

Dear Parents,

Each time I communicate with our Oak Hill Academy family, the country is getting closer to having some sort of resolution to the COVID-19 crisis. I feel that our teachers, students, parents and administrators have all banded together to make the best out of an unprecedented situation. I must send our good wishes and heartfelt thank you's to the number of parents who are doctors, nurses, pharmacists, healthcare workers and first responders. You are putting your lives on the line for all of us. Of course, thank you to the rest of you for doing your part by staying home and staying safe.

At Oak Hill we remain committed to providing the best education for the remainder of the school year and for next year. Safety is a top priority and concern. Unlike many of our neighboring schools, we are fortunate to have small class sizes and many buildings. If needed, we would be able to conduct classes with social distancing in mind. We can adapt quickly and make accommodations to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. The administration is working on variations of a comprehensive operational plan that will be aligned with the health official's guidance for our eventual re-opening. Below you will see possible procedures under consideration.

As an independent school, we rely on tuition from our families and fundraising activities from our entire OHA community. Despite the current situation, this year is no different. Even during this crisis, these funds continue to support the faculty and staff who work every day to provide a quality education to your children. Unfortunately our fundraising activities had to be curtailed due to the COVID-19 crisis. These activities help provide some of the funds that contribute to the mission of our school.

Oak Hill is in contact with various independent and local schools to share information and help each other. Our administrators are involved in many webinars and videoconferencing meetings concerning trying to maintain a level of normalcy in a suddenly different world. For example, tours and entrance tests are now being conducted virtually and through videoconferencing. Supporting our current families and welcoming new enrollment is vitally important even during challenging times.

We understand that this is a difficult time emotionally and financially for all of our community. In an effort to support our families, we have instructed Smart Tuition to waive all May late fees for the 2020-21 school year. In addition, Oak Hill Academy will work with any family who endures financial hardship on a case-by-case basis. Please reach out to our Business Manager, Mrs. Gina Misson, at [gmission@oakhillacadmy.com](mailto:gmission@oakhillacadmy.com) if you like to change your payment plan for next year or would like to discuss your financial situation. With families possibly facing difficult and uncertain financial situations, we are anticipating a greater need for Tuition Assistance to help them get through this crisis. Since Oak Hill funds its own Tuition Assistance program, we are trying to assist families to maintain their child's enrollment at OHA.

Due to the unprecedented circumstances this year, Oak Hill Academy will be demonstrating its commitment to all of our families by paying the premium for every student for the 2020-21 school

year for the Tuition Refund Plan to Dewar Insurance (normally this fee is billed to the parents in August).

Based on the guidance of the governor, we may not be physically able to return to school through June. Under those circumstances, the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have their graduation delayed until a date in August. Due to the fact that Broadway is closed, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Broadway trip has been cancelled. We are working closely with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation committee on plans to celebrate all the accomplishments of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade class.

We are developing contingency plans to be able to re-open in the fall, once allowed. Our priority is to have a safe and healthy environment for our staff and students that will adhere to CDC and state health official guidelines. Our goal is to use our advantage as a small school to keep our children, staff and entire community as safe as possible. It is our hope to confer with a number of our medical parent professionals to research and develop a plan far in advance of implementation.

The plans listed below are all tentative and are subject to revision.

### Return to School Protocol

Personal safety of students and staff is the number one priority, and all decisions are based on the latest health advisories.

Possible procedures:

- Students and staff may have to wear masks brought from home. Extras will be available in nurse's office (pending CDC and state guidelines)
- Daily check for temperature upon arrival and lining up prior to entering school. Those administering will wear protective gear and clothing (pending CDC and state guidelines)
- Possible COVID-19 testing for all students and staff
- Any student or staff member with designated temperature over designated normal will be isolated and will be required to go home
- Students to use personal water bottles. Filling stations will be available. All water fountains will be closed down.
- Only one student at a time will be allowed in the restrooms
- All classes will have tables and desks spaced as recommended for social distancing.
- In the Upper School, change of class will use a rotational plan to ensure social distancing to avoid crowded hallways. Students will remain spaced according to guidelines
- Teacher and staff members will be utilized to cover divided classes
- Physical Education classes will only use movement activities and will not use common balls, equipment, etc. Classes will be held outside as much as possible.
- Collaboration will occur by teachers using social distancing in small groups or by using devices and apps; Upper School will have personal 1:1 Chromebooks therefore avoiding any sharing. Lower School shared devices will be monitored and cleaned.

- Remote learning will be available for students who are ill or quarantined or whose parents are ill or quarantined.
- In the event a student or staff shows signs of a fever, the student/staff is to be taken to an observation room while the rest of the class is organized and led into a spare isolation room while the classroom is disinfected
- All students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizers before lunch and after certain activities
- We will have a crisis management plan in place for when someone in our community tests positive for the coronavirus
- All equipment will be wiped down daily
- An educational plan will be developed for students toggling between receiving instruction at school and remote learning
- We will continue to explore technology options to enhance both in school and at-home learning
- We will continue to provide professional development for teachers
- Upon re-opening, we will use formative assessment to measure student level of understanding
- We will have the OHA Remote Learning Plan ready to re-enact
- We will adhere to: Sick, stay home; Sick, go home
- Buildings will be professionally cleaned nightly according to recommended guidelines
- We will have additional daily cleaning of commonly used surfaces (door handles, sinks, faucets, etc.)
- Four additional hand washing stations have already been installed – 2 in Upper School, 2 in Lower School, giving us a total of 6 sinks in both Upper and Lower School plus sinks already in library, gym, cafeteria, nurse's office, Scire Center, Soler Center, Tech Center and Center for Early Learning.
- Social distancing will be maximized by utilizing all available space (cafeteria, gym, tech center, empty classrooms, Scire Center, Soler Center, library)
- All hand sanitizer units will be filled and functional
- No visitors, except for necessary health officials and first responders, allowed in school buildings
- Parents will not be permitted to enter buildings
- Nurse's room will be sanitized constantly
- Enhanced instruction for students on good hygiene procedures will be taught:
  - Wash hands often (20 second rule)
  - Sneeze in elbow
  - Do not touch face, nose, or mouth
  - Dispose of tissues immediately
  - Feel sick; go to nurse
  - Practice social distancing
- An explanation of the final plan will be shared with students and parents prior to implementation

- A dry run of this plan will be done with staff acting as students

We are grateful for everyone's patience and understanding as we continue to help each other more than ever before. Rest assured that any and all decisions will be made with the safety of our students, staff and Oak Hill community in mind.

Be safe. Be well. Be Oak Hill strong.

Very truly yours,

**Joseph A. Pacelli**

Headmaster, *Oak Hill Academy*

PS – I would welcome assistance from any members of our Oak Hill family that have professional knowledge, experience or access to any measures that would assist our Return to School Protocol.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY this week to:

4/29 Noah Henderson 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

4/30 Aanya Patel 5<sup>th</sup> grade

5/1 Evelyn Seetoo 7<sup>th</sup> grade

5/1 Nico Fabricant 8<sup>th</sup> grade

5/2 Declan Peduto 6<sup>th</sup> grade