



THE LEARNING CENTER  
K-8 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

# REOPENING PLAN

## OVERVIEW

We hope to welcome students back to the Learning Center in August. One thing is certain: it will be good to be together again.

Our enduring priority is the health and safety of every member of our community. The reality of the current pandemic means that this coming year will be unlike those of the past. We are developing protocols, in accordance with expert guidance, that best suit our particular situation for in-person learning. We will also offer the option of online education, both as a primary mode of education and as our means of education should we all need to pivot to remote learning because of COVID.

It is our belief that students gain the most benefit - educationally, emotionally, and socially - from in-person engagement with their teachers and fellow students in the classroom setting. The American Academy of Pediatrics ("AAP") speaks to the benefits of students returning to the classroom:

"The AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020."

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

As we come back together, our priority is safety. The Learning Center has developed phased reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year, written by our pandemic team: Dana Yeager, Dr. Becky Dawson, Dr. Gabrielle Morrow and Sara Mehler, RN MPH. This document is over 25 pages long and available for review. It has been approved by our board of directors. Our plan meets - and often exceeds - the standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Department of Education. In addition, to ensure a community dedicated to safety, our families will be asked to join us in signing the Learning Center Compact. The Compact is a statement of mutual commitment to community health and behavioral standard which every student, parent, guardian, teacher and staff member will sign before the start of the school year.

"Individually we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."  
- Ryunosuke Akutagawa

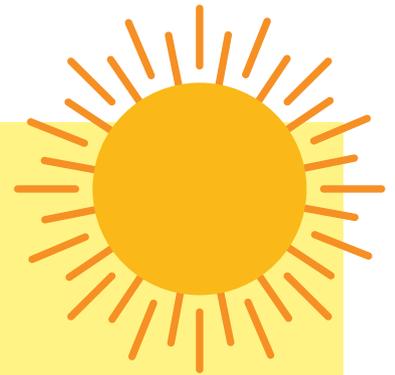
## RE-OPENING

At the Learning Center, we are fortunate to have small class sizes. Therefore, most of our health policies remain the same throughout the year unless we are required to pivot to remote learning. A reminder that families are welcome to choose remote learning if they are not comfortable with in-person learning at any moment for any reason. At any point in time families can pivot to remote learning. Once a family moves to remote learning, we ask that they commit to that decision for the rest of the grading period (9 weeks). We believe this flexibility will allow families to reassess their choices at the end of each grading period.

### HEALTH CHECKS

Temperature checks will be conducted prior to staff and students entering our building. As part of the Learning Center Compact, parents will screen their children daily for symptoms of illness.

During the yellow phase parents will complete an online health survey for their child prior to 7:30am on school days.

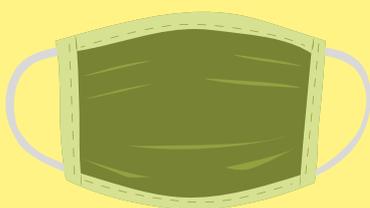


### OUTDOOR LEARNING

Learning will happen outdoors whenever possible. For example, we plan to start our year with small groups learning in Diamond Park under tents.

### FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings will be worn indoors. Per the Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines, shields are acceptable. Face covering will be promoted with love and kindness. We will frame disease prevention in The Learning Center spirit of social responsibility: we cover our faces to protect our friends and our community.



### PHYSICAL DISTANCING

We plan for physical distancing while encouraging social connection. Teachers are rearranging desks and furniture to make physical distancing more natural. Staggered entrances and exits have been scheduled throughout the day for students and classrooms. Classrooms will operate as quaranTEAMS to limit the mixing of students. Teachers will move from classroom to classroom as necessary to teach different subject areas while students will remain with their classes. Students will eat lunch in their classroom every day. We will enjoy our lunch outdoors as often as possible.

## REMOTE LEARNING OPTION

At the Learning Center, we are fortunate to have small class sizes. Therefore, most of our health policies remain the same throughout the year unless we are required to pivot to remote learning. A reminder that families are welcome to choose remote learning if they are not comfortable with in-person learning at any moment for any reason. At any point in time families can pivot to remote learning. Once a family moves to remote learning, we ask that they commit to that decision for the rest of the grading period (9 weeks). We believe this flexibility will allow families to reassess their choices at the end of each grading period.



## CLEANING & SUPPLIES

We have a daily schedule for cleaning and disinfecting with an emphasis on handwashing and good hygiene practices for our students. To be clear, this is the same plan that has been in place for years, however, we are adding more frequent cleanings and more frequent hand washings, and will be attentive to cleaning touch points, such as faucets, door handles, and light switches. In addition, each student will be provided a lap desk of his or her own and their own set of supplies to prevent cross touching of items. The supplies will travel with the student to and from school.

## ILLNESS PLAN

Should a child or staff member test positive for COVID-19, all families will be informed. The school will be closed for 72 hours (three calendar days) for deep cleaning. The school will pivot to online instruction for that time. During that time, we ask families to carefully monitor for symptoms. Should your child show signs or test positive for COVID-19, please continue online instruction for 14 days from the onset of symptoms (and at least 3 days free of symptoms). The classroom of the COVID-19 person will quarantine for 14 days. This classroom will attend school through remote instruction.

## LARGE GATHERINGS

Whole school indoor gatherings and family events are postponed indefinitely or will be conducted remotely.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips that require transportation are postponed indefinitely. Walking field trips to parks and other outdoor venues will be considered.

"We must learn to accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."  
- MLK, Jr.

## REMOTE LEARNING

As you review our plans, keep in mind the position of the AAP:

“Although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection. Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.”

We will be both following the guidance of the Departments of Health and Education. Additionally, we will be monitoring the health of our school and local community. If disease spread increases, we will pivot to remote learning.

### OVERVIEW

The Learning Center teachers have been hard at work creating plans for effective, nimble remote learning. Much was learned in the spring of 2020. The teachers are excited to use the latest technology to create inclusive, personalized instruction, with special considerations to account for the diversity of our students.

We currently have over 20 pages of plans created by our teachers at this time, and they are still working. Specific details will be made available to families soon. We have been collaborating via Google documents to give each other feedback to create the highest quality education. As always, we are available for discussion and individualization of curriculum.

### LOGISTICS

Our remote education platform is G Suite. Students will use their email address to join Google meetings, conference with teachers and access assignments. Students may borrow Chromebooks as needed.

Students will be given a collection of learning manipulatives, tools, and books.

Younger students may receive packets of worksheets and assignments.

### STAYING CONNECTED

Students will “check in” during their classroom’s morning meeting via Google meet.

Small group instruction will be provided via Google meet. Groups of 2-5 students will meet with their teacher daily. We will continue to promote critical thinking and positive communication while tackling literature and mathematics.

Students may also receive direct instruction or individual conferences.

Students will be encouraged to reach out and connect to their friends using Google Hangouts during remote learning.

Flexibility is the cornerstone of The Learning Center: if your child is unable to attend a meeting due to scheduling conflicts, keep in touch with us and we will provide alternate avenues for completing work and staying connected.

The online format lends itself very well to individualized tutoring and instruction on an “as-needed” basis. We are able to give one-on-one time and focus to building skills that are needed, so that the student can feel confident in areas where they might have felt self-conscious in the past.

-Chris, Voyagers Teacher

## AGE APPROPRIATE LEARNING

The Learning Center prides itself on providing individualized instruction and supporting each student as they develop their strengths. In this spirit, we have been honing the way we connect remotely with different age groups.

## NOVICES

Aside from regular small group virtual meetings to allow for focused instruction based on individual needs, the Novices plan to hold weekly events to bring us together and have fun as a whole group through events like Novice Dance Parties, Show and Tell and Book Club!

## APPRENTICES

Lauryn and Dan are excited to hold weekly online Author's Shares where students get to share the writing they've been working on, hear others' writing, and give and receive feedback. Also, the Apprentices have always loved creating and presenting slideshows, and we had a few students share their slideshows over Google Meet in the spring. That was a lot of fun and a huge hit with the kids, so we'll definitely bring that back if we go remote.

## PLAYERS

Emily and Simon are looking forward to doing weekly STEM projects with the Players, challenging students to hands on science and technology activities. And, of course, Simon can't wait to get started with his outdoor education projects again.

## VOYAGERS

The Voyagers won't skip a beat when we transition to remote learning! They will continue to have Morning Meeting in the form of puzzles and tasks to get warmed up for the day. They will continue with small-group discussions for Literacy, and small-group and individualized instruction for writing and math. The on line format allows students to participate in collaborative research projects, group shares, and student-led presentations with lively discussions following. Last spring the Voyagers even participated in group cooking projects while video conferencing, climate change simulation, and Voyager game nights!

There are tremendous challenges ahead, and there are tremendous opportunities. The Learning Center is responsive to the needs of a changing world as we find ways to better serve our students, families, teachers, staff and community.

The 20/21 school year will require us to partner in the education of our children. We will provide you with the tools to be the best academic coaches should we go remote. We are a community-based school and we will weather this pandemic together.

As we navigate and support one another through the 20/21 school year, remember that in 21/22, we will likely be back to fully engaging, whole heartedly, with The Learning Center philosophy - in a BRAND NEW SCHOOL HOUSE!

