



Charleston Day School

Est. 1937



2020-2021 RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

Updated: July 24, 2020

“It is important for all of us to remember we are part of a community —
a community that takes care of one another.”



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Dear Charleston Day School Families,

I hope all of you have found a little bit of time to relax and recharge. Everyone deserves that and so much more. Over the course of the summer, the COVID Task Force has been working tirelessly and in consultation with health organizations such as the CDC, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Concerns (DHEC), as well as state and local officials to develop a safe, comprehensive plan for our return to campus. We continue to focus on two major areas in our planning: the health and safety of our community and the educational experience of our students. Please review our newly created Return to School Plan for more information about our specific plans and other details regarding the upcoming school year. Please note that we will continue to update this document in the coming weeks as new or modified information is available.

In planning for the re-opening of the school in August, we have created three working plans. In addition, should we return to on-campus learning, we have added an Alternative Learning Plan (ALP) option for those families who feel that their student is at risk or are uncomfortable returning to campus. As always, the health and safety of our students and faculty are paramount, and we will continue to be guided by the school's mission: to foster scholarship, integrity, respect and responsibility in our students.

At this point, we are continuing to focus on returning to campus in August; however, the plan that will be executed for our school opening will be dependent on the guidance of national, state and local authorities and the current state of the pandemic in South Carolina in early August. We know that the success of any of these plans will depend upon the support and cooperation of our entire school community, so I am grateful for your trust and partnership. I look forward to “seeing” everyone soon.

Warmly,
Judith

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Judith'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Learning Plans

Following are the basics of the current working plans. Please understand that this situation and our plans are fluid. There will likely be changes and refinements in the coming weeks, and we will make you aware of those changes as they occur. In all cases, increased sanitation and campus readiness plans will be in place.

PLAN A

On Campus Learning

- Students will be 6 feet apart and organized in small groups (cohorts) by homerooms.
- Students will remain in their cohort classrooms throughout the day.
- Teachers will travel to the students.
- Students will be provided individual materials (no shared supplies).
- Extra outdoor time is being built into all students' schedule.
- Students will be required to have face masks.
- Lunch will be delivered to and eaten in their cohort classroom.
- Some high-risk students may utilize the Alternate Learning Plan (ALP).

PLAN B

Modified Remote Learning

- Portions of the campus or individual classrooms move into Modified Remote Learning as a result of a confirmed case of the virus within the school.
- Impacted classrooms will be deep cleaned and sanitized.
- Modified Remote Learning will align more closely with the regular school schedule, allowing other unaffected areas of the school to continue to operate under Plan A.
- Students not impacted will continue to follow Plan A.

PLAN C

Full Remote Learning Campus Closed

- Campus is closed and all students would be taught via Remote Learning Plan.
- Enhancements to the Remote Learning Plan utilized in the spring of 2020 would be in place.
- All students would be provided with a school-provided iPad or laptop with appropriate applications such as Zoom preloaded on the device.
- The Remote Learning schedule for all students (K-8) is roughly 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM with some breaks and time for lunch.

PLANS AND PROCEDURES

Charleston Day School is closely monitoring information regarding the spread of COVID-19, and we are following the guidance and directives of our local health department, state and local governments, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Our board advisory team and our task force team are reviewing options and preparing for students to return to campus for the 2020-2021 academic year. We expect that health recommendations and guidelines will continue to evolve over the coming weeks, and we will monitor and make updates to the plans detailed below.

The foundational components of Charleston Day School will remain constant. We will continue to offer a strong academic program while maintaining connections and supporting our community. All of us will need to be flexible, but our mission and our values will not change. We look forward to being back together soon!

Building and Cleaning Modifications

Q: How will the school be disinfected and cleaned?

A: The school will be cleaned and disinfected daily by a professional cleaning crew. In addition, high touch services and areas will be cleaned throughout the day. Following are several additional improvements:

- The school has invested in [iWave Air Purifiers](#) for all of the HVAC units across the school. This technology will significantly impact the quality of the air in the school as a whole, as well as in each of the classrooms.
- Two six-sink outdoor hand washing stations have been constructed for outdoor play spaces.
- Dedicated on-site facilities personnel will be on campus daily to continually monitor and clean high touch surfaces and bathrooms.
- An evening cleaning crew will continue to clean daily.
- We have purchased a [Clorox 360 Machine](#) to further enhance our cleaning and sanitizing processes nightly.

Hand Hygiene, Face Coverings and Social Distancing

Q: How will playground use/recess be impacted by social distancing?

A: We have created revised recess schedules to provide increased time for outdoor play, while limiting the number of students on the playground. Following morning carpool, we will close the gates to traffic and utilize the parking area as an additional outdoor space.

Q: Will students be able to use the water fountains?

A: Students will be allowed to use the water bottle function of the fountain, but will not be allowed to drink directly from the fountain. All students should bring a labeled water bottle to school every day to ensure proper hydration.

Q: How will the School monitor social distancing on campus?

A: Our School Nurse and Division Heads will work with each teacher to “walk through” the day and trouble-shoot any areas of concern. Students will be instructed in safe social distancing, and we have limited movements across campus. In addition, all classrooms have been modified to accommodate 6 feet between students, in compliance with the CDC recommendations.

Q: Will masks be required?

A: Yes. We will follow CDC and SC DHEC guidelines regarding masks. Parents will be asked to provide masks from home, both for hygiene reasons and to ensure student comfort. Please purchase or make *solid-colored masks* for your student. We recognize that there are many options, so please choose one that is most comfortable for your student. You are not required to purchase the Land’s End mask that is available under our uniform program.

Q: What about face shields?

A. We have purchased innovative [ZShield](#) face shields for every student and adult in the building to provide a clear layer of protection when facial visibility is critical, such as reading groups. Each student will have his/her own personal face shield which will be cleaned daily and remain at school.

Q: Does everyone have to wear one all day?

A: Masks will be required to be worn throughout the school day. At a minimum, students will wear masks to and from school and anytime they leave their cohort room. The CDC has shared that COVID-19 spreads mostly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced from an infected person, and studies have shown that sometimes people with COVID-19 have no symptoms. Even with our diligent health screenings, social distancing measures, and cleaning protocols, the use of cloth face coverings will give us an extra level of protection.

Q: What if my child has sensory issues or breathing concerns?

A: We understand that every child is different and has different needs. Please reach out to Nurse Gore at julia.gore@charlestonday.org with specific concerns.

Q: What can my child expect regarding hand hygiene?

A: Students will wash hands before entering the building and multiple times throughout the day. In addition, every classroom will be equipped with hand sanitizer.

Teaching, Learning and Technology

Q: Will there be Special Area classes (ex. Art, Music, Character Education, Science, PE)?

A: Yes, these classes are an integral components of our curriculum. To minimize both the sharing of materials and spaces, Special Area class teachers will travel to the homeroom. Each student will have his/her own supplies.

Q: How will you help ensure the safe use of materials?

A: The school will choose materials that can be easily cleaned. Students will be given their “own” set of materials to use. Any shared devices, such as calculators, will be cleaned between each student use.

Q: What technology will be provided by the school?

A: Each student in grades K-8 will receive either an iPad or laptop which has been loaded with Zoom and all necessary software.

General School Questions

Q: Is Opening Day August 18, 2020?

A. At present, we continue to focus on opening August 18th, 2020.

Q: Are visitors (including families) allowed on campus?

A: Our campus will be closed to visitors. While we love our community, this includes parents. Parents should email, Zoom or phone to contact school personnel.

Q: What about events like the Halloween Carnival, Bingo Night, etc.?

A: CDC and DHEC protocols on large events will drive future events in the coming months. We are working with our Parent Association on alternate plans and ideas for these large community events.

Q: How will carpool work?

A: A health screening will be conducted during morning carpool. This may include a temperature screening. Students will wash their hands at the handwashing station and then proceed to homerooms. We have purchased [PikMyKid](#) to aid in managing a smooth, socially distanced dismissal process.

Q: How will lunch be provided?

A: With Chef Nick returning, he and his Flik team will be delivering lunch to each homeroom cohort. This will not be a “grab and go” program. We anticipate that there will be some choice regarding daily meals. We will provide more information about this shortly.

Q: Will there be an After-School Program?

A: In the near term, drop-in after-care will not be available. In order to maintain our homeroom cohorts, we will be able to provide after-care for a limited number of families who require it on a regular basis. More information on this option will be provided shortly.

Q: Will there be an Alternate Learning Plan for families/students who are at risk or not comfortable returning?

A. Yes, those students who have an elevated risk for COVID-19 and opt out of on-campus learning may participate in an Alternate Learning Plan (ALP). Those students will be allowed to Zoom into their classes each day. The students will see and hear the teacher, see the board as needed, and hear some classmates and classroom sounds. Books and supplies will be sent home ahead of time. Any worksheets will be emailed or posted on LMS for parent or child to print at home. Students will be responsible for all classwork and homework as assigned during the day.

If you are interested in this alternate plan, you must notify your Division Head, Vicky.Cardwell@charlestownday.org (K-5) or Marianne.Clare@charlestownday.org (6-8) by July 31, 2020 and commit for a four-week minimum.

Q: Where will students keep their supplies and books if they had a locker?

A. In order to maintain social distancing, we will not be able to utilize lockers. For students in grades 4-8, we have purchased individual bins for them to keep their books and supplies next to their desks.

Q: What will happen with off-campus field trips?

A: In the near term, fall off-campus field trips have been cancelled. We will continue to monitor the safety of such trips and will reschedule at a later date to the extent that is possible.

COVID Response Plans

Q: Will faculty and staff be trained specifically for Covid-19 risk minimization?

A: Yes, this is a core priority prior to the start of school.

Q: What is the protocol if a student or staff member is diagnosed with Covid-19?

A: If a student or any member of a student’s household is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school nurse must be notified at once for contact tracing and to communicate with others. Students must quarantine at home until they are cleared for school re-entry by a doctor.

Q: What happens if there is a resurgence of the virus in the fall?

A: We are prepared to move to a Remote Learning Plan should conditions warrant. As we did previously, we will look to public health agencies and other medical resources to make final decisions about learning models.

Q: What will happen if someone in the CDS community tests positive for COVID-19?

A: As a community, we have an obligation to notify our local health authorities and the school community of a COVID-19 diagnosis. We will use the contact tracing guidelines provided by the CDC and SC DHEC to notify any families of students who may have been in contact with the infected individual as soon as possible. The notification process should be very quick. Community members who may be affected will follow the health department and CDC protocols provided by Nurse Gore. These protocols will guide each individual's return-to-school plan. If they are able, students can continue with classes utilizing the ALP option. Please note that CDC guidelines, testing protocols, and the availability of certain tests change often as more information about the virus becomes available. CDS will use the most up-to-date information from government agencies such as the CDC to guide families in how to respond to any COVID-19 related concern.

Q: What if my child has to miss school due to COVID-19?

A: It is imperative for your child to stay home if you suspect your child has COVID-19, your child has a tested positive for COVID-19, or your child or your household members have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19. It is vital that each family is very transparent about any COVID-19 related situation so we can inform any other community members who may have been exposed. Nurse Gore will help you determine the best course of action before your child can return to school. Your child's Division Head will work closely with you to develop the best academic plan for your child while he or she is out which may include the ALP depending on the child's level of illness and ability to participate.

Q: What if my child needs to be absent but it is not due to COVID-19?

A: If your child is not feeling well for any reason, please do not send him or her to school. We understand that all absences will not be related to COVID-19, but it is vital that we gather health information on a daily basis, so we are actively monitoring any health related changes in our school population. Our absence policy remains the same as in previous years. If your child will be absent, please email [Margi Marks](#) and homeroom teacher and provide a detailed reason for the absence.

Q: What happens if a student or employee begins to have symptoms during the school day?

A: If a student or employee begins experiencing COVID-19 symptoms during the day, he or she will be isolated from others immediately. The School has a designated isolation area should these situations arise. Any area the student or employee has visited that day will be cleaned thoroughly. If it is a student, the parents will be called by Nurse Gore to pick up their child immediately, and she will advise them on next steps.

Q: If one student had to be quarantined at home for an extended period because of illness or exposure, will they be able to join their classes virtually?

A: Yes, each student will be able to follow his or her normal schedule using the ALP.

Q: If one student or teacher/staff tests positive for COVID-19, will the entire campus be shut down and go back to virtual learning immediately?

A: No, we will use contact tracing to determine who has been exposed and require those students and employees to follow our protocols including remaining at home and using the ALP.

Q: When we get back into "flu season," what will the protocol for how students/parents should handle the illness and the determination of whether it's the flu or COVID-19?

A: There is already guidance on students not coming in if they feel sick, have a fever, etc. Because there is much

more that we know about influenza, we will be treating the two differently. For both cases, the student will not be allowed to come back to school until he/she has a clearance note from a doctor. Any student with a positive test for COVID-19 will need to follow the School's requirements for re-entry.

Q: What metrics will CDS use to make decisions (a specific number of confirmed cases, percentage of absences, etc.)?

A: We will rely on public health experts such as SC DHEC and local medical centers such as MUSC to provide up-to-date data regarding the virus. Usually community spread of diseases is determined on several statistical models. The number of community COVID-19 cases and the number of confirmed cases within our school or sections of our school will be key to making these decisions.

Q: If the Charleston County School System moves to a mandatory close, will we do the same?

A: One of the best aspects of CDS is that we are not bound by what other schools are doing. As an independent school, we are able to make our decisions based upon what is best for our school. Our school size allows us to be more flexible and nimble than larger institutions. While we are in constant communication with other local independent and public schools, our decisions are and will continue to be made based upon what is best for the CDS community as a whole.

Q: My child has been at home for several months with just our family. I am a little concerned about him/her transitioning back to a full school day in August. What support will he/she have at school?

A: Your child's social emotional well being is important to us, and we understand that children of all ages may have struggled during this time. We are fully aware that many students have had little contact with people other than their immediate families and may have issues with separation and anxiety when school begins. Our school counselor, [Allison Nesser](#), is available to help in the transition to a full school day.

In addition, your family can begin to prepare for school:

1. Practice social distancing as a family so all are healthy for the start of school! CDC and SC DHEC provide all of the guidelines online (link below). Social distancing in public: 6 feet apart.
2. Practice wearing a mask: Ensure your child has a well-fitting, comfortable mask. Students should start practicing wearing a mask at home now so they will be comfortable with face coverings while at school.
3. Practice proper hand washing techniques with your child for at least 20 seconds (say the ABCs or sing a song). Make hand washing part of your daily routine. The CDC provides excellent resources for all ages: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>.
4. Make sure immunizations and well-visits are up to date.
5. Avoid high risk environments with crowds.
6. What to expect at school: Start conversations with your child about what may look different at school this year.
7. Back to a routine! Ensure your child is getting adequate rest, exercise and a healthy diet to ensure the transition back to school is successful!

Resources

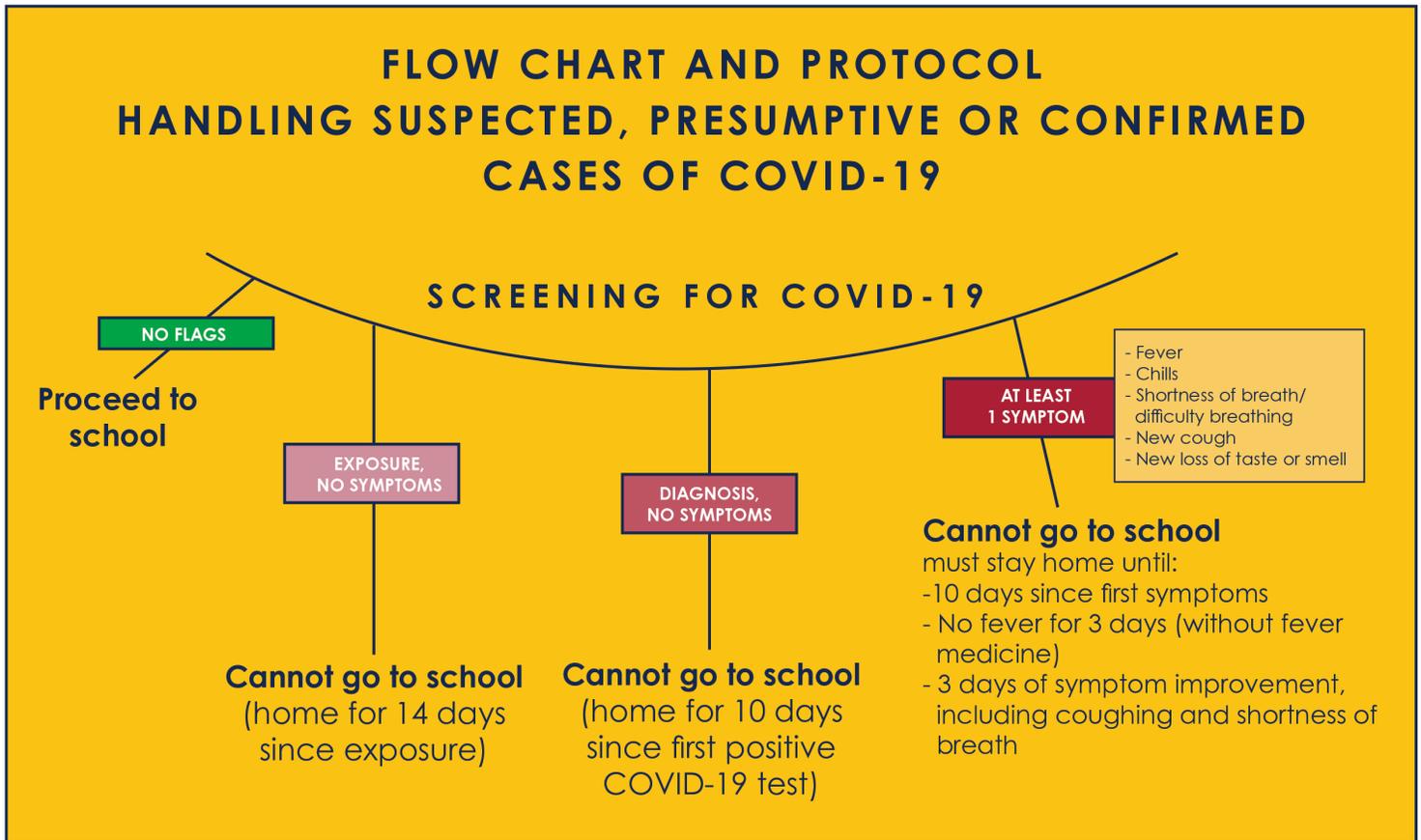
Charleston Day School is seeking guidance and updates from these organizations:

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html
- SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) — www.scdhec.gov
- American Academy of Pediatrics — www.aap.org
- National Association of Independent School — www.nais.org/articles/pages/additional-covid-19-guidance-for-schools/
- SC Department of Education — <https://ed.sc.gov/newsroom/covid-19-coronavirus-and-south-carolina-schools>
- Dr. Katherine Richardson, Medical Director of the Lowcountry Public Health Region at the SC DHEC
- Dr. Allison Eckhard, Associate Professor of Pediatrics & Medicine in the Divisions of Infectious Diseases at the MUSC

HEALTH PROTOCOLS

Updated 7/24/20

Please note: these protocols are being updated frequently.



Task Force Team

Judith Foley Arnstein, *Head of School*

Vicky Cardwell, *Lower School Division Head*

Marianne Clare, *Middle School Division Head*

Julia Gore, *School Nurse*

Katherine Kuszmaul, *Marketing and Communications Specialist*

Christina Mahaffey, *Executive Assistant to the Head of School, School Registrar & Event Coordinator*

Caroline Moore, *Director of Institutional Advancement*

Catherine Skeen, *Director of Enrollment*

Donia Teagle, *Technology Coordinator/Instructor*

Cheryl Waddell, *Accounting Manager and Director of Financial Assistance*

Gigi Wallace, *Athletic Director*

Heidi Whaley, *Business Manager*

Andy Willits, *Director of High School Placement, 8th grade Language Arts and Homeroom Teacher*