, the gym, cafe and art room doors and windows will remain open for circulation;
 - **The Workshop will be cancelled if there is inclement weather.**
 - If the workshop is cancelled due to weather 10 students (max)—2 groups of 5 (or may be broken into smaller groupings)—will be permitted to work for a half day on music, art, film, poetry and writing inside the building or under the tent.
- In the event of a thunderstorm during the Workshop participants will be assigned rooms/areas to report to inside the building, **this will be treated like a fire drill**. If the storm doesn't pass we will assign groups to indoor activities.

APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT

Aerial Fabrics

- Performers use the same aerial fabrics (by color) only one student per silk (except siblings);
- Fabrics swapped out and mats sanitized when groups change;
- Limit of 2 group lessons per day 7 students per lesson (max) and/or in gym at one time (2 additional students can be on the state);
- Aerial fabrics sanitized/washed every night (we will be working with at least 2, preferably 3 sets);
- Any faculty working with students on fabrics will wear gloves at all times.

Trapeze

- The trapeze will be treated similar to a zip line at Berkshire East or Zoar Outdoor (although the latter actually requires more contact with users);
- Participants and staff on apparatus will wear disposable, single use nitrile style gloves and masks at all times;
- One staff, one flyer on board;
- Flyers will climb the ladder with gloves and mask on on, once at the top they will throw their gloves in a receptacle, put their mask in their pocket;

Heath School Proposal

- After they land in the net flyers will put their mask back on;
- No catching, flying only;
- **Note:** A single staff will be assigned to each group of flyers who will be assisted on the board by that same staff member for the duration of the Workshop.

Music

- Instruments will be brought in from home by individuals whenever possible, and not shared with others and can be used by only one participant per day.
- Hilltown Youth equipment will be sanitized after each use;
- Singing lessons/trainings will be outdoors either 1:1 or in physically distanced groups space 12' apart (**there will be no singing instruction indoors**).

PERFORMANCES

- Our current plan is to put on a show in the same way as last summer. This meant that each scene was in a fixed location on the mountain, and we had 5 groups of 10 audience members a night who saw the show staggered 15 minutes apart.
- Outdoor exhibition(s) or performances will take place at Berkshire East

BERKSHIRE EAST

- Safety and physical distancing protocols will be the same as at the Heath School.
- We will have use of the West Lodge exclusively for our program along with its bathrooms, no other parties will be sharing those restrooms.
- All activities will take place outdoors. 5 people (4 participants and one staff) may work inside the lodge (e.g., on art) during a light rain, similar to the Heath school cafe
- The West Lodge is where we will wait out a storm or should we require an early pickup due to inclement weather
- We will have use of the tubing park as a base of operations where we will have a shade tent and, possibly, an outdoor static rig.
- Hilltown Youth will not have to wait in the lift line but can enter the lift thru the gate the mountain bike patrol use.
- Chairlifts will be sanitized before we load and unload on days we use them.
- The mountain's shutdown days are Tuesdays and Wednesdays so we will have that site to ourselves on those days.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Jonathan, Scott Halligan, Laura Iveson, Arlie Hart, Zach Arfa, Theo Sweezy, Franklin Speck, Adam Hallenbeck (On behalf of the Hilltown Youth & Recovery Theatre Leadership Team)

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