

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How did SEM make the decisions about procedures for opening in the fall?

In late spring, we began scenario planning for the opening of school 2020. The planning for our fall opening scenarios was guided by our experience in the spring, parent and student feedback to our distance learning, consideration of our mission, faculty surveys, medical advice, government recommendations, and the best practices from National Coalition of Girls' Schools, National Association of Independent Schools and New York Association of Independent Schools. Our common goal is to provide the best overall experience for our students and their families and our faculty and their families while prioritizing the health and safety of all.

Families and school form a partnership. We all must acknowledge that in order to have the privilege of being on campus, we will make the necessary sacrifices and adjustments to protect our community. We are all responsible for checking the constantly updating Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and NYS guidelines for health and safety.

On what date is my student expected to be at SEM?

NEW RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

Wednesday, August 17

RETURNING RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

Saturday, August 22

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

Wednesday, August 2

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Tuesday, September 8

What new requirements are there for my student to return to campus on their prescribed date?

1. Every day student must obtain a COVID-19 test within one week before coming to campus and that test report must be submitted to the school nurse. If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they will be required to remain off-campus until 14 days after they are symptom free. If a student tests positive but has no symptoms, they must remain off campus for a minimum of 14 days following the positive test. If you are having trouble scheduling a test, contact Nurse [Kim Skomra](#).

2. All residential students will quarantine for 14 days and will be tested for COVID upon arrival and before joining classes.

3. The school expects students to adhere to strict physical distancing practices, including wearing masks when physical distancing is not possible outside their own family, for a minimum of 14 days prior to returning to campus.

4. In the spirit of school-family partnership, all students and their families will be asked to affirm their willingness to adhere to the expected standards developed by the school to keep our community safe. A formal document will be available by August 1.

Will students be allowed to learn remotely for part or all of the year?

Yes, we anticipate that some students may want or need to learn remotely.

When and which COVID test should my daughter take to start school?

Your daughter should be tested for COVID-19 (not the antibody test) one week prior to the start of school. Please contact Nurse [Kim Skomra](#) if you are having difficulty scheduling the test.

What about travelling before school starts?

We will ask if a student has travelled outside of Western New York as part of our daily health check.

What new protocols will the school have in place to mitigate the spread?

MASKS: At this time, we expect that all students, faculty, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks on campus and we ask that all families provide washable cloth masks for their daughters.

TESTING: We are requiring every student to have a COVID-19 test before the start of school. Additional testing may be required throughout the school year; we will determine those testing intervals based on recommendations from the CDC and local and state health departments, best practices for the needs of our school.

HEALTH MONITORING: All students, faculty, and staff will be required to self-monitor. No one may not attend classes or other school activities or come to work if they are symptomatic or have been in recent contact with anyone testing positive for COVID-19.

CAMPUS RESTRICTIONS: We are developing our plans related to visitors to campus, as well as students' ability to leave campus.

SANITIZATION AND CLEANING: New protocols are being developed and sanitization and disinfecting supplies will be available throughout the school.

Will the school nurse conduct a daily health and temperature check?

Yes.

Will the school nurse conduct COVID-19 tests?

No.

What about transportation?

As of July 15, 2020, we are awaiting plans from individual school districts.

Does SEM do what the Buffalo Public Schools do?

No. SEM will adhere to the guidelines set by New York State and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Should students bring their own cleaning products?

No. SEM will provide cleaning and sanitizing supplies with allergies and sensitivities and efficacy of the product as necessary calculations. Students may bring their own personal size sanitizer and gloves if they wish.

What about sports in the fall?

Athletic Director Kacie Mills will advise according to NYS and league guidelines for safe athletics.

What about the senior lounge?

SEM administration is working with senior class leadership to plan for safe usage of the lounge.

What about drivers' ed?

Drivers' ed is provided by an autonomous vendor which is not offering services to SEM at this time. We are in contact with the driving school and families will be apprised when it is available again.

How will lunch work?

There will be no more self-serve. Lunch will pre-made and served with disposable utensils.