Accent Pontiac Summer Activities Plan

Background:
In early March, the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, reached the state of Michigan. To slow the spread, Governor Gretchen Whitmer closed Michigan schools for three weeks on March 12, 2020, later extending the order for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Accent Pontiac immediately connected with our partners in the Pontiac School District and our network of El Sistema-inspired organizations to determine a plan to continue to provide music education support to our students in this new context. Based on the needs of our community, Accent Pontiac transitioned to launch two projects in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: 1) Virtual Music Instruction for Accent Pontiac students and 2) Direct Services Support, delivering food and household items weekly to Accent Pontiac families, in partnership with Pontiac’s My Covid Response network and other community organizations.

On May 7, 2020, Governor Whitmer released the MI Safe Start Plan, a plan to gradually and safely reopen Michigan’s economy. The MI Safe Start Plan outlines 6 stages, and is based on data and information from health experts. On June 1, 2020, Governor Whitmer moved Michigan into Phase 4 of the MI Safe Start Plan, which allows for in-person gatherings with strict social distancing guidelines.

Purpose:
Accent Pontiac students have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in March, students have been isolated from teachers, friends and family that do not live in their home. While many students participated in weekly deliveries and virtual learning with the Pontiac School District and Accent Pontiac, many students are feeling the fatigue of extended screen time. Now that Michigan has entered Phase 4, allowing for limited in-person gatherings, we have received feedback from Accent Pontiac parents requesting in-person activities. Based on the carefully planned phased reopening of the State of Michigan and the safety guidelines that accompany Phase 4, we are confident that we can safely implement the following activities.

Activities:
Porch Lessons
- July 13 - August 7
- Individual lessons will be offered on percussion, brass and woodwind instruments. Enrolled students will receive 1-2 lessons per week.
- Students will see the same teacher for each type of lesson to limit the number of interactions between different people.
- Lessons will occur outside on a students’ porch or lawn; no lessons will occur inside a students’ home. Porch lessons will be rescheduled or cancelled if there is inclement weather.
- Accent Pontiac siblings may participate in a group lesson, provided that the Accent Pontiac teaching artist is always at least 6 feet away from each student.
• A parent or guardian must be present in the home at all times during the lesson.
• Only Accent Pontiac students may participate in porch lessons.
• Additional safety protocol is described below.

Jam Sessions:
• Dates TBD; two events total
• Location TBD; will be an outdoor event
• Jam sessions will include socially distanced activities such as bucket band music activities, relay races, etc. as well as a meal.
• No brass or woodwind instruments will be played at jam sessions.
• Accent Pontiac students and families will be invited to attend.
• Every student participant must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
• Jam sessions will be capped at 20 families.
• Additional safety protocol is described below.

Safety Protocols:
*These protocols are informed by and aligned with CDC guidelines, the MI Safe Schools plan, and the Oakland County ReOpen Toolkit.

Documentation
• Every Accent Pontiac staff member must complete a health form each day of participation in any in-person Accent Pontiac activity (see attached).
• Every Accent Pontiac student must have a signed COVID Release form and General Liability Release form for each Accent Pontiac activity (see attached).
• Both staff health forms and student COVID Release screen for symptoms of COVID-19 and contact with any confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Hygiene
• Accent Pontiac will provide hand sanitizer and disinfectant to staff for all activities.
• Accent Pontiac students and staff will be assigned instruments to use over this period; sharing of instruments will be avoided.
• All instruments and equipment will be disinfected after each use.
• Accent Pontiac students and staff will be encouraged to frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol throughout each Accent Pontiac activity.

Personal Protective Equipment
• Accent Pontiac will provide disposable masks for staff, students and family members, as needed.
• Facial coverings will be worn by Accent Pontiac students, staff, and family members at all times during Accent Pontiac activities, except when eating or actively playing a brass or woodwind instrument.
  o Facial coverings will not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without help.

Social Distancing
• All Accent Pontiac staff, students and family members from different households will remain at least 6 feet apart during Accent Pontiac activities.
• During brass and woodwind instruction, students and staff will face the same direction whenever possible.

Location and Transportation
• For now, all Accent Pontiac activities will take place outdoors.
• Accent Pontiac will not provide any transportation to summer activities.

Food Preparation
• Disposable utensils and dishes will be used for all meals.
• Food and utensils will not be shared by students and family members from different households.
• Pre-packaged boxes or bags will be used for meals, whenever possible; there will be no buffet-style or communal dishes.
• Anyone handling food will handle all items with gloves.
  o After removing gloves, Accent Pontiac staff members will immediately wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.

Responding to COVID-19 Symptoms and Positive Cases
• Any Accent Pontiac student who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 at an Accent Pontiac activity will be immediately isolated and sent home.
• Symptomatic students will not be allowed to return to Accent Pontiac activities until they have tested negative for COVID-19 or have been released from isolation according to CDC guidelines.
• Accent Pontiac will cooperate with the local public health department if a participant of an Accent Pontiac activity tests positive for COVID-19.
  o We will make immediate efforts to alert any participants at Accent Pontiac activities who were in contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19.
  o Anyone in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days must wait 14 days before participating in any additional Accent Pontiac activities.

Looking Ahead

August Summer Program
Accent Pontiac’s summer program is scheduled for August 10 - 21 at Center For Success - Pontiac. Currently, these plans are on hold. If Michigan enters Phase 5 of the MI Safe Start plan, we plan to move forward with our summer program with modifications to ensure social distancing and safety for Accent Pontiac staff and students. A full plan will be released once Michigan enters Phase 5. If Michigan remains in Phase 4, we will use these 2 weeks to provide a more robust schedule of “Porch Lessons”, ensuring our students get a robust musical experience in a safe environment.

2020-2021 School Year:
On June 2, 2020, Superintendent Kelley Williams released the Pontiac School District’s proposed plan for the 2020-2021 school year (see attached). On June 30, 2020, Governor Whitmer released the MI Safe Schools plan, providing additional guidance for the reopening of Michigan schools. Throughout this time, Accent Pontiac has remained in communication with our partners in the Pontiac School District and additional community partners. At this time, plans for the Fall are still fluid and updates will be given as we gain more information.
**Final Note**

The safety of Accent Pontiac students, families and staff is our top priority. We are committed to following the guidelines from the CDC and State of Michigan and staying up-to-date on best practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. If at any point in time, Michigan regresses to Phases 1 – 3, Accent Pontiac will cancel all in-person music instruction and move activities to a virtual platform. This plan may be revised as more information on COVID-19 becomes available.