

Possible Protocol for Returning to School in September

To our Oak Hill Families,

We wanted to share with you some of our plans for September. We have been through a lot together and have managed to maintain the heart of Oak Hill Academy, even in an unprecedented situation.

The following ideas are under consideration, but be assured, no matter how the school looks in September, Oak Hill will remain a special environment that we all know and love.

POSSIBLE PROTOCOL FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER

It is important to note that these plans are working models that can be refined and finalized when we are given concrete guidelines from the CDC and requirements from the Governor's office and state.

Important Highlights:

- **We are anticipating and planning for full school days each and every day for all of our students on campus simultaneously.**
- **All classes will have tables and desks spaced as recommended for social distancing.**
- **The school will offer a remote learning option for parents who would be more comfortable with the availability of online instruction. This would include the administration of the OHA curriculum using Google classroom, access to instructional videos, ability to attend some classes remotely in real time using live feed technology, and connection with teachers through video conference. Of course, the execution of this plan will vary depending on the grade level.**

Each spring we start planning for the next school year that will begin in September. This year has been quite unusual, as we were required to move to a remote learning plan in mid-March. This almost instantaneous change was quickly adopted and refined as time moved on. Although the circumstances were different, the learning process continued. As I have said before, I must commend our students, teachers, and parents for their outstanding work during this uncertain time. Our teachers report that our children advanced their overall knowledge, as well as took ownership of their own learning.

Some of the lessons learned over this time are as follows:

1. Technology will be a continued positive force in the learning process.
2. Each of the tools of online learning must be a part of the implementation process. The uniformity and continuity amongst teachers are preferred when possible.
3. Reading should be at the top of the list for all grade levels.
4. Using creativity doesn't stop when remote learning begins.
5. Teacher instructions must be given to be clearly understood.
6. The possible stress level on all fronts must be considered by both parents and teachers. Children need time to simply relax.
7. Social interaction must be maintained as much as possible. Children need to know that their teachers and friends are there for them and care for them.
8. Assessment must take many forms. The objective is to determine what is understood and how we can build for further learning.
9. Students need feedback in remote learning the same as in the live classroom.

10. Teachers should utilize video conference sessions for individual contact as well as group work. Breakout sessions are also desirable for small group discussion.
11. Research and hands on projects that tie into a deeper understanding enhance all subject areas.

Those, and I am sure others, will help us as we plan for 2020-2021.

Below, we would like to share our tentative plans for next school year. We will divide our plan into two categories, (1) Learning and Instruction and (2) Health and Safety.

Learning and Instruction

Our Learning and Instruction plan has been built with a great deal of flexibility allowing for both in school and remote scenarios. We have a great advantage as a small school when it comes to teacher to student ratio, as well as the ability to spread out to make allowances for social distancing guidelines (again, to be determined by the state and CDC.)

Our Lower School will continue with the same curriculum as in previous years using a blended learning environment. Our children will be active learners as they use technology and hands-on activities to enrich their thinking skills. Engaging the student in deep thinking, reading, and math-reasoning skills will be the central goals. All of our "special" subjects will help our children to be well rounded in their scope of development. Research shows that these subject areas not only expand creativity but also support the basic skills.

Our Upper School students will enter a somewhat different school day than before. Our curriculum that has been constantly enhanced over the last 40 years will continue to engage and challenge them to strive for their personal best. In order to reduce student movement around campus, we will be using a six period day on a six-day cycle.

All teachers will take professional development training over the summer to enhance their technology and blended learning skills. OHA teachers who have become experts in an area will share their knowledge with others. This will help create a consistent educational plan.

Oak Hill Academy will be prepared whether school is mandated to be remote or in-person. An educational model will be in place for students toggling between receiving instruction at school and remote learning. If the school grounds should have to be closed, we will have the OHA Remote Learning Plan ready to enact.

In the event there is remote learning, extra help will be made available to connect student and teacher. Students who receive educational services will have a schedule to keep these plans going. Upper School Lit Plus will be available remotely. After school clubs will be offered even in remote learning, but with some modifications.

With remote or live instruction, the "Tuesday Talks," which is a small group teacher led discussion, will continue to provide a forum for the social and emotional well-being of our students. It will include strategies for coping, creating a code of respect, celebrating of diversity, etc. The Lower School will use the Responsive Classroom to achieve similar goals.

Health and Safety Plan

Our Health and Safety Plan will continually evolve over the summer as we learn more about state and CDC guidelines. In order to be proactive, we are making a series of plans available for possible implementation.

Some of the features may include the following:

I. Monitoring for Covid19

- A. The school will adhere to 'Sick, stay home; sick, go home.'
- B. Prior to entering school, there will be a daily temperature check for staff and students. Those administering will wear protective gear and maintain a record (depending on CDC and state guidelines.)
- C. Any student or staff with a temperature over designated normal will be isolated and will be required to go home
- D. Absenteeism will be monitored to identify any trends in staff or child absences due to illness. The school nurse will maintain a log.
- E. Possible Covid19 testing for all students and staff (pending accessibility and recommendation of medical experts.)

II. What if there is a case of COVID19 at OHA?

1. In the event a student or staff member shows symptom(s), (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) the individual shall be taken to an isolation room while the rest of the class is organized and led into a spare room while the classroom is disinfected.
2. We will have a crisis management plan in place for when someone in our community tests positive for the coronavirus. The health department will provide our lead on best and necessary practices.
 1. Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any possible case of COVID19 while maintaining confidentiality.
 2. Identify area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms (isolation room).
 3. Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home or to a healthcare facility.
 4. Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and to follow CDC guidelines if symptoms develop.
3. Create a communication system for staff and families for self-reporting of symptoms and notification of exposures and closures. Our school nurse will be responsible for responding to Covid19 concerns.

III. Social Distancing

1. All classes will have tables and desks spaced as recommended for social distancing.
2. In the Upper School, change of class will use a rotational plan with a one-way traffic pattern, to ensure social distancing to avoid crowded hallways. Students will remain spaced according to guidelines. For the time being, students will not be using lockers so that a safe distance can be maintained.
3. Stagger use of communal use spaces such as playgrounds and cafeteria (or have lunch in classrooms and other designated areas.) Routine cleaning must be performed between each new group's use.
4. Physical education classes will be held outside as much as possible. Emphasis will be placed on non-contact sports and games with no shared equipment.
5. Only one student at a time will be allowed in the restrooms.
6. Technology will help us collaborate in the classroom while still maintaining social distance.

7. Social Distancing will be maximized by using all available space (cafeteria, gym, tech center, empty classrooms, Scire Center, Soler Center, library.)
8. Keep children's belongings separated and in individually labeled pencil cases and bags. These can be brought to specials.
9. PreK and Kindergarten will use head-to-toe positioning for nap and rest time.
10. No off campus field trips.
11. For the time being, substitute virtual versions of large group assemblies or performances in lieu of large in-door gatherings.
12. Whenever possible, Lower School will minimize class movement to various other rooms. It might be better to have the teacher come to the class instead, especially for some specials.

IV. Hygiene

1. Avoid sharing of items.
2. Upper School will have 1:1 personal Chromebooks, therefore avoiding any sharing. Lower School shared devices will be monitored and cleaned. Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
3. **Pending CDC guidelines and state mandates**, students and staff may have to wear masks.
4. Students will use personal water bottles with their names on them. Filling stations will be available. All water fountains will be closed down.
5. All students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizers before and after lunch and other activities.
6. Starting on the first day of school, enhanced instruction for students on good hygiene procedures will be taught and demonstrated.
 1. Wash hands often
 2. Sneeze in elbow
 3. Do not touch face, nose, or mouth
 4. Dispose of tissues immediately
 5. Feel sick, go to nurse
 6. Practice social distancing
 7. Do not share items

V. Physical Plant and Other

1. Until receipt of notice and guidelines from the state, no visitors, except for necessary health officials and first responders, are allowed in school buildings during school hours.
2. Post signs on how to stop the spread of Covid19.
3. Four hand washing station have been installed with two in the Upper School and two in the Lower School. This gives us six sinks in both Upper and Lower Schools plus sinks already in the Arts building, gym, cafeteria, Scire Center, Soler Science Center, Tech Center, and Center for Early Learning.
4. All hand sanitizer units will be filled and functional.
5. Desktops will be disinfected between classroom rotations: constant cleaning of surfaces using ultra violet light wands and/or disinfectants and/or cordless electrostatic sprayers (ionization machines).
6. Nurse's office will be sanitized constantly.
7. We will have continuous daily cleaning of commonly used surfaces (door handles, sinks, faucets, etc.)

8. Rooms and equipment will be professionally cleaned nightly according to recommended guidelines.
9. Upper School classrooms will have new slider windows installed to provide increased ventilation and AC units in both Upper and Lower Schools will use the fan option to increase air circulation.

We all realize that the current situation is complex and is weighed down with plenty of uncertainty. However, we will all prepare the best we can to ensure the health and safety of our entire community. A dry run of this plan will be done with staff acting as students. An explanation of the final plan will be shared with students and parents prior to implementation. School might look a little different this fall, but it will still maintain the essence of OHA. We are confident that our children will be in an environment which continues to enrich their lives socially and academically, while permitting them to feel safe, wanted, and cared for.

Please enjoy your summer, relax, and stay healthy. We will keep you updated as plans become more stable.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Pacelli

Headmaster, *Oak Hill Academy*