



RE-OPENING THE *hilltop*
2020-2021



elgin
academy

DEAR friends,



No matter through what vehicle our learning happens, it will be personal and based in the relationships that are the hallmarks of the Elgin Academy experience.

~Seth Hanford

We have just concluded the 2019-2020 school year, a year unlike any other in our collective memory or in our school's long history. I want to thank all members of our community for the creative, courageous, and compassionate approach to each other and this unprecedented situation. *Our mission, Inspiring students to become our creative, courageous, and compassionate future,* has never been more alive, and as we turn our attention fully to the 2020-2021 school year, we continue to be guided by this ambitious statement.

The purpose of this document is to outline the considered way in which we will make our decisions about how to re-open our campus. And while we cannot make definitive claims at this point given the variable nature of this public health situation, there are things we know now that we want to share.

We anticipate another communication in late July or early August with many more details as the status of the pandemic at that point and its subsequent impact on school will be much clearer. We will also host a series of divisional town halls in mid-August.

For now, we are preparing to teach in-person, to utilize the connected learning methods we developed through the latter part of this year, and to move back and forth as necessary to accommodate the needs of our community. In our uncertain environment, this planning is necessary. **I want to be very clear, though, that it is our intention to have as many students on campus as possible, with as full a range of programs and offerings as we can as soon as public health, medical science, and good judgement make it advisable to do so.** We are readying our campus to ensure appropriate social distance, and we are working on the procedures, schedules, and health monitoring, guided by the science and our many partner organizations, that will make this possible.

We know that the benefits of connected learning are more accessible for older students than younger students. These older students can most often make use of the technology independently and the nature of the work they are doing transitions more easily. **While we'd like to have all students on the campus all of the time, we will prioritize having younger students on campus first and most often if we cannot host each student each day;** we know that they benefit the most from the in-person experience that is so central to their learning how to learn and sets the foundation for their future schooling.

No matter through what vehicle our learning happens, it will be personal and based in the relationships that are the hallmarks of the Elgin Academy experience. **To ensure this, we are planning to prioritize having all students on campus early in the year in order to establish and build the relationships that are crucial in any year at Elgin Academy.**

We also know that people will have varying levels of comfort with returning to campus. Each family's circumstance is different. **We are currently working on plans to make sure that the benefits of learning at Elgin Academy are available on campus and off.** An example of this might be to find a way for individuals from home to access live classes synchronously. We also have abundant faith in our use, where appropriate in certain disciplines, of asynchronous classes. Ultimately, our aim is to incorporate both, getting the mix right for each discipline and age.

On the pages that follow, you will find details about the many people on campus who are working to ensure a successful 2020-2021 school year. I am so grateful to these faculty, staff and community members who are volunteering their time to help us make the best decisions with the most recent information in this quickly changing situation. I am also so thankful to our entire faculty and staff, all of whom are working hard this summer to learn from the last few months and build on their successes to make 2020-2021 even better. Collectively, their hard work and expertise will allow us to analyze all of our options, react to the most recent information and, ultimately, set up the best and most adaptable plan.

I am confident in the program we will offer in 2020-2021 and look forward to working with you and your family. I can't wait to see you soon!



Seth Hanford
Head of School



RE-OPENING THE HILLTOP *committees*

We have assembled several committees comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators. Each committee has its own purpose and essential question to guide them as they work to prepare Elgin Academy to re-open. These committees will work individually as well as together to determine plans of action and best practices as we move forward.



PHYSICAL CAMPUS, SAFETY, AND HEALTH MONITORING

Essential Question: *How can we best ready and manage the campus based on evolving federal, state, and local guidelines?*

The purpose of the Physical Campus, Safety, and Health Monitoring Committee is to lay out the guideposts through which we will make decisions regarding the program.

Committee Members

Marnie Kut - Chair, Assistant Head of School for External Affairs

Jenn Brown, RN - LS Division Secretary

Andrew Kolba - Maintenance Director

Jim Kolba - Maintenance



COMMUNICATIONS

Essential Question: *How do we develop an effective communication plan as it relates to COVID-19 and the ever-changing landscape?*

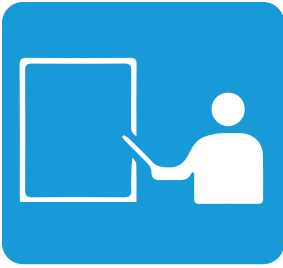
The purpose of the Communications Committee is to analyze various platforms and implement a communication plan to best disseminate information to the EA Community.

Committee Members

Marnie Kut - Chair, Assistant Head of School for External Affairs

Bonita Goist - Director of Admissions and Marketing

Tanya Moore - Summer Program Director, Website Content Manager, Advancement



PROGRAM COMMITTEE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS SUB-COMMITTEE

Essential Question: How do we ensure the best academic experience for our students with the flexibility to transition between in-person learning, hybrid models, or connected learning based on the needs of the community?

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS SUB-COMMITTEE

Essential Question: How do we ensure the fullest co-curricular program possible, designed to help students of all ages explore and pursue passions beyond classes in this environment?

The purpose of this committee and its sub-committees is to analyze the academic and co-curricular programs, to maximize our students' experiences, and to ensure that we are prepared for both in-person and connected learning opportunities.

Committee Members

Doug Sept - Chair, Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs

Academic Programs Sub-committee

Courney Boborci - LS Faculty, Faculty Innovation Team

Jessica Brown - MS Faculty, 7/8 Grade Dean, Faculty Innovation Team, Student Support Team

Bob Camosy - US Faculty, Faculty Innovation Team

Harry Gould - LS Faculty/Lead Teacher, Faculty Innovation Team, Student Support Team

Susie Howe - MS/US Faculty, Faculty Innovation Team

Jim Kidston - US Faculty, Technology Director

Katie Kruse - US Faculty, Director of International Studies

Jamie Lau - US Faculty, Faculty Innovation Team

Mariam Nasser - MS Faculty, Faculty Innovation Team

Co-curricular Programs Sub-committee

Mary Bayer - MS/US Faculty, Theater

Veronica Clements - MS/US Faculty, Videography and Art

Tanya Moore - Summer Program Director, Website Content Manager, Advancement

Rick Williams - US Dean, Athletic Director



SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Essential Question: How can we enhance our student support while building community, fostering a sense of belonging, and encouraging student success at the start of and throughout the school year?

The purpose of the Social/Emotional Support Committee is to understand that relationships are the key to success at Elgin Academy; and this committee will work to ensure that students have access to these relationships in any in-person, connected, or hybrid environment.

Committee Members

Helen Elayan - Chair, Director of Personalized Learning

Jessica Brown - MS Faculty, 7/8 Grade Dean, Faculty Innovation Team, Student Support Team

Harry Gould - LS Faculty/Lead Teacher, Faculty Innovation Team, Student Support Team

Janet Hughes - MS Faculty, 5/6 Grade Dean, Student Support Team

Doug Sept - Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, Student Support Team

Rick Williams - US Dean, Athletic Director, Student Support Team



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to support other committees as needed, provide feedback during the process, and review the final plan to ensure coherence, consistency, and effectiveness.

Committee Members

Seth Hanford - Chair, Head of School

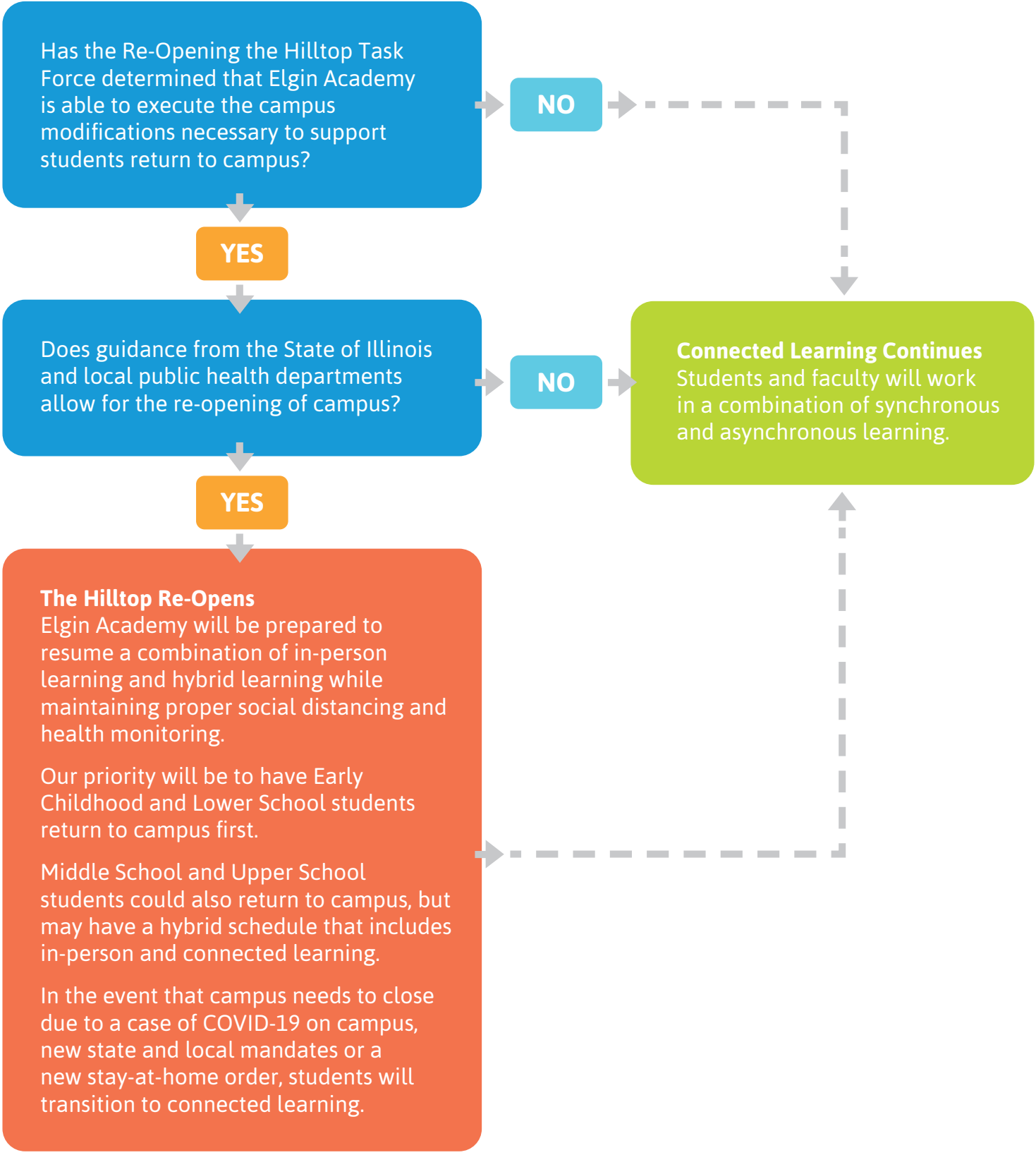
Rich Johnson - Professor of English and Director of International Education at Harper College, past parent, and Education Committee member

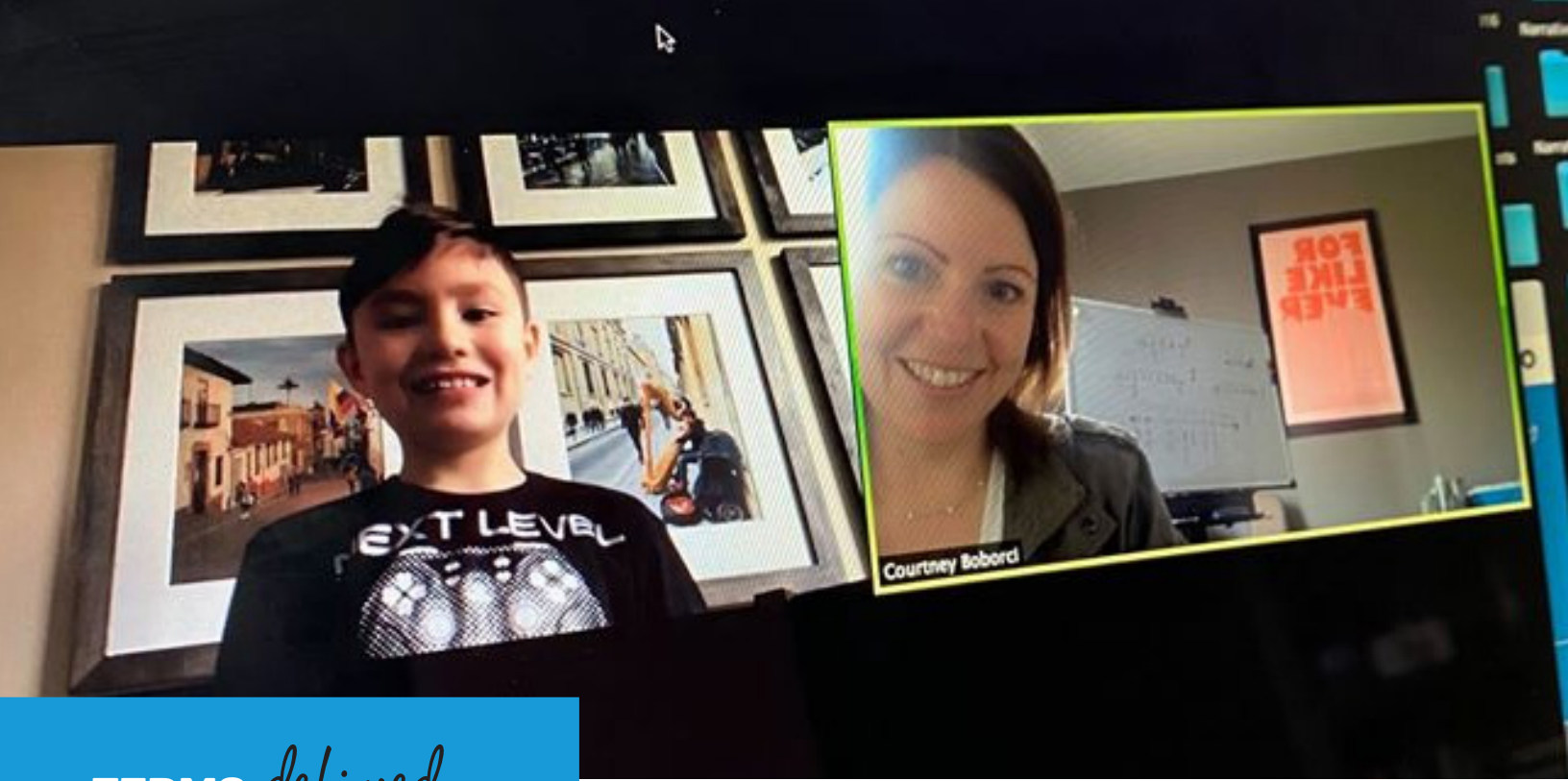
Jon Kaufman, MD - local pediatrician, past parent, and coach

Rob Wadington - attorney, past parent, past Board member, current Board advisor

Margie Ward - Elgin Academy Board of Trustees Chair

RE-ENTRY *plan*
The process





TERMS *defined*

Connected Learning

Teaching and learning that takes place primarily in an online format. Connected Learning may include a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Synchronous Learning

Teaching and learning happens at appointed times where the teacher and students meet concurrently in connected formats.

Asynchronous Learning

Teaching and learning happens at varied times where teachers provide information and content that students can always access at different times.

Hybrid Learning

A mix of campus classroom and connected teaching and learning.