
PROVIDENCE REUNITED

ADDITIONAL FAQs: A SUPPLEMENT TO THE FALL REOPENING PLAN

Updated 8/14/20

Will my child wear a mask all day long?

No. Masks will be worn when entering and leaving the building, when heading to or from one part of the building to another in hallways, when students are gathered in one space such as restrooms, or when a classroom activity involves being in close proximity to a teacher or peer without a barrier.

Classrooms are being reconfigured to provide distancing through either 6-foot separation in our largest rooms or through clear physical shield guards in smaller rooms. Once a student has taken a seat in class, he/she may remove the mask. In addition, students who prefer to keep a mask on may do so.

While state directives permit a mask exemption for students younger than 10 years old, we will require all students to bring “travel” masks with them to use during the limited times when distancing is not possible through spacing or through physical barriers. This is for the protection of our whole community, including faculty and staff.

Most of the day students will be in locations where distancing measures will allow for removal of the mask. In addition, for our youngest learners in kindergarten and first grade, classrooms have adjoining dedicated bathrooms, so restroom breaks will not require hallway transit.

What masks are acceptable on campus?

We know these are unusual times, and we desire to make wearing masks as simple and comfortable as possible. For this reason, we are allowing exceptions to dress code colors to allow some creative relief.

As an exception to our usual dress code, non-Providence colors and patterns will be allowed to try to make this unusual season more fun. Following CDC recommendations, we require a cloth face mask that properly covers the nose and mouth. A cloth mask that is the right size, comfortable enough not to touch and adjust frequently, and can be slipped on and off easily is the goal. A tightly woven cotton mask with multiple layers would be a good choice, for example.

A summary of masks compiled by NPR recommends a balance between fit and function: “When choosing a mask, experts say focus on the fabric, fit and breathability. How well a mask protects



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is a function of both what it's made of and how well it seals to your face. But if you can't breathe well through it, then you're less likely to keep it on" (NPR, July 1, 2020). While synthetic fabric "buffs" or "gaiters" worn around the neck and slipped up over the nose and mouth may not be the ideal fabric, the snug fit may give better protection on the sides versus regular masks according to Dr. Abraar Karan, a physician at Harvard Medical School serving on the Massachusetts' COVID-19 response team (NPR). Buffs will be allowed as a mask at school.

Masks may not have writing (like slogans or phrases), menacing images (like fangs or other "angry" themes printed on them), or offensive symbols of any kind. The school may disallow any specific mask if deemed inappropriate. Students who forget a mask will be supplied a disposable face mask for a small replacement fee. Also, the Class of 2021 will be selling Providence Academy masks as a fundraiser, so stay tuned!

A good summary of mask options may be found here (copy and paste into browser):
<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/07/01/880621610/a-users-guide-to-masks-what-s-best-at-protecting-others-and-yourself>

UPDATE: At this time, gaiters and bandanas are still permitted by the State of Arkansas as meeting the facial mask requirements. However, citing a new study out of Duke University, Governor Hutchinson has indicated he does not favor gaiters as face masks. Accordingly, the school is phasing out the sale of gaiters in our own fundraising offerings, and we encourage parents to consider cloth masks instead of polyester gaiters when practical and possible. To note, masks with "cut out" exhalation vent holes do NOT meet the CDC standard for facial masks, so these may not be worn in school (CDC: Considerations for Wearing Masks).

How will the school create social distancing?

Social distancing to limit exposure to non-household members will be accomplished through spacing or through physical barriers. When six foot gaps are not possible, the CDC recommends that schools use dividers like plexiglass or similar. Of course, plastic "sneeze guards" are now widely in use in our communities at checkout stands or post office counters.

Social distancing will be emphasized as much as reasonably possible. While we are reconfiguring rooms throughout the campuses to increase space or to create physical separation through barriers, we cannot always guarantee students will be distanced at every moment. When students are closer than 6 feet or not protected by a barrier, we will require a mask to be worn.



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What will classroom divider barriers look like?

When reviewing how schools deploy physical barriers for distancing, we have found a range of applications. For example, a private school in California pictured in *The Wall Street Journal* set up cardboard or pressed wood fold out partitions normally used for testing days; this is an inexpensive solution, but walls off students with poor visibility to the instructor and each other. Similarly, someone reported to us a group using plastic cling wrap to fashion a barrier; that is creative, but not durable or easily cleaned. On the other extreme, a school in the Netherlands photographed by Reuters installed massive plastic cube-like dividers at each desk; this created very large, clear walls but also meant students were confined to boxes.

In our designs, Providence Academy falls in between these examples. We have worked with multiple prototypes to adapt to different room sizes and table dimensions. We also worked on barrier dimensions using variously sized volunteer “models” from a young student to a grown man. At times when distancing is not possible by spacing or by barriers, such as when walking through busy hallways, we will require masks to be worn. Once seated at our workspace, masks may be removed for most class lessons.

Grammar Campus

Small round tables will have clear crisscross partitions. We showed a working prototype design to our kindergarten teachers, and they felt it was great for students and teachers alike. It creates a physical barrier without causing the student to feel too boxed in.

Grammar rooms with rectangular tables are large enough spaces that most tables will have side dividers, but typically only the tables closest to the teacher will also need front “windshields.” Side dividers will extend slightly beyond the edge of the table for better coverage. Students can be spaced six feet apart front to back in most grammar rooms, which allows for limited deployment of sneeze guards. A few grammar rooms are large enough to accommodate students with full gap spacing and no plexiglass. The sixth grade theatre room, for example, has ample space for students without a need for installing physical barriers.

As an additional resource for the school, two employees of Children’s Hospital walked through the grammar building with Mrs. Abbott and Mrs. Kight. They provided feedback on extra measures for the school to take in keeping our spaces ready for students.

Upper Campus

Most upper school rooms have rectangular tables, and most of those tables will be outfitted with side dividers and front windshields. Dividers will extend slightly beyond the edge of the table for



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better side coverage. With generally smaller rooms (and taller students than at grammar), more dividers are needed, but we are striving for designs that create a solid barrier without tight confinement. Some very large upper rooms have 5-foot round tables, and those will have crisscross sneeze guards.

What will lunchtime be like?

At the Grammar Campus, students will sit with their friends from their homeroom class during lunch. We will be seating four students per 6-foot round table with clear dividers on the sides of students. Because the tables are large, a center divider is not needed. Signs will be placed at each table to indicate where students can sit. We will use the entire gym for lunch set-up which should provide plenty of room for our students to spread out during lunch, while still allowing them to be social with their friends in small groups. Students will wear masks to lunch until they are settled at their tables to eat. Before students enter the gym for lunch, teachers will take all students to wash their hands. Hand sanitizer will be placed around the gym for after students are done eating.

At the Upper Campus, students will still be able to sit with friends during lunch (socially distant, of course). We are approximately tripling the size of the lunch area(s). More tables throughout the entire gym (versus using half of the gym as in previous years), social distancing guides, and signage will be in place (such as marked-off seats similar to local restaurants) as well as added seating outside. This should give our students plenty of room to spread out during their lunch break as social distancing guidelines suggest. We will require students to wear their masks until they have settled into their chosen seat.

What will dropoff and pickup be like?

Grammar Campus

This year parents will drop-off and pick-up by entering the South entrance of the IBC campus. A video and map will be sent out to parents. As students are greeted at drop-off by Mrs. Abbott and Mrs. Kight, parents will lift up a green signal card (which will be given to them at Parent Academy Boot Camp training in August) to indicate that they have self-screened their student(s). Students must have a temperature below 100.4 (without medication) to enter the building. If parents were unable to self-screen their students before drop-off, staff members will be able to screen for temperature at the door using a no-touch scanner. Students will enter the school through the gym doors and sit with their homeroom class. Each class will be socially distanced from other classes. Students will need to wear their masks for a short time while



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waiting in the gym to go to their classroom. If a student has a fever of 100.4 or higher, the parent will receive guidance about what to do for a safe return to school.

Upper Campus

Dropoff at the Upper Campus will be very similar to past years, but with a few added wellness procedures. As students are greeted at the door by members of the school staff and faculty, their temperature will be checked before being admitted to the building using a no-touch scanner. Any student with a temperature above 100.4 degrees will be asked to wait before entering for a temperature recheck. If a student's temperature remains 100.4 degrees or above, he or she will not be allowed to enter the building at that time. Parents will be called to return to campus and take their child home and provided additional guidance about the safe return to school.

As students enter the building, they will be asked to wear their masks until they have had a chance to move into a socially distant space and/or seated in their classrooms.

Will the test pilot of the Fayetteville morning shuttle still run in the fall?

We still plan to implement a test pilot of a Fayetteville morning shuttle. However, that program is temporarily on pause while we roll out the main operational adjustments needed for reopening. For this reason, we will likely be running a trial shuttle in Quarter 2.

We will still operate a shuttle route in the afternoon for athletes to arrive at training facilities for practices. If the bus is full, masks will be required for that short trip. If the bus is not full and there is 6-foot spacing between riders, masks will be optional once students are seated. Students may always elect to wear a mask on the bus if desired. The bus will have enhanced cleaning procedures on interior surfaces.

NEW What should I do if it is necessary for my child to quarantine?

Under current health guidelines, quarantine is required when someone has been *exposed* to a person who has tested positive. Exposure means being "within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes" (CDC: Summary of Covid-19 Specific Practices). In this situation, the ADH requires quarantining for 14 days from the most recent exposure (ADH: Covid-19 Resources Page). If exposure should occur at school, our staff will help identify any classmates or school employees who may need to quarantine. If exposure should occur in the community, please begin the quarantine process at home and notify the head of school for your campus.



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Isolation is similar to quarantine, but is a term used to describe a recovery period for someone who is *positive for Covid-19*. For someone with a positive test but no symptoms, the isolation time is 10 days. For someone with a positive test who is showing symptoms, isolation is required for 10 days since the first appearance of symptoms AND 24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) and with no other symptoms present (ADH).

If a student contracts Covid-19, we will work closely with the family on helping in any way possible so that schooling does not become a burden during convalescence. We are a community here, and we want to help in large and small ways.

There is a helpful visual chart summarizing quarantine and isolation guidelines here (cut and paste into your browser):

https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/When_can_I_stop_isolation_or_quarantine_5.7.20_.pdf

NEW How may my family select the remote learning option?

We are excited to provide the flexibility for students to learn onsite or remotely!

Based on feedback from our families, most students will begin the school year in person. Grammar families have already received information from Mrs. Abbott on the slightly modified drop-off procedures for this year. Upper students will have a similar drop-off process as last year; however, no-touch temperature screenings will occur at entry.

For families selecting remote learning to start the year, please email your intention to your head of school at grammar or head of school at upper as appropriate for your student(s) by Thursday, August 20. This will assure that we account for the location of our students for attendance purposes and allow our teachers and staff to give more care to ensuring your child(ren) are supplied with necessary resources.

At the grammar campus, remote learning will be conducted through asynchronous (taped) lessons uploaded throughout the week. At the upper campus, remote learning will be a blend of asynchronous and synchronous (live) lessons. We intend to take care that remote learning students have opportunities to connect with others “live” at times at certain scheduled intervals.



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To give our students excellent and personalized attention, class size limits will be applied as usual whether students are remote or onsite. In addition, we are investing in upgrades to recording technology on campus.

While we intend for families to have flexibility to move between remote and onsite learning as their circumstances or preferences change, as a practical matter we would encourage families to opt for their preferred learning mode for most of a given quarter. Reasonable exceptions will be readily made, of course! Please talk with your head of school at upper or grammar if you would like to change learning modes, as we would like to support your family as much as possible.

In addition, should an on-campus student need to quarantine or isolate from others, we will quickly help a family transition to remote learning to allow for a seamless transition.

NEW Will fall athletics be offered?

Yes, at this time, we intend fall athletics to go forward. Staying flexible is the key! Coach Daniels has done an excellent job of staying aware of changing guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health, the Heartland Christian Athletic Association, and the Arkansas Activities Association. Many of our students have already been able to participate in modified team and individual workouts. Competitive play will be subject to change this year, also, as teams around the region coordinate Covid management.

Also, we DO plan for a fall Patriot Family Night! It will be a few weeks later than usual this year as our athletic department considers options for how responsibly to manage what is normally a large group of Patriot Nation enthusiasts!

What is next?

We will continue to expand on the FAQs provided in the reopening plan and in this document as we prepare for school. Upcoming topics will include what to do if your family is traveling out of state or out of country during the school year and how to volunteer at school in these unusual days.

Got questions? Mrs. Abbott and Mr. Hopkins are available for any specific questions you may have, as well, about either campus. Reach out - they are glad to talk!

