



Re-Entry Plan for September 2020

The Process

Academy Hill established a re-entry task force executive committee, comprised of the chairs of three subcommittees (health, logistics, technology) and the Head of School, which worked collaboratively with all staff to develop a re-entry strategy that allows for flexibility and transparency, and prioritizes the health and safety of our community. The executive committee will also benefit from the consultation and advice of parents currently serving the greater community as healthcare professionals.

AHS has begun to prepare the physical campus to support students in the fall of 2020. The executive committee is developing a three prong approach to re-entry options for our families.

Task Force Executive Committee:

Head of School: Melissa Earls

Health Chair: Kelli Brodhagen

Logistics Chair: Danielle Mazur

Technology Chair: Christopher Zaluga

Health Advisory Committee:

Kelly Binnall

Christopher Dow

Priya Malik

Anupama Thambi

Massachusetts has lifted
the school closure
mandate.

YES

Academy Hill's re-entry task force
committee which includes medical
professionals and subcommittee chairs,
determines AHS is able to execute the
physical campus modifications needed
to support students safely returning to
campus in the fall of 2020.

YES

Students are able to return to in-
person instruction without health
prohibitions AND applicable faculty
member(s) are able to return to
physical campus.

NO

NO

NO

YES

VIRTUAL LEARNING

AHS administration will create and AHS faculty will facilitate a robust schedule of online classes, featuring live instruction for all students. Students will progress through the scope and sequence of the advanced AHS curriculum, which will include modern and classical languages. Specials will be added to the schedule at least 1x/week for all grade levels.

LEARN AT HOME (for students)

Your child(ren) will continue to access Academy Hill's teaching and learning with modifications to ensure that students are receiving a well-balanced and academically fulfilling experience. This option may include recorded lessons and online interactions. The learn at home option is activated after 5 consecutive days of COVID-related absence.

TEACH FROM HOME (for teachers)

Your child(ren) will continue to access Academy Hill's teaching and learning as their teacher instructs from home with the assistance of educational technology, and an adult monitors the class onsite and offers personal assistance as necessary.

ON-CAMPUS LEARNING

Your child(ren) will begin the 20-21 year on campus with the expectation that specific health and safety protocols will be required. In the event that authorities close schools, your child(ren) will be expected to transition to virtual learning.

New Massachusetts Travel Restrictions Take Effect on August 1: Plan Accordingly

- Governor Baker announced new, stricter travel restrictions for Massachusetts. Anyone coming to Massachusetts from a restricted state must complete a "Massachusetts Travel Form" (found online) upon arrival in Massachusetts, and must quarantine for 14 days or face potential fines of \$500/day. To avoid quarantine, travelers may produce a negative coronavirus test administered no more than 72 hours prior to arriving in Massachusetts. For a list of currently restricted states, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order#lower-risk-states>
- As a reminder, Academy Hill is scheduled to welcome students back on Tuesday, September 8. **Please make your travel plans accordingly if you intend to be with us on the first day of school.** Students will not be permitted to start remotely as a result of quarantine due to out-of-state travel immediately prior to opening.
- Just prior to the start of school, families were urged to reconsider participation in extracurricular activities. It was important to us to determine the efficacy of our safety protocols and new routines. I continue to urge you to refrain from all the nonessential extracurricular activities and large group gatherings while we attempt a safe reentry. I understand that several students might be participating in athletic tournaments or performance arts festivals across state lines that involve participants from multiple states. One of the conditions for reopening is a strict fidelity to contact tracing. These multi-state activities make it difficult to adhere to contact tracing requirements. Additionally, we cannot vouch for the safe practices of so many participants. Our current families are entrusting their students to our care and vigilance. **To that end, any student participating in an event that includes participants from multiple states is required to quarantine for a minimum of five days, and then produce a negative test, or, alternatively, to quarantine for a period of 14 days.** Because these extracurricular activities are voluntary, we are not offering a simultaneous remote and live instructional option for students to whom this requirement applies.

On-Campus Learning

Academy Hill is preparing for on campus school operations to resume in the fall of 2020. The community will follow specific health precautions which will be in accordance with our local, state, and federal requirements. Specific decisions and plans regarding on campus modifications are expected to be fluid as the state progresses through new phases of re-opening and the Center for Disease Control adjusts its recommendations, however current considerations include prescribed physical distancing of 6 feet, the use of masks for all adults and students grades 1 – 8 (strongly recommended for all students), new arrival procedure and slightly staggered dismissal times, new lunch and recess protocol, no shared materials, and other health and safety requirements. Staff will be demonstrating new protocol with students during the first days back to school.

Masks should be worn at all times when staff and students are in the building, unless students are eating or drinking. This applies to all adults and students in grades 2 - 8, but we strongly recommend all students to comply. Mask breaks may be taken outside when students are at least 6 feet apart, but should be limited to under 15 minutes, unless students are at least 10 feet apart.

Details of new arrival/dismissal procedure:

Students will head directly to homerooms when they arrive between 8:00a and 8:20a. Unfortunately, we will no longer be able to use our middle school students to assist our younger children as they exit cars and enter the school building.

Dismissal will occur from homerooms on a slightly staggered schedule, with the assistance of our public address system. We will station administrators and non-homeroom teachers to call cars to Ms. Kelli, who will use the PA system to call names. Arrival and dismissal will make use of the three front external doors. Grades 5 - 8 will use the middle school door, grade 1 will use the main door, and Early Learners - grade 4 will use the door by the Early Learner room. Other non-homeroom staff will also be stationed outside, although we cannot open car doors or assist students as they enter cars.

The slightly adjusted dismissal schedule:

Early Learners and Kindergarten begin dismissal at 3:00.

Grades 1 – 4 begin dismissal at 3:15.

Grades 5 - 8 begin dismissal at 3:30.

Siblings may be dismissed with the youngest child.

On-Campus Learning, continued

In addition to the outdoor classroom currently available, we have created additional outdoor learning spaces and purchased a tent for one of these spaces. Four distinct, marked spaces will be available to all teachers through an assigned schedule system. Students will provide their own seating during outdoor class periods. Outdoor class and recess time will provide students with opportunities for mask breaks, as long as students are supervised and a distance of at least 6 feet is maintained.

While inside the school building, staff will keep classroom windows open to assist with ventilation. Students should dress accordingly, wearing light clothes on warm days and layers on cooler days. Open air ventilation is preferred to air conditioning, as this arrangement serves to dilute any viruses that may exist in the building.

Extended day programming will be offered for students. While we offered before and after school care as a drop-in service in the past, this year all extended day will be available only as a pre-registration, pre-paid option to be arranged on a month-to-month schedule.

While we understand that families rely on carpools to arrive at school on time or to get home after classes, please consider using carpools only if absolutely necessary for the first four weeks of school. If you must carpool, students who reside in different houses should wear masks while riding in the same car.

We also ask that families strongly consider eliminating extracurricular activities for the first month of school, as we work to keep the virus from entering the building. We hope to remain open for in person teaching and learning until the Thanksgiving break. If a child participates in an extracurricular activity, protocols around direct contact, quarantine periods, and contact tracing will extend beyond the school walls.

Details of new lunch/recess protocols:

All students must bring their individual cold lunch and all utensils and lunch supplies. We are unable to share the refrigerator or microwaves in the Community Room at this time. Students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Note: Middle School students **only** will be able to use microwaves in classrooms. Parents, please make sure your children bring lunch and snacks that are easily opened and consumed. We are unable to assist students with opening packages and containers this year.

Students will enjoy at least two scheduled, staggered recess periods each day. Students will attend recess with one or two other grade levels. Whenever the weather permits (above 20 degrees Fahrenheit and no rain), students will be outside for recess and physical education.

Purchases:

We have made purchases as a community to assist us as we prepare to open safely. We will install additional screens in classrooms to allow for natural air flow while keeping out insects. We have also purchased Medify MA-40BV2.0 Medical Grade Filtration Systems for teaching and learning areas.

Other installations and purchases include a sneeze guard at the main desk area; new sanitizer dispensers; additional materials and equipment for indoor and outdoor sanitization; additional educational technology, etc.

Preparing for Interruptions

Following the recommendations from local, state and regional organizations, and trends from past pandemics, Academy Hill is preparing for waves of interruption to on campus learning.

In the event our local community experiences a spike in COVID-19 cases or authorities re-issue school closure or “stay-at-home” mandates and an interruption of physical operations occurs, a shift to blended/virtual learning will occur immediately.

Blended Learning

Blended learning does not change our mission to provide an intellectual, nurturing, and enriching foundation in a welcoming environment for students at the elementary school and middle school levels. Academy Hill's blended learning model blends daily synchronous (live) instruction with asynchronous (accessible anytime) instruction with a schedule intentionally designed to provide access to the full scope of the curriculum to the extent possible.

The blended learning option may become necessary for students unable to return to our physical campus due to health concerns, including heightened risks of susceptibility for the student or immediate, same household family members related to COVID-19; or for staff unable to return to our physical campus if the faculty member or an immediate family member in the same household is in a high risk group related to COVID-19. The blended learning option is only available to students who are unable to return to campus as verified by a physician's order. Students must return to in-person instruction at the end of the quarantine period, upon clearance from a doctor. **The blended learning option will be exercised for students who miss 5 or more days of instruction due to issues related to COVID-19.**

If a faculty member is unable to perform instructional duties on campus, but is able to teach from home, students will attend classes on campus while the teacher instructs from a remote location, with the assistance of the appropriate technology. Students will be supervised and/or assisted by an adult in the classroom at all times. Faculty members teaching from home will have access to advanced remote technology. We are increasing our 1:1 availability and adding projector systems to facilitate the reception of instruction from remote locations.

Virtual Learning

Academy Hill transitioned to a virtual learning model with short notice and minimal preparation as of March 13, 2020. Throughout the spring, we attempted to improve this early, forced model of online instruction. The re-entry technology task force has explored additional enhancements to our current model, in consultation with our accreditation body (AISNE) and other independent schools throughout the region. Our teachers participated in related professional development this summer as we prepare for the possibility that we may pivot back to virtual learning at some point this year.

The virtual learning model planned for 20 – 21 will include a more robust schedule for PK-3, that is more closely align with the spring 2020 schedules for grades 4 – 8, but also one that is developmentally appropriate. The model will also include regular virtual interaction with specials and language (K-8) teachers for all students.

The delivery methods for blended/virtual learning will include Google Hangout/Meet and Zoom, but may include other programs as determined to be best practice by the re-entry technology task force in consultation with the re-entry executive committee. The student interface platforms will include Google Classroom (anticipated grades 3 – 8) and SeeSaw (anticipated grades PK – 2).

Please be advised that to proactively decrease the likelihood of the spread of the coronavirus within our community during the holiday season, Academy Hill School will engage in a period of remote, virtual learning to commence on Tuesday, November 24, 2020, at the conclusion of the regular school day. In person teaching and learning will resume on Monday, January 11, 2021. We have made this decision in recognition of travel plans related to the holidays, family homecomings, and the current required quarantine periods.

Sample Remote Learning Schedule and Notes

	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
8:30 – 9:10	History	History	MWF: Language T: Music Th: Art
9:15 – 9:55	Literacy	Literacy	Science
10:00 – 10:40	Science	Math	MWF: Latin T: PE
Break			
10:55 – 11:35	Math	MWF: Language T: Music Th: Art	Literacy
11:40 – 12:20	MWF: Language T: Music Th: Art	MWF: Latin T: PE	History
Lunch			
1:00 – 1:40	MWF: Latin T: PE	Science	Math
1:45 – 2:25	Forum/Capstone		
2:30 – 3:15	Open for extra help/Study period		

	PK/K	1	2	3/4	5
8:30 – 9:00	GMS (K only)	GMS	GMS	GMS	GMS
9:10 – 9:40	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy	MWF: Language T, Th: Classics/Latin
9:45 – 10:00	Break				
10:00 – 10:30	Math	Math	M: PE T: Music Th: Art F: Spanish	M: Art T: Classics W: Spanish Th: PE F: Music	Literacy
10:40 – 11:10	Social Studies/Science	Social Studies/Science	Social Studies/Science	Math	Math
11:15 – 11:45			Math	Science	History
11:50 – 12:30	Lunch/Break				
12:30 – 1:00	M: PE T: Music Th: Art F: Spanish (K only)	M: Art W: Spanish Th: PE F: Music		Social Studies	Science
1:00 – 3:00	Individual meetings, story times, etc. To be scheduled weekly				

Schedule notes: PK – 2: Schedules may be individualized or optimized for each class or grade. Guidance: Teachers will meet with individual students or very small groups during class time or individual meeting time, according to constructed and pre-published schedule. Teachers may meet with the whole class as warranted. Every child will have scheduled face time with his or her teacher every day. PK – 2 students should expect approximately 90 minutes of scheduled time each day (including, NOT in addition to specials), supplemented with related suggestions for additional work or experiences.

Example: Teacher meets with students 1, 2, 3, 4 for Literacy on M and W; Teacher meets with students 5, 6, 7, 8 for Literacy on T and Th. Teacher meets with whole class on Friday. Teacher meets with students 5, 6, 7, 8 for Math on M and W; Teacher meets with students 1, 2, 3, 4 on Th and F. Teacher meets with whole class on T.

Grades 3 – 5 should plan to meet with the whole class as scheduled, unless breakout sessions are warranted for a particular lesson.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus

While specific decisions and plans remain fluid as more information and updated public health guidelines are issued, current requirements and procedures include:

- ✓ Required 14-day quarantine for any staff member or student who has traveled outside of New England (except RI), New York, or New Jersey; (Please plan summer travel accordingly.)
- ✓ Home health checks and self-reporting each morning;
- ✓ Institution of capacity limits and student cohort assignments to allow for social distancing in spaces such as the Community Room and at recess;
- ✓ Use of 4 distinct outdoor learning spaces assigned according to specific class schedule;
- ✓ Signage and space markers throughout the building and at restrooms to allow for social distancing;
- ✓ Specifically assigned bathroom stalls and sinks to assist with accurate contact tracing;
- ✓ Modification of programs and events in compliance with limits on crowd sizes and social distancing measures;
- ✓ Revised sanitizing and cleaning protocol and installation of air purifiers in classrooms;
- ✓ Schedule daytime custodian to sanitize restrooms and high touch surfaces;
- ✓ Use of masks during classes and in public gathering spaces (required for all staff and students 1-8 and strongly suggested for students PK and K);
- ✓ Changes to campus access for visitors and parents;
- ✓ Slight modifications to arrival and dismissal process;
- ✓ Updated sick child/staff policy and return to school requirements;
- ✓ Continued use of online and virtual platforms in conjunction with in-person services (a blended approach) to keep in-person contact at safer levels in the areas of academic instruction, student activities, and more.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus: Individual Supplies

Each student must have the following supplies on hand for the start of the school year.

- ☐ Individual hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol);
- ☐ Face covering/mask* (students in grade 1 and above REQUIRED; students in PK and K strongly recommended), including one spare to be kept at school;
- ☐ Individual container of disinfectant wipes;
- ☐ ~58 quart “Sterilite” or “Rubbermaid” style container with lid, labeled;
- ☐ Individual seat/chair for use in outdoor classrooms;
- ☐ Individual classroom and art supplies in individual, labeled cases;
- ☐ Individual box of tissues;
- ☐ Individual water bottle (fountains may not be shared at this time);
- ☐ Individually-packed cold lunches with all necessary plates and utensils;
- ☐ Individual computer mice, earphones, etc. as applicable. Earphone/earbuds, etc. are required for grades 2 – 8.
- ☐ Individual sunscreen and bug spray (or come to school with it already applied).

*Note on face covering: Covering should fit securely over the nose and mouth, and stay on comfortably all day. Face shields are not recommended, and therefore not allowed without the use of a mask, as well.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus: Screening and testing

- **Academy Hill will adhere to current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recommendations for schools as applicable to AHS.** Please note that these guidelines are fluid and are updated frequently. The guidelines and protocol included in the remaining section have been released by DESE and are publicly available on the DESE website.
- While there will be no temperature check or screening upon arrival, we ask that families self-screen at home before coming to school, and report results via the Snowman portal. Reminder: Any one with a fever of **100.0** or higher must stay home. If you suspect your child's low grade fever is an indication of oncoming illness, that child should also stay home.
- Parents should plan ahead for instances of illness and absence from school.
- Students and staff must be fever-free without the aid of a fever reducer for **72 hours** before coming to school. If a child becomes sick with a fever or any COVID-related symptoms while at school, the child must be picked up as soon as possible (preferably within 30 minutes of a phone call home). We have prepared a required isolation room at school. Parents of children sent home with a fever or COVID-related symptoms or concerns will be asked to drive to the rear parking lot of the building and come to the marked science lab door to pick up sick children. **Children or staff with fevers or COVID symptoms will be required to consult with their family physician before returning to school.**
- **Any child or staff member who has knowingly come into direct contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID or is presumed positive may not return to school for a period of 14 days, regardless of test results. Direct contact is defined by the CDC as exposure at less than 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes.**
- Self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases is a minimum of 14 days. Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 14 days. People who test positive can resume public activities after 14 days and once they have:
 - a. gone for 3 days without a fever (and without taking fever-reducing medications like Tylenol); and
 - b. experienced improvement in other symptoms (for example, their cough has gotten much better); and
 - c. received clearance from public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative).
 - Repeat testing prior to return is not recommended. Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus: Screening and testing

Policy of when a student/staff person may return to school after COVID-19 symptoms (absence of positive test)

If a student or staff member has COVID-19-like symptoms, they may return to school after they have tested negative for COVID-19, have improvement in symptoms, and have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. If a provider makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19-like symptoms, the individual may return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (e.g., influenza or strep pharyngitis).

If a student or staff member presents COVID-19-like symptoms and chooses not to be tested, they may return to school 10 days from start of symptoms, as long as their symptoms have improved and they have been without fever for at least 24 hours prior to their return to school without the use of fever reducing medication.

Definition of COVID-19 related fever

Over the summer, the threshold for a COVID-19 related fever by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been updated from greater than 100.4°F to greater than 100.0°F. As a result, going forward, a fever as a COVID-19 symptom will be defined as 100.0°F or higher.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus: Screening and testing

Immunizations required in all models of learning

Previously released guidance emphasized the importance of maintaining school immunization requirements and obtaining the flu vaccine as students return to in-person school. This is equally important for students who are enrolled in remote or hybrid schooling models. Immunization requirements must be met in all models of learning. Immunization requirements now include the seasonal flu vaccine.

Please note that medical and religious exemptions are still permitted, but must be certified in writing.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus: Symptoms

Most common symptoms of COVID-19

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to STAY HOME. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves. **If a student or staff presents with these symptoms, they must consult with a healthcare professional before returning to school.**

- ☐ Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- ☐ Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- ☐ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ☐ New loss of taste or smell
- ☐ Sore throat
- ☐ Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- ☐ Muscle aches or body aches
- ☐ Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- ☐ Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- ☐ Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus:

Direct contact and notification

- In the event of a positive test within our community, Academy Hill will notify all families of the positive case.
- If a member of the community is home/goes home with COVID symptoms and is presumed positive, but chooses to quarantine for 14 days rather than test, Academy Hill will notify all families of the presumed positive case.
- All direct contacts of a positive or presumed positive case must be tested or quarantine for 14 days prior to returning to school.
- If a student tests for COVID, results must be presented before a student is allowed to return to school.
- Please consult with your family physician or see [THIS LINK](#) for information about testing and test sites.

Health and Safety at the AHS Campus:

Tracking transmissions and potential school closure

- If there is more than one confirmed COVID-19 case (students or staff) in the school at one time, or if there is a series of single cases in a short time span, school leaders will work with the local board of health to determine if it is likely that there is transmission happening in school.
- When there is one isolated case, the staff or student's close contacts will need to stay home and be tested, not the whole school.
- When there is suspected in-school transmission *beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts*, school will consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, *for example*, making a decision to a) close part of the school or the entire school for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) close the school partially or fully for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.
- Massachusetts is tracking its overall statewide reopening in phases according to the Reopening Massachusetts plan. Currently, Massachusetts is in Phase 3 of reopening, where additional businesses can resume operations with specific guidance.
- If Massachusetts or the city of Springfield move back into a prior phase, DESE (in consultation with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center) will communicate with school districts and independent schools to determine whether in-person school should continue.