



REOPENING PLAN

Shady Side Academy
2020-2021



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● ● ● INTRODUCTION

Dear Shady Side Academy Families,

I am proud to share our comprehensive 2020-2021 Reopening Plan, which complies fully with all CDC guidelines and government public health mandates. At present we are actively preparing to start the school year on September 1 with in-person instruction for every child, every day, while also providing a live remote video attendance option in support of students for whom on-campus participation is unworkable or unadvisable. As you will see in the plan, we are taking extensive measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and prioritize the health and safety of our community members, including significant renovations of our campuses and buildings, adjustments to our academic schedules, the implementation of state-of-the art technology, robust disinfection and hygiene practices, as well as a range of other health and safety protocols informed by the region's leading medical experts. And, our plan provides the necessary flexibility for us to toggle to all-school distance learning if necessary.



Our 2020-2021 Reopening Plan has been built upon the following foundational principles:

- **Safety** – As one of our Guiding Principles, safety underpins every aspect of this plan, which has been designed to fully align with federal, state and county public health guidelines and in consultation with infection prevention experts at UPMC. The health and safety of our students and employees remains our highest priority. We know that if students do not feel safe at school, or their families do not feel safe sending them to school, they will not learn effectively.
- **Academic Excellence** – As it has for the last 137 years, our commitment to academic excellence is unwavering. Rather than simply looking for a way to survive this challenge, we have embraced this as an opportunity to reimagine the way we deliver on this promise to families. Our goal is not simply to survive this pandemic, but to thrive in spite of it.
- **Flexibility** – When it is safe to do so, we believe children are at their best academically and socially when they attend school in person and form close relationships with their teachers and peers. Therefore our planning process has been guided by the goal of serving every child, every day with in-person, on-campus instruction. However, in these uncertain times, we recognize that a successful return-to-school plan must be flexible enough to adapt. This plan is designed not only to provide a safe, in-person learning environment, but also to offer an effective distance learning environment if needed.

I am thankful to all of my talented, generous colleagues who dedicated the past few months to the development of this plan, especially the members of our COVID-19 Health and Safety Team. Our team has worked tirelessly and around the clock this summer, and I remain so proud of their dedication and commitment to our special community. They are such an inspiring group of human beings, and I count myself lucky to serve as their leader. I know you join me in expressing gratitude to all of those who have prepared and will implement this plan in support of our students and mission.

The coming year will demand continued patience and elasticity from all of us. Please take heart in the fact that none of us are alone and that we are a highly relational community where people connect meaningfully, provide support and learn deeply with one another – and we will remain so in the months ahead: *So stand throughout the years!*

Glory to Shady Side!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bart'.

Bart Griffith '93
President

● ● ● ABOUT COVID-19

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. Symptoms can range from mild or no symptoms to severe illness, and may appear **2-14 days after exposure**. Symptoms may include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. You can become infected with COVID-19 by coming into close contact with an infected person, from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks, or by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes.

PREVENTION

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid exposure to the virus. The following are the best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact.** Maintain six feet of distance between yourself and people who are sick, and people who don't live in your household.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face mask** in public and around people who don't live in your household, especially when social distancing is difficult to maintain.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash, and immediately wash your hands or use hand sanitizer afterward.
- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- **Monitor your health daily.** If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and follow CDC guidance.

RESOURCES

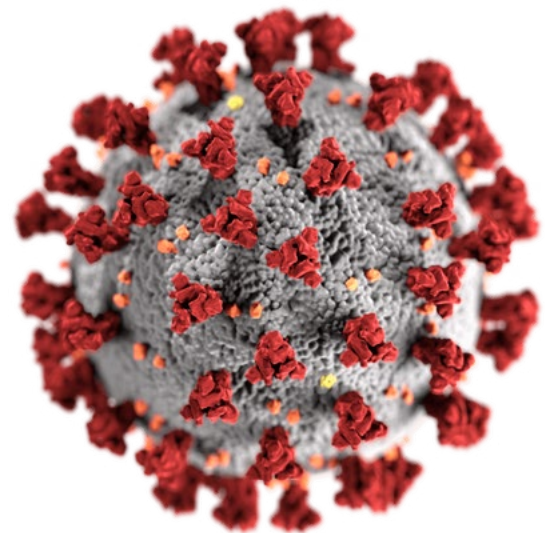
[John Hopkins CSEE Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases](#)

[CDC: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[PA Department of Health: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[PA.gov: Responding to COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

[Allegheny County Health Department: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)



SCHOOL OPERATIONS BY COLOR PHASE

The below chart provides an outline of the Academy’s planned operations broadly based on Allegheny County’s color phase in Gov. Wolf’s [Process to Reopen Pennsylvania](#) (assuming the state retains this system) as well as the prevalence of COVID-19 cases in our school community. The Academy’s COVID-19 Health and Safety Team will closely monitor cases in the SSA community and heed state and county recommendations related to school operations.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY STATUS	ACADEMY OPERATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green or Yellow Phase Minimal to moderate or controlled community transmission of COVID-19 	IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classes held on campus with students attending in person Live remote attendance option using smart video technology for students with specific circumstances that make on-campus learning unworkable or unadvisable (see page 16 for more detail) SSA follows CDC and PA guidance for PPE, de-densifying and social distancing, as well as any additional restrictions mandated by the state or county. Athletics continues, following CDC and PA guidance for interscholastic competition Non-essential visitor/volunteer restrictions Virtual assemblies and large gatherings; small in-person gatherings within CDC and ACHD limits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Phase Mandated or elective campus closure due to substantial, uncontrolled community transmission of COVID-19 	DISTANCE LEARNING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classes held online with students participating synchronously or asynchronously from home No athletics, or in-person activities and events Campus(es) closed to all but essential personnel

● ● ● COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

All members of the Shady Side Academy community have a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep our students and employees – and their families – safe. It is critical that all community members remain committed to the policies and procedures listed in this plan and any future communications.

WE EXPECT ALL SSA FAMILIES TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING:

TRAVEL GUIDANCE: All SSA families are strongly encouraged to avoid travel to high-risk areas in the 14 days prior to the start of school. If your family travels to an area where there are high amounts of COVID-19 cases, including the states listed in the [Travel section of the Pennsylvania COVID-19 website](#) or the [Travel Guidance on the Allegheny County Health Department website](#), please notify the school nurse and self-quarantine at home for 14 days, utilizing the live remote attendance option (see page 14) We are also asking families to limit exposure and interactions with those outside of their “close circle” for 14 days prior to the start of school.

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE: Adhere to all orders and guidance of all applicable government health organizations, including the CDC, PA Department of Health and Allegheny County Health Department. This includes practicing social distancing and wearing face coverings outside of school.

HYGIENE: Practice and reinforce good hygiene practices at home, especially frequent hand-washing.

MEDICAL FORMS: Complete all required medical forms in Magnus Health, including emergency contacts, before your child begins classes or preseason athletics.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS: Complete the required symptom questionnaire for each child at home each morning. If your child fails the temperature check upon arrival at school, take them home.

STAY HOME IF SICK: If your child feels sick, or if they answer yes to any of the questions on the daily symptom questionnaire, keep them home from school.

FACE COVERINGS: Send your child to school wearing a clean fabric face mask every day, and teach them how to properly wear and remove the mask. Wash fabric masks regularly.

PICK UP SICK CHILDREN: If your child becomes sick or symptomatic at school, please pick them up within an hour of notification. Boarders must be picked up by their local host/guarding within 24 hours of notification.

COVID-19 CASE/EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION: If your child or someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to COVID-19, notify the school nurse immediately and follow all protocols for isolation/quarantine and returning to school.



HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES



HEALTH SCREENINGS: Students and employees must complete a symptom questionnaire via a school-provided mobile app or website each morning before arriving at school. If any answers are “yes,” they may not come to school. Otherwise they will receive a “green pass” that can be displayed on an iPad/phone or printed out. Upon arrival at school, the individual must show their green pass and undergo a no-touch temperature check. Anyone with a fever of 99.5 degrees* or higher on two consecutive temperature checks will be sent home with instructions for follow-up with a physician. Boarders will be referred to the health center and, if deemed necessary, must be picked up by their local host/guardian within 24 hours. Students who fail the screening may participate in classes from home using the live remote video attendance option, but may not participate in athletics until cleared to return to campus. Instructions for downloading the mobile app with the symptom questionnaire will be shared in August.

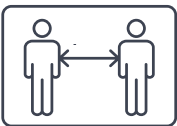
**The 99.5 degree temperature is based on recommendations of UPMC medical experts.*



FACE COVERINGS: Students and employees are required to wear face masks for most of the school day and will be provided with two SSA fabric masks. For students in grades 6-12, masks should be solid-colored without patterns or words. Do not wear face masks with exhalation valves. Policies will allow for the removal of masks when it is safe to do so, such as during meals and socially distant outdoor activities. Clear face masks are available to teachers to enhance communication with students.



HYGIENE: Good hygiene will be taught and reinforced. Hand-washing stations are being installed in hallways and common areas, and touchless hand sanitizers are in every classroom. Water fountains and water bottle refill stations will be closed, and students should bring a full water bottle to school each day. Bottled water also will be available.



SOCIAL DISTANCING: In classrooms, desks and tables will be arranged to meet CDC guidelines for social distancing. Existing classrooms have been reconfigured or expanded, and some common spaces have been converted into classrooms to allow for social distancing in every single class.



COHORTS AND REDUCED MIXING: Academic schedules and classroom assignments have been designed to keep students in smaller, more consistent cohorts throughout the school day. Students will travel less from room to room and encounter fewer peers in hallways and common areas.



SHARED MATERIALS: Classroom practices will limit the sharing of devices and learning materials, and the touching of other students’ personal belongings.



TRANSITIONS: Hallways and stairwells will be designated as one-way, with appropriate signage.



FOOD SERVICE: Lunch will be delivered to classrooms or packaged for “grab and go” service. Individually packaged meals will be served in biodegradable containers with biodegradable silverware. Families will order school lunches online in advance. All self-service or buffet-style stations in the cafeterias will be closed.

Health and Safety Measures (cont.)



VIRTUAL GATHERINGS: Larger gatherings such as assemblies and meetings will be held virtually.



FIELD TRIPS: There will be no in-person field trips.



CLEANING AND DISINFECTION: Classrooms, common spaces, high-touch surfaces and shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected frequently following CDC guidelines and using CDC- and EPA-approved products. Fog sprayers will be used to disinfect dormitory common areas and frequently used spaces.



RESTROOMS: Restrooms will be cleaned hourly and have occupancy limits.



VENTILATION: Buildings with HVAC systems have new air filters with settings adjusted for fresh air intake. Buildings without HVAC will utilize open windows and fans where needed to increase fresh air flow. Classes and activities will be held outdoors when possible.



SIGNAGE: Abundant signage will reinforce health and safety protocols including hygiene, social distancing, mask-wearing, one-way traffic and more.



EMPLOYEE TRAINING: Employees will receive training on health and safety protocols, and faculty and staff will receive guidance on how to model, encourage and enforce protocols with students.

PARENT & VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

Visitors will be restricted to those with essential tasks that cannot be completed remotely. All visitors must have an appointment with a department or employee; no walk-ins can be accommodated. All reception desks will be equipped with plexiglass dividers, and visitors must undergo a health screening upon arrival, in addition to the usual safety protocols. Visitors must wear a face covering at all times while on campus.

Parents and family members will not be able to volunteer on campus, walk into the building to drop off or pick up students, or visit students during the school day. All parent meetings and parent-teacher conferences will be held virtually via Zoom.

● ● ● COVID-19 CASE PROTOCOLS

While these health and safety protocols will minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 on our campuses, *we expect there will be cases of COVID-19 in our community.* In preparation for this reality, we have developed the following protocols for monitoring, testing, contact tracing and communication:

MONITORING & TESTING

Students and employees who fail the daily health screening, exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 or have known exposure to COVID-19 will be sent home and instructed to follow up with their physician for further testing and assessment. If testing for COVID-19 is recommended, the student or employee should stay at home until receiving two negative test results or completing a 14-day quarantine. Students waiting to be picked up from school will be put in an N95 mask and moved to an isolation space. Exposure to COVID-19 outside of school must be reported to the school nurse.

RESPONDING TO POSITIVE CASES

A positive COVID-19 test must be reported immediately to the school nurse, who must notify the Allegheny County Health Department. SSA will follow ACHD directives for the disinfection and/or closing of any classrooms or facilities used by the individual and begin contact tracing (see below). Students and employees who test positive may not return to school until 72 hours after symptoms resolve AND at least 10 days after symptoms first appeared.

CONTACT TRACING

Our school nurses and other staff members have been trained in contact tracing by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and will work with the ACHD to identify any SSA community members who were in close contact with an infected person. According to CDC guidelines, “close contact” with an infected person is defined as: being within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes; having direct physical contact; sharing eating/drinking utensils; or getting sneezed/coughed on. SSA will directly inform those exposed, providing instructions for quarantine and testing.

COMMUNICATION

Only those community members who were in close contact with the infected individual will be informed, NOT the entire school or campus community. Due to HIPAA health privacy laws, the names of those who test positive or are exposed to COVID-19 must be kept confidential. Should SSA or the ACHD determine that any of our campuses need to dismiss early or close temporarily due to COVID-19 cases, families will be notified via our School Messenger emergency notification system, and distance learning will go into effect. We expect that any infected and exposed individuals will be treated with respect, kindness and dignity.

To avoid gossip and rumor, SSA will only act on positive cases when an individual or family contacts the school directly. *We will not entertain or investigate rumors, anonymous tips or secondhand information,* so please do not share “what you’ve heard” with the school or other community members.



PERSONAL DEVICES

- **Grade K-8 students** will have school-issued iPads with age-appropriate accessories.
- **Grade 9-12 students** must have a laptop must have a Mac or Windows laptop. Students who do not have their own laptop may check out a Microsoft Surface Pro from the library for home and school use. Contact Senior School Librarian [Lindsey Myers](#) to request a laptop.
- **All students** must take their devices and accessories home each evening and return with them fully charged the next school day.

SMART VIDEO CAMERAS IN CLASSROOMS

Meeting Owl Pro “smart” video cameras will be available to every classroom across all four campuses, and will integrate with Zoom for students utilizing the live remote attendance option during in-person instruction. The Meeting Owl Pro has a 360° panoramic view and automatically shifts to focus on whoever is speaking, allowing students at home to participate in classes live alongside their peers.



ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS



Canvas is SSA’s new PK-12 learning management system (LMS), replacing Finalsight Teacher Pages, Google Classroom and class blogs to ensure all instructional assignments, resources and communication live in a single digital platform. Parents and students will receive more details on Canvas at the beginning of the school year.



Seesaw will be utilized for PK-5 students alongside Canvas to support instruction. Seesaw allows younger students to use creative tools to take pictures, draw, annotate, record videos and interact with curricular content.



Zoom video conferencing will be used for the live remote attendance option as well as all-school distance learning. When in-person classes are being held, Zoom’s integration with the Meeting Owl Pro camera will enable students at home to participate in classes virtually alongside their peers. Should the entire school move to distance learning, Zoom will be used for all synchronous (live) classes.

SUPPORT

- Students will receive training on device care, digital citizenship and instructional resources.
- School-issued devices will be managed by the Academy.
- Parents will have access to training videos for Canvas, Seesaw and Zoom.
- The Technology Help Desk is available to support students, parents and teachers via email and Zoom on school days from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Email helpdesk@shadysideacademy.org if you need help with the following:
 - If you have trouble using any SSA online learning platforms
 - If you are having trouble with your SSA-issued device or need a device
 - If you do not have adequate internet access in your home for distance learning
 - If you are purchasing a laptop for a Senior School student and would like specifications

SECURITY

- All SSA online learning platforms are password-protected for security.
- SSA’s Zoom license provides more security than the free version. Class meeting IDs are posted on password-protected platforms, a “waiting room” eliminates unwanted drop-ins, and meetings are locked once all students are present.

● ● ● IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

Should Allegheny County remain in the Green or Yellow Phase, and the ACHD permits schools to open, In-Person Instruction will be offered on campus for every child, every day. Across all four campuses, we have worked to modify our classrooms and academic schedules to keep students in smaller, more consistent cohort groups to limit the number of individuals they come into contact with throughout the school day.

COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

ARRIVAL AND BEFORE CARE

Carpool families will be assigned staggered arrival times and designated to the lower or upper entrance. Upon arrival, students must show their “green pass” from the daily symptom questionnaire and undergo a no-touch temperature check before entering the building. Parents are not permitted to walk students into the building. Details about arrival and dismissal procedures will be sent to families later in August.



Before care is available beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Small age-based cohorts will rotate between play time in the gym and quiet art, reading and play time in the lobby, with social distancing. *NOTE: This year, we ask that families utilize before care only when necessary to keep our numbers at a minimum.*

CLASSROOMS AND COHORTS

Some grades have been split into 2-3 sections or “cohorts” to meet CDC social distancing guidelines in every classroom. Existing homerooms have been modified or expanded, and some specialists’ rooms and common spaces have been converted into homerooms. Cohorts will stay together all day. To minimize hallway traffic, specialist teachers will come to each homeroom vs. students traveling from room to room.

ACADEMIC DAY AND SCHEDULE

The academic day will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. These times may vary slightly due to staggered arrival and dismissal procedures. Classes will follow a five-day (Monday-Friday) schedule with multiple breaks throughout the day for lunch, recess, outdoor learning and handwashing.

OUTDOOR LEARNING, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PLAY

Students will learn and play outdoors as much as possible, utilizing our full 17-acre campus. Classes, recess and play time will happen in the treehouse, outdoor classroom, woods, playground, garden and fields. Outdoor and playground equipment will be sanitized between uses. Students will continue to have physical education classes, utilizing the outdoors when possible. **All students will wear their school uniforms for PE and will not need to purchase PE uniforms.** Please send your child to school with appropriate clothes and outerwear for the day’s weather.

ARTS

Art and music classes will be taught in each homeroom. Music classes will have a general music emphasis, with no choral singing, wind instruments or concerts.

LUNCH

Cohorts will eat lunch in their classroom. Cafeteria lunches may be ordered online in advance and will be delivered to the classroom.

In-Person Instruction (cont.)

ASSEMBLIES AND COMMUNITY TIME

Virtual assemblies will be held each Friday, with students participating from their classrooms via Zoom. Responsive Classroom morning meetings and closing circles will occur in each homeroom.

DISMISSAL AND AFTER SCHOOL

Carpool families will be assigned staggered dismissal times at the upper and lower entrances. Bus students will remain in homerooms until their bus is called over the PA system. After-school students will be picked up in their classrooms by ASA staff.

After School Adventurers (ASA) will not offer enrichment classes this year, but will be available for families who need after-school child care. ASA students will be kept in small age-based cohorts and enjoy a mix of indoor and outdoor play, fun activities and quiet homework time. Families must register for ASA in advance, and registration information will be sent in August. *NOTE: This year, we ask that families utilize ASA only when necessary to keep our numbers at a minimum.*

JUNIOR SCHOOL

ARRIVAL AND BEFORE CARE

Multiple building entrances will be used to prevent congestion. Upon arrival, students must show their “green pass” from the daily symptom questionnaire and undergo a no-touch temperature check before entering the building. Parents are not permitted to walk students into the building. Details about arrival and dismissal procedures will be sent to families later in August.

Before care is available beginning at 7:30 a.m. Small age-based cohorts will rotate between play time in the gym and quiet art, reading and play time in the foyer, with social distancing. *NOTE: This year, we ask that families utilize before care only when necessary to keep our numbers at a minimum.*

CLASSROOMS AND COHORTS

Additional sections or “cohorts” have been added to some grades to meet CDC social distancing guidelines in every classroom. Existing homerooms have been modified or expanded, and some specialists’ rooms and common spaces have been converted into homerooms. Cohorts will stay together all day. To minimize traffic in the hallways, specialist teachers will come to each homeroom vs. students traveling from room to room.

ACADEMIC DAY AND SCHEDULE

The academic day will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Classes will follow a five-day (Monday-Friday) schedule with multiple breaks throughout the day for lunch, recess, outdoor learning, and handwashing.

OUTDOOR LEARNING, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PLAY

Students will learn and play outdoors as much as possible, utilizing our full seven-acre campus as well as Frick Park. Classes, recess and play time will be held on the fields, playgrounds, gardens, courtyards, patios and park trails. Outdoor and playground equipment will be sanitized after use. Students will continue to have physical education classes, utilizing the outdoors when possible. **All students will wear their school uniforms for PE and will not need to purchase PE uniforms.** Please send your child to school with appropriate clothes and outerwear for the day’s weather.



In-Person Instruction (cont.)

ARTS

Art and music classes will be taught in each homeroom. Music classes will have a general music emphasis, with no choral singing, wind instruments or concerts.

LUNCH

Cohorts will eat lunch in their classroom. Cafeteria lunches may be ordered online in advance and will be delivered to the classroom.

ASSEMBLIES AND COMMUNITY TIME

Virtual assemblies and community “meetings” will be held each week, with students participating from their classrooms via Zoom. Responsive Classroom morning meetings and closing circles will occur in each homeroom.

DISMISSAL AND AFTER SCHOOL

We will utilize multiple building exits to avoid congestion at dismissal time. Bus students will remain in homerooms until their bus is called over the PA system. After-school students will be picked up in their classrooms by ASE staff.

After-School Explorers (ASE) will not offer enrichment classes or music lessons this year, but will be available for families who need after-school child care. ASE students will be kept in small age-based cohorts and enjoy a mix of indoor and outdoor play, fun activities and quiet homework time. Families must register for ASE in advance, and registration information will be sent in August. *This year, we ask that families utilize ASE only when necessary to keep our numbers at a minimum.*

MIDDLE SCHOOL

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival, students must proceed to the medical tent in front of the main entrance to show their “green pass” from the daily symptom questionnaire and undergo a no-touch temperature check. Students arriving before 7:45 a.m. will enter the gym, where they will be monitored and maintain social distancing. Students arriving after 7:45 will go straight to their first period classroom.



LOCKERS

Students will only use their lockers to store coats and outerwear. They will carry the day's instructional materials in their backpacks. Updated class supply lists will soon be posted on the [Summer Information](#) and [Newly Enrolled Families](#) pages that will lighten the load in their backpacks. This will eliminate students crowding around lockers and enable them to move directly from class to class.

ADVISORY GROUPS AND CLASSROOMS

Advisory groups will remain small, with homeroom assignments that allow for social distancing. Existing classrooms have been modified or expanded, and some common spaces have been converted into classrooms to ensure social distancing in every class.

ACADEMIC DAY AND SCHEDULE

The academic day will begin at 8 a.m. and end between 3:30-3:40 p.m. (see Dismissal section). Upon arrival, students will go straight to their first period class (not homeroom). Classes will follow a seven-day rotating schedule similar to last year, but with shorter 40-minute periods to allow extra passing time between classes.

In-Person Instruction (cont.)

ARTS

Art and music classes will continue to be held. Music classes will be modified, with no choral singing, wind instruments, or concerts. Drama will still occur as a fall and spring activity; however, no all-school play or musical will be performed.

LUNCH AND CONFERENCE

Lunch and conference will be combined into fifth period, which is a longer period. Students will return to their homerooms to do schoolwork and conference with teachers via Zoom. Lunch will be eaten in the homeroom during this period as well. Cafeteria lunches can be ordered online in advance and will be delivered to the classroom.

ASSEMBLIES

Virtual assemblies will be held once per cycle, with students participating from their homerooms via Zoom.

LIBRARY

Students may browse and request library books for delivery through the online library catalog. eBooks will also be available for student self-checkout.

ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Students will still participate in their chosen athletic/activity at the end of the school day in each term. More athletic teams will practice at the Middle School campus than in the past. Students who must ride busses to the Senior School for athletics will be seated one per seat, and buses will be disinfected after each trip. Athletics will focus on skill development and follow the [CDC's Considerations for Youth Sports](#) as well as [state sports guidance](#) and [PIAA Return to Competition](#) guidelines; however, at this time it is uncertain whether games will be played against other schools. Academic teams such as Science Olympiad, Robotics and Rocketry may have staggered in-person meetings due to group size limits. Clubs and committees will meet via Zoom during conference and lunch period.

DISMISSAL

NEW: Carpool students whose athletic/activity takes place at the Middle School should be picked up at the MS campus at 3:30 p.m. All students who ride school district buses, and carpool students whose athletic/activity takes place at the Senior School, will be dismissed from the SS campus at 3:40 p.m.

SENIOR SCHOOL

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival, students must show their "green pass" from the daily symptom questionnaire and undergo a no-touch temperature check at one of three medical tents: at the Rowe Hall flagpole entrance, the Rowe Hall courtyard entrance, or the Hillman Center lower entrance.

LOCKERS

School lockers and locks will be provided only to students who request them. Students can request a locker by emailing attendance@shadysideacademy.org.



In-Person Instruction (cont.)

ACADEMIC DAY AND SCHEDULE

The Senior School will have a new academic schedule this year to minimize the number of classes and interactions students have per day and allow for smoother and more sustainable toggling to distance learning. The academic day will run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. except on Wednesdays, which will run from 9:35 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. with time in the morning and afternoon for faculty meetings and professional development.

Each 12-week term will be divided into two six-week sessions, one Blue and one Gold. Each year-long and term classes will meet in either the Blue or Gold session but not both. Classes will meet every day on a Monday-through-Friday rotating schedule. Each day includes four 70-minute class periods (50 minutes on Wednesdays), and most students will take 2-3 classes per session. Students and parents will receive more details on the new academic schedule in August.

COMMUNITY TIME

A community time period (formerly assembly period) is built into each school day except Wednesday. This time will be used for virtual assemblies and class meetings, in-person advisory group meetings (designated rooms), and student activities/club meetings.

LUNCH

Dining hall lunches can be ordered in advance online and will be prepackaged for “grab-n-go” pickup at different locations on campus. Students will have several different indoor and outdoor eating locations on campus to choose from, with socially distant seating and occupancy limits at each. The Hillman Plaza will be tented to provide an additional “outdoor” socialization space and dining area.

FREE PERIODS

Students will have a variety of approved indoor and outdoor locations where they can spend free periods. Grade 9-10 students will be required to report to designated supervised locations for free periods during first or second period.

ARTS

Visual art classes will continue in the Benedum Visual Arts Center, which is spacious enough to allow for social distancing. Music class offerings will be modified, with no choral singing, wind instruments or concerts. Theatre offerings will include small fall and winter productions that maintain social distancing for actors and are shared with the community virtually via video.

LIBRARY

Students may request library books via email for pickup at the circulation desk during designated times. Overdue notices will be sent via email. Returned books will be quarantined for three days before being returned to circulation.

ATHLETICS

Athletic activities will follow the [CDC's Considerations for Youth Sports](#) as well as [state sports guidance](#) and [PIAA Return to Competition](#) guidelines. We continue to await further guidance from the PIAA and WPIAL regarding interscholastic competition, we are committed to providing a robust athletic experience for all participating students. Physical and athletic activity will continue to be part of our school day.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Club and student activity planning time will happen on Thursdays during the community time period. Clubs may also meet virtually at times convenient to their membership. The annual Club Fair will be reconfigured to meet health and safety protocols.

BOARDING & RESIDENTIAL LIFE

Reopening our boarding program requires a shared commitment to individual and community health. We will employ multiple overlapping mitigation strategies to keep our community safe. This is an opportunity to make our residential life program and community stronger.

OPENING OF SCHOOL

- **Local Host/Guardian:** Every boarding student must identify a site – off campus and within a 4-5 hour driving distance in the United States – where they may isolate and/or quarantine if necessary.
- **Move-In:** Move-in protocols are in development; however, we anticipate offering multiple move-in days beginning the week before school starts. Details will be communicated in August.
- **Airport Transportation:** We will not provide transportation from the airport to SSA. Contact [Chad Green](#) for information on reputable car services.



DORMITORIES

- **Family Units & Dorm Squads:** Roommates will be considered a “family unit.” Each dorm will be divided into four “dorm squads” based on room location, with a dorm advisor and prefect in each squad. This is intended to reduce contacts while fostering meaningful connections among smaller groups of students.
- **Rooms:** All students should anticipate living in doubles. If available, prefects and some seniors may be placed in singles. Room furniture will be configured to maximize social distancing where possible, with roommates sleeping head to toe.
- **Access to Dorms:** Only dorm residents, residential life faculty and authorized SSA personnel will be allowed access to a dorm. Day students and boarders who do not live in the building will not have access. Only juniors and seniors may return to the dorm during the school day, provided they sign in. Parent and family visits will be limited to short pick-up and drop-off scenarios.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- **Testing:** SSA will partner with [Orig3n](#) to test all residential students and faculty at the start of the school year, after winter and spring break, and any other time deemed advisable. Further testing will occur for those with symptoms of COVID-19 or to clear an individual who had COVID-19 to safely return to school.
- **Dorm Safety:** Boarders will be required to maintain social distancing and wear masks inside the dorms, except when in their own room with their roommate (who is considered a “family member”). Students should bring several masks, and dorm advisors will have backups. Students must wash their hands regularly, and hallways will have hand sanitizer stations. Restroom use will be managed through occupancy limits and scheduling, and access to common rooms and kitchen areas will be controlled. Halls and bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently by our custodial staff, and students will clean their rooms for weekly inspection. New traffic patterns will be established in the dorm.
- **Health Screening:** Boarders, like all students, must complete the health screening process each morning. We anticipate boarders will be required to complete a second screening later in the day, verified by a trained adult.

In-Person Instruction (cont.)

- **Isolation/Quarantine:** Boarders who fail a health screening will be referred to the nurse. If the nurse deems isolation or quarantine necessary, the student will be taken to a designated location (not their dorm room) until they can be picked up by their local host/guardian (within 24 hours of notification). It is likely the student's roommate will need to follow isolation/quarantine protocol.
- **Flu Shots:** SSA strongly encourages all students and adults in the boarding community to get a flu shot this fall. We will assist seven-day boarders with this process when the vaccination becomes available.

COMMUNITY LIFE

- **Food Service:** Boarders will have ample and nutritious meal options each day. Breakfast will be eaten in the dorm, while lunch and dinner can be picked up and eaten at multiple locations. Seating in the dining hall will be managed to accommodate social distancing. Weekly community dinners will not occur in person, but there will be virtual and outdoor community gatherings. Protocols for food deliveries from off-campus vendors will be shared when school opens.
- **Activities:** We will be creative in offering opportunities to have fun and socialize with friends on campus and/or outdoors as much as possible. Off-campus activities will occur within health and safety protocols.
- **REACH Software:** We will continue using [REACH Boarding software](#) to facilitate sign-in/sign-out procedures, day travel, weekend leaves and more. This year, in addition to REACH kiosks, students can sign into spaces using Near Field Communication (NFC) and/or Quick Response (QR) technology.
- **Off-Campus Travel and Leaves:** Boarding parents must complete an Off-Campus Permission Form. Day travel, special and weekend leaves will likely operate largely as in the past. However, the time windows for day travel will be more limited, the number of students who can travel off-campus together will be restricted, and weekend leaves may be restricted. All leave submission deadlines must be met.
- **Study Hall:** Study hall will be held in the dorms for ALL boarding students from 7:45 to 9:45 p.m.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

For students who ride public school district buses, bus routes/stops and bus safety protocols are set by each individual school district, not by SSA. Families are encouraged to reach out to their school district now to ask questions about transportation plans. Students riding public school district transportation will need to adhere to any additional health and safety protocols communicated by their district. If you have questions regarding bus transportation, email SSA Transportation Coordinator [Diane Curry](#).

LIVE REMOTE VIDEO ATTENDANCE OPTION

When classes are being held in person, a live remote video attendance option is available for students with specific circumstances that make on-campus learning unworkable or unadvisable, such as: students at high risk for illness or who live with high-risk family members; international students facing visa or travel issues; students diagnosed with, showing symptoms of, or having known exposure to COVID-19; and students unable to comply with campus health and safety protocols such as face coverings. **To inquire about your child beginning the school year with this option, please contact your school head by Friday, Aug. 14.**

Every classroom will have access to a Meeting Owl Pro 360° smart video camera that integrates with Zoom, allowing students at home to participate in classes live alongside their peers.

● ● ● DISTANCE LEARNING

Should the governor move Allegheny County into the Red Phase, which mandates that all schools must close, or should the ACHD mandate that SSA must close one or more of our campuses due to cases of COVID-19, our Distance Learning Plan will go into effect and all classes at the impacted campus(es) will move online.

Built on the Distance Learning Plan we used in Spring 2020, and modified to incorporate feedback from families, SSA's 2020-2021 Distance Learning Plan will utilize an age-appropriate mix of synchronous (live) classes and asynchronous assignments, with built in community time and student support.

COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

- Students will engage in online learning both synchronously (live) and asynchronously (pre-recorded/posted lessons), with three Zoom lessons per day: two facilitated by the homeroom teacher and one led by a specialist.
- Responsive Classroom morning meeting and closing circle will be held via Zoom to cultivate classroom community.
- Optional extension learning opportunities will be provided for families who would like their child to engage beyond the required lessons.
- Faculty will hold regular office hours via Zoom.
- Our expanded 1:1 iPad program will provide K-5 students with a school-issued iPads, which students will practice using respectfully and independently.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- The Middle School will shift to a two-day alternating schedule for all-school distance learning, similar to Spring 2020. The schedule features a structured academic day with 3-4 live Zoom classes plus asynchronous assignments posted in Canvas.
- Students will utilize their school-issued iPads for all classwork.
- Students will have a daily Zoom check-in with their advisory group.
- Faculty will have Zoom office hours every other day to meet individually with students.
- Morning video announcements will be sent, and assemblies will continue via Zoom.
- Grading will continue as usual.



Distance Learning (cont.)

SENIOR SCHOOL

- During all-school distance learning, the same five-day block schedule with alternating six-week Blue and Gold sessions will be followed as in in-person instruction.
- Students will have “face time” with their teachers every day, with part of each class period held synchronously and part asynchronously.
- Assemblies, class meetings, designated rooms and club meetings will continue to be held via Zoom during community time period.
- Faculty will hold regular Zoom office hours and continue to be available to meet with students individually outside of class.
- Grading will continue as usual and will not be pass/fail as in Spring 2020.

TUITION & FINANCES

Tuition refunds became a nationwide topic of discussion last spring as schools and colleges transitioned to distance learning, oftentimes under the assumption that schools save money when campuses are closed. Shady Side benefits from minimal savings in this scenario because campus operations continue even when buildings are not occupied by students. Our most significant expense – salaries and benefits – does not go down at all. Additionally, we have made significant financial investments this summer in our physical plant, technology resources, faculty professional development, and health and safety resources to ensure we can reopen safely and deliver an outstanding academic experience whether our campuses are open or closed. Finally, tuition only covers roughly 75% of our operating expenses, with philanthropic gifts and auxiliary revenue making up the rest. And, when our campuses are closed, we lose auxiliary revenue from things like facility rentals and after-school programs.

Therefore, families should not expect tuition refunds should Shady Side transition to distance learning this year. We encourage families who might consider the possibility of withdrawing in the case of extended distance learning to purchase tuition insurance. For more information about tuition insurance, please contact Manager of Student Financial Services [Verne Bergstrom](#).



● ● ● STUDENT SUPPORT

Regardless of whether classes are held in-person or online, our learning specialists, school counselors, nurses, librarians and college counselors will continue to support students and families in person, by email, by phone or videoconference. Contact the following via email anytime for help:

CAMPUS	LEARNING SPECIALIST	SCHOOL COUNSELOR	SCHOOL NURSE	LIBRARIAN	OTHER
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL	Kara Troyer Grades PK-2 Mikki VanKirk Grades 3-5	Claudine Runnette	Lisa Tweardy	Courtney Anderson	
JUNIOR SCHOOL	Colleen DeChancie Grades PK-2 Katie Nestor Grades 3-5	Katie Boss	Kari Theoret	Phyllis Guering	
MIDDLE SCHOOL	Amy Katz	Dr. Claudia Henry	Donna Giel	Mary Guering	
SENIOR SCHOOL	Sandra Lashway	Creighton Runnette	Linda Diskin Day Nurse Amy Gray After-Hours Boarding Nurse	Lindsey Myers	College Counseling: Lauren Lieberman Julie Hertz Lucas Frankel Kelsey Williams

* Please click on individual name to be linked to school email address

EQUITY & INCLUSION SUPPORT

Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Relations [Lillian Grate](#) is available to support all PK-12 families via email or weekly Zoom office hours.

● ● ● IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES

Tuesday, Aug. 11	Reopening Plan Q&A via Zoom All PK-12 Parents, 7 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 17	Senior School Fall Preseason Athletics Begin
Tuesday, Aug. 18	Country Day School Reopening Orientation via Zoom New Parents 6 p.m. / All Parents 7 p.m. Junior School Reopening Orientation via Zoom New Parents 6 p.m. / All Parents 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 19	Middle School Reopening Orientation via Zoom New Parents 6 p.m. / All Parents 7 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 20	Senior School Reopening Orientation via Zoom New Parents 6 p.m. / All Parents 7 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 24	Middle School Fall Preseason Athletics Begin (Select Sports)
Monday, Aug. 31	All Schools: New Student Orientation
Tuesday, Sept. 1	First Day of Classes (Noon dismissal for PK-K)
Monday, Sept. 7	Labor Day: Academy Closed
Thursday, Sept. 10	Country Day & Junior Schools: No Classes Virtual Hopes & Dreams Conferences via Zoom



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM DUE AUG. 31

Each family is asked to sign an acknowledgement form indicating they have read and understand the information in this plan. Please log in to the [Veracross Parent Portal](#) click the gold School Policy Forms button and complete the 2020-2021 Reopening Plan Acknowledgement Form by **Aug. 31, 2020**.

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM

Our reopening planning effort has been guided by the thoughtful work of the Academy's COVID-19 Health and Safety Team, a task force composed of administrators across all four campuses:

- Bart Griffith Jr. '93, President
- Dr. Jennifer Asmonga, Head of Country Day School
- Christa Burneff, Hillman Center Artistic Director
- Brad Davies, Head of Junior School
- Paul Francioni, Director of Facilities
- Katharine Fredriksen, Chief Financial & Operations Officer
- Lillian Grate, Director of Equity, Inclusion & Community Relations
- Chad Green, Dean of Student & Residential Life, Senior School
- Jody Kokladas, Innovative Teaching and Learning Facilitator
- Dr. Peter Mathis, Assistant Head of Junior School
- Debi Mauder, Director of Administration and Planning
- Katie Mihm, Director of Enrollment Management
- Amy Nixon, Head of Middle School
- Jen Roupe, Director of Communications
- Trixie Sabundayo, Head of Senior School
- Dr. Ali Saras, Director of Alumni and Development
- Maria Thieman, Head Nurse
- Nate Verbanets, Director of Auxiliary Programs
- Tim Winner, Director of Educational Technology

Shady Side Academy would also like to thank the UPMC infection prevention specialists who volunteered their time this summer to provide counsel and advice to our COVID-19 Health and Safety Team.

QUESTIONS?

Families should expect to receive more granular school- and grade-level details via email from their school office in early to mid-August.

If you have general questions about the Academy's 2020-2021 Reopening Plan, please email covid19@shadysideacademy.org.

View the 2020-2021
Reopening Plan online at
www.shadysideacademy.org/coronavirus