

COVID-19 Guidelines for the Upper School

In the most recent parent survey, approximately 65% of parents wanted to start school in person and on time. Another 35% preferred either starting remotely or having a later start time. Clearly, a third of our parent body are nervous about in person learning at this time. Many in the US faculty have also expressed concern, anxiety, or fear either for themselves, or a compromised family member as the Upper School community comes back together for in-person learning. In order to ensure the safest possible environment, everyone must adhere to the guidelines below and in the Safe at Sayre document. That includes checking in daily with your student and making sure they don't have any symptoms associated with the corona virus, and keeping them at home if they do. It means students must have masks on and worn appropriately, even if they feel uncomfortable, when in the building, and they must maintain physical distance from their peers as well. These guidelines need to be followed outside of school as well to ensure the safety of everyone in our community from students and faculty to staff and administration. This must be a team effort if we are to make the return to in person learning as safe as possible.

Following the CDC and the Kentucky Department of Education Guidelines for a safe return to school, we have adopted the following policies and procedures

- 1). **Classrooms:** All desks will be forward facing in classrooms. We will install plexiglass dividers on each of the student tables to physically separate students, and a plexiglass divider will be placed on teacher desks as well. Average class sizes range from 14-16 with a handful of classes falling into the 17-19 range. Class size and square footage of rooms will be considered to ensure safe distancing for students and teachers.
- 2). **Outdoor spaces:** Tents will be purchased for our outdoor spaces to encourage students to get outside during study halls, and for teachers to take classes outside when appropriate.
- 3). **Hallway flow:** Hallways will be one directional. Our hallways and stairwells will be marked one-way and will have directional arrows and social distancing spots. Traffic on the main floor will flow from the backdoor to the front. The front stairwell will be used to go upstairs, and the upstairs hallway traffic will flow in one direction from the front of the building to the back. The stairwell at the MLK end of the building (by the English classrooms) will be downstairs only. The Atrium stairs will be two directional, with students staying alongside the right railing going up and coming down. Students will enter the back door in the mornings (unless late to school in which case they must enter through the front door on Limestone St.) For dismissal, we will use both the front and back doors as described in the arrival/dismissal section.
- 4). **Masks:** Masks are required and must be worn at all times while in any building on campus. Students are expected to bring their own masks. If a student arrives at school without a mask, one will be provided. However, it is the expectation that students will come with a suitable mask or cloth face covering. **A "gaiter" or bandana is not sufficient protection.**

Some further notes about masks:

- a). Masks worn to school must be free of words or logos. They can be of any color or pattern.
- b). While cloth face coverings are recommended (as medical masks are intended for health care workers), medical masks may also be worn. Students should not wear masks with breathing filters in them because they emit the student's breath into the air which is counterproductive to our goal.
- c). Cloth masks should be properly placed on and off the face away from other students, and should be laundered daily. *Masks must be worn covering both the nose and the mouth.*
- d). Wearing a mask is important for the health and safety of our faculty, staff, and students. It is also crucial for our ability to remain in school for an extended time. We will support each other in a positive way as we engage in this

public health practice together. We will also urge and encourage each other in positive ways to wear masks properly.

e). Face shields are permitted, but they do not take the place of a mask and may only be worn in addition to, not in lieu of, a mask.

f). All adults in the building will wear a cloth mask at all times unless they are alone in a room. Adults may also wear face shields in addition to the mask as desired.

g). One suggestion: purchase several masks so that students can find the ones that fit best and are most comfortable. One that is comfortable for a few minutes may not be comfortable for a full day at school. Plan ahead and try out multiple designs and types.

5). **Upper School Arrival/Dismissal Plan:**

Upper School Arrival Plan:

- Students may enter the Upper School no earlier than 7:45 am. No student may enter the building prior to this time. They may only enter through the rear door (closest to the parking lot on MLK) and they must have a temperature check and a temperature reading of no higher than 100.4 before entering the building.
- Students who are dropped off by parents/guardians will have their temperature screened before leaving their car. Students will crack their window allowing a teacher to scan their forehead with a digital thermometer before being allowed to enter the school. Students having a temperature reading equal to or higher than 100.4 will not be permitted at school.
- Students who drive themselves or ride with siblings or classmates will be screened at the back door before entering the Upper School. All students arriving between 7:45 and the end of E period/FLEX (8:45 on M/F and 9:05 on T/W/Th) will attend an assigned proctored study hall through the end of E period.
- All students must arrive before the end of the study hall period to have their temperature screened. On Monday and Friday, this is no later than 8:45 and on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, no later than 9:05.
- Students who arrive after the designated times either due to tardiness or scheduled appointments must enter through the front door on Limestone Street and go directly to Ms. Haden's office to have their temperature screened by Ms. Haden before they will be permitted to attend class.

Upper School Dismissal Plan:

- At the conclusion of the school day, students will be dismissed in stages to reduce congestion in the hallways, locker areas, sidewalks and parking lots.
- Students with classes on the first floor will exit through the front doors (closest to Limestone); students with last period classes on the second floor will exit using the MLK door. Students on the lower level will exit the door on that level at the front of the building.
- The first students dismissed will be students who drive themselves to school and the students who ride with them (siblings, friends, neighbors) and also the students who walk to school.
- The second set of students dismissed will be those participating in athletic practices at the gym or complex, or those participating in other extracurricular events elsewhere on the campus.
- The remaining students dismissed will be those being picked up in the carpool line. Parents and guardians picking up their children in the carpool line will have a placard with the students' names on them. Students will be called from their classrooms as cars arrive. Students waiting on rides will not be permitted to congregate in the building.
- All students should be picked up no later than 4:00 pm.

Other notes about temperature checks:

- Faculty will wear plastic goggles or a facemask, and a cloth face covering while taking temperatures. Please do not engage in conversation, and have your mask on before getting your temperature taken.
- After students have their temperature checked we will ask them to put on a plastic wristband signifying they have had a temperature check and they will sanitize their hands before touching the entrance door.
- If a student has a temperature of 100.4, we will report that number and ask you to take the child (and any siblings) home or to the doctor.
- At the back door entrance, there will be social distancing markers so students will know where to line up as they wait their turn to be temp checked.

6). **Duty:** Teachers will be on duty for morning drop-off, lunch and pick-up.

7). **Lockers:** Students will have lockers assigned for extra books, supplies and outerwear, but use of the locker pods will be limited as students maintain an appropriate six foot spacing. Students should plan on using their backpacks to carry books for several classes in a row.

8). **Vending Machine, Water Fountains, and Buttery snacks:** The vending machine will not be in service for the start of the year. However, the Buttery will serve breakfast foods for students as usual. In addition, this year students will be able to pay cash or use a credit/debit card for snack food. Yellow tickets will be phased out this year. Water fountains will be closed to use, but the water bottle stations (one on each floor) will be available. So students should plan to bring a water bottle, with a straw, to school each day. (Straws allow students to drink without removing their masks.)

9). **Health:** Any student who has a fever or other contagious symptoms will be removed from the classroom immediately and kept in a safe and isolated area. We request that parents come as quickly as possible when we call.

All faculty and staff will be required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test given after July 22. We encourage families to have regular COVID-19 testing in order to keep school open as long as possible and prevent the spread of the disease. Practicing social distancing and wearing masks in the community will also help maintain a healthy school.

10). **Visitors:** We are required to limit visitors to the building. Parents should call the US office at (859) 389-7390 to arrange to pick up a child if necessary during the school day. Robin Haden will locate your child and have her/him ready to go at the designated time.

Adults in the buildings will be limited to teachers, staff and administrators, maintenance and cleaning crew, substitute teachers, and the school nurse. Parents will, of course, be admitted in case of necessity. Please understand that, though we love having a close rapport with parents and consider it an integral part of our partnership, we will not be able to have parents or other non-essential visitors in our buildings. Teachers and administrators are eager to maintain a strong partnership with families, so we encourage you to schedule a phone call or Google Meet as needed.

11). **Hygiene and public health:** Our building will include signage to help educate our students about preventing the spread of disease. We will encourage regular hand washing. Touch-free hand sanitizing stations will be placed throughout the building.

12). **Regular preventive health and vaccinations:** **Please note: state guidelines for school vaccinations are still in place. Remember to contact your pediatrician in case you missed any updates during lockdown. The health department requires an updated immunization form for school.

13). **Cleaning:** Our cleaning crew has added more daytime hours and has been furnished with new equipment for sanitizing and disinfecting. Enhanced procedures are in place. We have removed the upholstered furniture in the atrium and replaced them with round tables with plexiglass dividers for student use during study halls. We will clean and sanitize bathrooms and high touch surfaces throughout the day. Classroom desks and chairs will be sanitized during the school day by teachers, and the cleaning crew will do a thorough cleaning of surfaces every evening.

14). **Lunch/Buttery:** Lunch will be served in the Buttery in two shifts with grade levels 9, 10 and 11 rotating through. Two groups will have lunch in the Buttery, and the third group will have grab and go options to choose. Those students in this group will either eat outside in nice weather, or will social distance in labeled spots in the Upper School, including the Atrium, the conference rooms, and the front seating areas. The Buttery tables have been outfitted with Plexiglas, and cleaning and disinfecting will take place before and after each lunch period. Students will be assigned seats to help with contact tracing if necessary. The Buttery layout has been altered to reduce contact (there is no more buffet style, of course) and a new menu has been planned.

Juniors typically have one out to lunch period per week, and this year we are going to start off the year with two out to lunch days (which days to be decided.)

Seniors have off campus privileges and will not have to remain on campus for lunch. If they do, we will fit those students who stay for lunch into the rotation on a daily basis.

For lunch, students are to enter via the basement door and wait in line using the social distancing dots (standing six feet apart). Faculty on duty will help students line up properly and go to seats correctly. At the end of lunch, students will be dismissed individually to place trays in the tray window and exit from the top doors.

15). **Bathrooms:** Bathrooms will be single occupancy this year and signs will be used to designate when a bathroom is in use. We have 2 bathrooms on each floor, 6 in total, and there are also bathrooms in the library, the Buttery and the gym for students to use.

16). **Class trips/Field trips and extracurricular activities:** Class trips for this year have been canceled. For the foreseeable future, field trips are also canceled. However, we will continue to use our downtown location and our outdoor spaces for creative learning.

17). **Ventilation:** Steve Guynn and the maintenance team have set the US HVAC system to run for a longer time and to increase air quality. They are continuing to look at ways to increase air quality and air flow in our building.

18). **Microphones:** Teaching with a mask is difficult on a teacher's voice, so we are adding microphones for teaching faculty. These will be a terrific upgrade to our classroom practices and helpful for all students, especially students and adults with hearing loss.