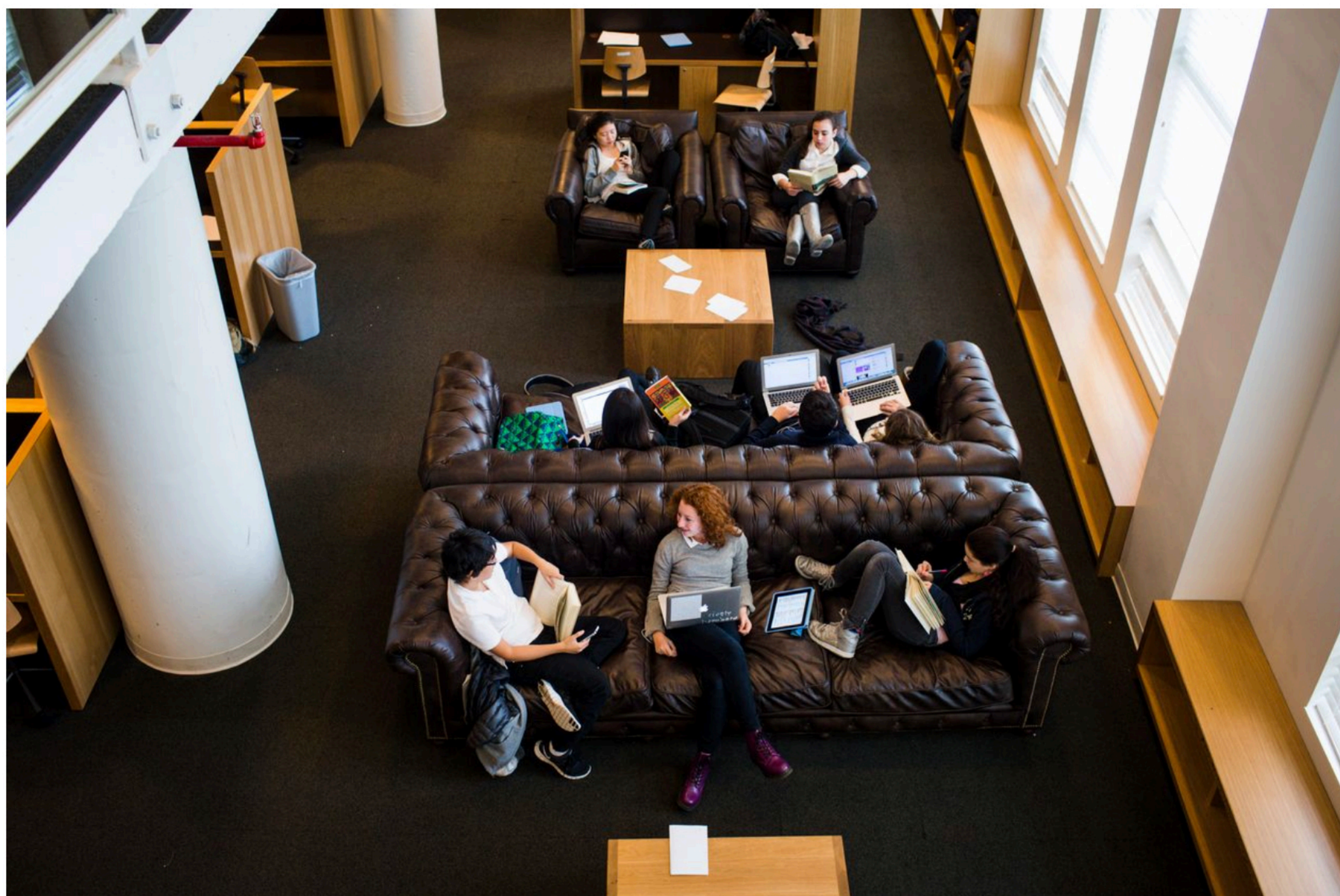


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Manhattan Private School Plans a Hamptons Branch

Avenues school attracts parents seeking alternatives amid the coronavirus pandemic; at-home tutoring for \$65,000



Avenues: The World School in Manhattan is offering an outpost in the Hamptons and a service dispatching teachers to students' homes.

By [Leslie Brody](#)

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Avenues, a for-profit school based in Manhattan, is pitching two new ventures for families seeking flexibility and safety during the coronavirus pandemic: An outpost in the Hamptons and a service dispatching full-time teachers to students' homes.

Leaders at the institution formally called Avenues: The World School, which enrolls children aged 2 years old to 18, are offering to send a teacher to a family's home potentially anywhere in the U.S. for in-person instruction for \$65,000 for the first child, and \$45,000 for each additional child. Its officials say that for health protection, no more than five children from two families can study in one home together.

The Hamptons branch comes after [a wave of affluent families](#) fled New York City earlier this spring for the eastern end of Long Island to escape the city's crowds and high infection rates

Many educators and parents worry low-income students are at risk of falling further behind with school buildings shut, and some children in public schools lack electronic devices for remote learning. But wealthy families can often purchase concierge services to deal with the disruptions of the pandemic, and education companies, including tutoring outfits, are jumping to woo them.

Avenues' new in-home option, called Avenues@HOME, will serve toddlers through fifth-graders, with a priority on younger children. Each teacher would work in-person with students for five hours every weekday and give progress reports to parents.

In the school's experience with its online curricula, "Learners really don't have that level of independence to be able to do that work on their own" until fourth grade or above, Jeff Lippman, an Avenues administrator, told parents in a webinar this week. School officials say they could hire between 75 and 100 teachers for the at-home option over the next several weeks.

Avenues, which has campuses in São Paulo, Brazil and Shenzhen, China, has been negotiating for a Hamptons location to serve families there. It says it has received about 150 inquiries about joining Avenues Studio Hamptons, for all or part of the coming school year. Its tuition is \$48,000, less than the \$56,400 charged at the Manhattan site due partly to lack of extensive extracurricular and sports activities.

Officials said the Hamptons site would serve at least fifth through 12th grades, and could grow to 150 students. Avenues has about 3,500 students world-wide, including nearly 1,800 in the Manhattan campus in Chelsea.



Elizabeth Formidoni's son Javier Mendez, who just finished grade 4, recreates the solar system with household items in the family's rental house in Noyack, N.Y.

PHOTO: ELIZABETH FORMIDONI

Elizabeth Formidoni, who has three children at Avenues, is considering signing up for the new Hamptons option. Her family lives in Manhattan now but could move full-time to their Water Mill, Long Island home. She said the Studio model, a mix of individualized online and face-to-face classwork, appealed to her because of its emphasis on in-depth projects and letting students work at their own pace.

Online learning in recent months had the unexpected benefit of letting her children dive more deeply into activities, like putting on plays together, she said.

"They got into projects and wanted to spend the afternoon doing them because they didn't have to change classes every 45 minutes," Ms. Formidoni said. "If the fall will be unpredictable anyway, maybe the Studio is a chance to do more immersive project work."

Avenues is among the education companies offering bespoke services that don't risk big crowds. Elite Method, which sends staff to give children one-on-one life coaching and sports training for \$250 per 90-minute session, says about 15 of its client families have decamped to the Hamptons. Chief Executive Rachel Dube said she fielded a few dozen inquiries this month from prospective customers there.

Ms. Dube said many parents want the security of having children meet with a coach individually rather than sending them off to a day camp led by teenage counselors who might not abide by safety rules required to prevent coronavirus this summer.

Caitlin Meister, founder of a private New York City-based tutoring practice called the Greer Meister Group, says she has seen a bump in requests for her one-on-one tutoring service this summer by videoconference, which ranges from \$150 to \$250 per hour. Its summer group classes include four students with one tutor for an hour, at \$50 per child per class.

She said so many camps canceled this summer that parents crave safe options to engage their children.

"We are getting flooded with requests to beef up tutoring," she said. Customers "doing an hour a week want to do two, three, four, five or 10 hours a week for summer."

Write to Leslie Brody at leslie.brody@wsj.com