



SUN VALLEY
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

2020-21

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LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



DEAR SUN VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES,

As we continue to move forward with our plan to reopen for in-person learning in August, I am full of optimism (albeit *cautious* optimism) and hope about the year ahead. This optimism is hard-earned and the result of many months of tireless work, research, strategizing, and collaborations by our SVCS team. Throughout all of this, I have been reminded of Henry Adams' observation that

**“Chaos was the law
of nature; Order was
the dream of man.”**

—Henry Adams

who

A Reunification Committee was created in March to work through all of the possible scenarios and challenges we could face as we come back together in community. The Reunification Committee is made up of Trustees, leadership team members, administrators, faculty and staff, and public health officials. They have met weekly both in large groups and 11 subcommittees over the past few months to make preparations to manage and mitigate the risks in reopening school this fall.

why

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the CDC, and other health organizations are advocating a responsible return to school with a system of precautions and modified behaviors in order to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19. We are closely following their recommendations and implementing changes to campus to help mitigate the potential spread of the virus. Please note, while we are taking a conservative and proactive approach, we cannot eliminate all risk associated with COVID-19. We must all acknowledge that this is a new disease and we learn more about it every day. We will continue to make decisions based on the best information available to us.

while chaos can seem like the natural state of things, humankind can bring order to it—we just have to be creative, adaptable, innovative, and relentless in our pursuit of an order that works.

Since March, the Board of Trustees, the leadership team, and the faculty and staff at SVCS have been working to understand the realities of living and educating in the midst of a pandemic. To manage the challenges, our team has been focused on the factors that we can control and the ways we can create a positive, sustainable, and meaningful educational experience for our students during this uncertain time. We do this work while always prioritizing the health and well-being of our students, their families, our faculty and staff, and our larger Wood River Valley community.

As of now, we will continue to work towards opening for in-person learning in August. We have prepared three models of instruction mapped out to responsibly meet the challenges of the pandemic as the public health situation

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



how

The Reunification Committee has worked and will continue to work very closely with a number of health, governmental, and educational organizations to create and maintain our plan for a return including the Centers for Disease Control, St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD), leaders at the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS), the State of Idaho, Blaine County, the Cities of Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum, and Sun Valley. Through our collaborations with these organizations, we have developed a responsible and responsive plan that offers us as much consistency as possible with each of the three instructional models.

what

In order to reopen our physical campuses in August and to keep them open as long as possible, we will be adhering to local and state ordinances that guide responsible re-opening. These include:

- + The Governor's Guidelines for Opening Up Idaho
- + Stay Healthy Idaho
- + Ketchum, Idaho's Health Order
- + Sun Valley, Idaho's Health Order
- + American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- + Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

will most likely shift throughout the year. We know many members of our community are anxious for a responsible return to campus for in-person learning. We also know that some individuals may not be ready to come back to school in-person due to health concerns. We are committed to working with those families in a connected or modified model.

What follows in this document outlines the approaches we will be taking and the process behind developing those approaches. Please read the following pages carefully and let me or the appropriate Division Head know if you have questions or concerns. Also, please note that this plan is subject to change at any time depending on the public health situation and the national, state, and local mandates. After last spring's nearly spontaneous move to connected learning, I know this—there is no other team and no other community I'd rather be with in the midst of a crisis. I have every confidence in our resolve, our grit, and our strength as a school and greater community.

Respectfully,
Ben Pettit, Head of School

please, do your part

In order for us to open with an in-person instructional model in August and in order to keep that in-person experience going, we all have to do our parts to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. Please be observant of local ordinances including wearing a mask/face coverings and maintaining physical distance when in public. Our priority is having educational experiences for our students, which may mean limits on adult gatherings on campus and assemblies in the year ahead.

Please consider travel carefully, especially air travel in the two weeks prior to the opening of school. If you must travel, especially to areas of high COVID concentration, please self-isolate for an appropriate amount of time. If you are exhibiting symptoms stay home and make an appointment to see a doctor.

Please and thank you!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following pages are the result of many months of planning and strategizing by committees made up of Trustees, administrators, and faculty. This document is detailed and covers many aspects of our program. It is our hope that you will carefully read through these pages so that you understand the path(s) we likely have ahead of us and the thinking behind each path. For your convenience, we have created this Executive Summary that touches on the salient points.

- 1.** Our priority, as always, is the health and well-being of our community members—our students, their families, our faculty and staff, and the wider Wood River Valley community. We have and will continue to make decisions with this top-of-mind. In addition, as always, we recognize that we need to serve both the physical health and the social-emotional health of our students and staff.
- 2.** We are planning to be open at the start of school for in-person instruction. We are, however, prepared with a “modified” and a “connected” model of instruction if the situation calls for it. The transition from model to model will be made based on mandates and guidelines from local and national health organizations and governmental agencies. Connected learning will be available to students who are unable to return to campus due to health reasons throughout the year.
- 3.** With all three academic models, we have prioritized the connectivity between students and teachers and the importance of engagement. Circumstances within the school, county, and state will dictate when and how we pivot between models, which may not be linear. It is possible that different parts of the school are operating in different models based on local conditions and circumstances within different divisions and cohorts.
- 4.** Because every individual’s actions impact the community in significant ways, we strongly encourage families to take the necessary steps to be healthy and ready to start school in person. It is critical that families, students, and staff adhere to established policies and practices regarding PPE, masks, physical distancing, handwashing, traffic patterns, and daily screening practices in order for us to operate in-person school. Please respect local stay-healthy orders.
- 5.** In order to abide by physical distancing and mask wearing guidelines set by local governments and health agencies, we will require masks for students above the age of 5 and for all faculty and staff when inside or in a situation where physical distancing is not possible.
- 6.** We require all Cutthroat community members to follow our revised illness policy which outlines symptoms to pay attention to, steps to take if symptoms present, and steps to take in order to return to school. This includes self-isolation and COVID testing in order to limit the potential spread of COVID.
- 7.** We will offer co-curricular programming (Outdoor Program, Athletics, and the Arts) but understand that potential modifications might be necessary depending on the mandates by national, state, and local governmental and health agencies.
- 8.** Due to the health situation and in an effort to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, we will limit campus access. We will also have heightened awareness and practices regarding hygiene, sanitation, and physical distancing.
- 9.** Flexibility, responsiveness, and communication are key to having a successful academic year. We will do our best to keep you abreast of the challenges as they present themselves and our responses to those challenges. We are all navigating unfamiliar waters, and we cannot predict how the situation will unfold or how our families, friends, students, colleagues, and selves will respond to this tumultuous time. If you are confused, worried, or have any questions, please reach out to the appropriate division head, teacher, or administrator.
- 10.** All families will be asked to sign an enrollment addendum acknowledging the risks associated with COVID and committing to upholding the standards, policies, and procedures established by the school in reopening this fall.

NECESSARY WORDS OF CAUTION

Our top priority is always the safety and well-being of our community members. As we are able to come together again, please be mindful that we all need to manage and mitigate risk and establish a responsible standard of care for all events and programming at the school. While we cannot eliminate all risk from COVID-19, we can take actions to mitigate it.

SVCS requires all participants who attend school-sponsored activities or who access any of the SVCS physical campuses to strictly observe those preventative measures which have been prescribed to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Such measures include social distancing of three to six feet, the use of facial masks or coverings, frequent handwashing, disinfection protocols and limits on crowd size. While these measures might minimize risk of exposure, participants should understand their participation could still result in exposure to COVID-19 and possible illness. In the event that someone in the school community does not want to undertake this risk, please contact the school administration to make alternative plans related to school offerings and events. Anyone enrolled at SVCS required to sign an Assumption of Risk/Release of Liability Agreement which will be distributed in the early August communication.

Our standards of care protocols for reopening various parts of our program are in line with the State's Idaho Rebounds criteria and AAP, WHO, and the CDC's guidelines and recommendations. Please continue to support the Stay Healthy orders in place and respect the need for caution and restraint as we navigate these unfamiliar waters. We appreciate your understanding and support.



GUIDANCE + EXPECTATIONS



guidance

We are using the recommendations and the guidelines set forth by local and national health organizations and governments including the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the South Central Public Health District (SCPHD), the State of Idaho, and Blaine County in our planning and decision making processes. **We are continually tracking COVID developments and will update our policies as the health situation develops. Please understand that the current environment is very fluid and our goal is to be proactive and responsive to the best information we have at the time. With that said, this plan is subject to change at any point depending on the health situation.**

we're in this together!

While we are making every effort to mitigate risk to our students, their families, our faculty and staff, and our wider community, we cannot eliminate COVID-related risk. All of us need to be able to trust our fellow community members to be good stewards of their own health and the health and wellness of others.

ASSUMPTIONS + CHALLENGES



assumptions

We have begun planning for the 2020-21 school year by acknowledging certain assumptions based on research and data from scientists, the medical and public health community, and government officials. As realities change, the following assumptions may be adjusted accordingly:

- + COVID-19 will continue to impact communities including our local and school populations and requires a response.
- + Several waves of infection are likely.
- + Personal Protective Equipment and physical distancing measures will continue to be a reality.
- + Testing, both for the novel coronavirus and for antibodies, is likely to become more readily available and reliable in the future.
- + Students of different ages have differing abilities to respond well to distance learning.
- + Sun Valley Community School will continue to prioritize in-person educational experiences wherever and whenever possible.
- + COVID-19 prevalence among children is lower than in adults, and children who contract COVID-19 are more likely than adults to be asymptomatic or to have mild symptoms.
- + While more rare, school-aged children can contract COVID or serious COVID-related diseases. We will do everything we can to manage and mitigate risk, but **it is important to recognize we cannot eliminate risk.**

challenges

Making decisions impacting so many based on an extraordinarily fluid public health environment is a major challenge for any school or organization. With that in mind, we have attempted to address the following challenges with the understanding that further challenges and complexities are likely to arise:

- + SVCS is a highly complex organization, serving the various needs of students from 2 years old to 18 years old and serving both day and residential students.
- + Monitoring the health and well-being of over 500 on-campus community members on a daily basis is a complicated task that will require the participation of every member of our community through self-monitoring and reporting.
- + While we are a student-dominated population, we must consider the health and wellbeing of the nearly 100 adults that comprise the faculty, staff, and administration of the school in our reopening plans. As noted, adults are more susceptible to COVID and COVID-related complications.
- + Not all students, families, or faculty will be able or comfortable to return to in-person learning for health reasons.
- + The need to contact trace, should a member of our community become infected, is also a complicated and time-consuming process, but it will be essential in our efforts to protect our community and in-person learning.
- + The need to redesign and reimagine educational experiences and community-building activities so that they function in all three potential models of operation is vital to a successful 2020-21 school year.
- + COVID-19 has impacted individuals, families, and our community in many ways—physically, emotionally, economically, and psychologically. We need to be as mindful and proactive about addressing the mental health impacts as we are about the physical.



IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

academics

BE PREPARED: THREE MODELS

Considering the above assumptions and challenges and in consultation with public health and government officials, we have designed three models that may be deployed schoolwide, or according to the needs of specific academic divisions or programs. The right model for the moment will depend largely on the medical realities of our community that are unpredictable and are likely to change periodically. Each model is outlined below. As guidelines from the State of Idaho as well as the CDC continue to change, we will take the steps necessary to manage and mitigate the risk to our students and faculty. We are prepared to pivot between these models as necessary and possibly not in succession, and we have designed schedules for each division that will allow for transferability and consistency of program delivery for students, families, and staff regardless of our operating model.

In all models, we have prioritized the connectivity between students and teachers and the engagement in individual learning.



1. IN-PERSON (with heightened awareness)

Going back to our regular program and regular activities is our first choice. If there is isolated to no community spread in Blaine County (Idaho Category 1), we will opt for in-person instruction, beginning at 8:15 a.m. each day with staggered dismissals from 2:30 to 3:15 p.m. by division. While this will be the most “normal” of the three models, there will be some noticeable changes on campus and in our community’s daily practices when it comes to cleanliness, hygiene, and personal health. We will also have changed traffic patterns (entrance-only and exit-only designations, one-way traffic, the use of exterior doors from classrooms, etc.), student cohorts, outdoor classrooms, staggered dismissals, increased ventilation etc. to mitigate risk. Specific arrival and dismissal procedures by division will be articulated in the early August communication. There may also be some significant changes to our co-curricular programming (Outdoor, Athletics, Aftercare) and events. Those details are explained later in this document. If you would like to opt out of in-person instruction due to health concerns, please speak to the appropriate Division Head to develop a plan.

Model 1 In-Person Learning

- Coincides with Idaho Category 1 + No Community Transmission
- Adjustments include cohorting, changed traffic patterns, some impact to co-curricular programming, heightened sanitation and more.

Model 2 Modified

- Coincides with Idaho Category 2 + Minimal to Moderate Community Transmission
- A combination in-person and connected learning that utilizes limited/staggered use of school buildings with physical distancing and heightened sanitation

Model 3 Connected

- Coincides with Idaho Category 3: Substantial Community Transmission
- Campuses closed for targeted short-term or extended periods of time. A robust online learning platform for all K-12 classes.

2. MODIFIED

Our “modified” model allows us to operate in-person as well as online and will be our protocol when there is minimal to moderate spread (Idaho Category 2). This model is predicated on utilizing student cohorts and staggering schedules to reduce student and faculty densities on campus. The modified model will also employ additional or repurposed classroom and program spaces as well as remote technologies. This model can be used to isolate cohorts within a school or for a return to school following a period of connected learning. However, it is important to note that it is highly likely that there will be no linear movement from one model to another or any pattern. In other words, we may start with in-person learning, but the health situation may necessitate that we move directly to connected learning, then possibly back to modified.



3. CONNECTED LEARNING

The “connected” model is our online version, similar to but further evolved from what we offered in the spring. This model will coincide with significant community spread at SVCS or in Blaine County (Idaho Category 3). Our faculty and staff have spent the summer preparing for the potential move to a modified or connected platform in order to deliver a robust SVCS curriculum for each class. The connected model will offer a full schedule, curriculum, and mission-aligned programming delivering vital content and skills for student progression. We are proud of the way our faculty and students adapted to connected learning in the spring. We learned many lessons from the experience and from the input we gathered from parents and students. While in-person is still our preferred model, our faculty and staff are ready to pivot to connected learning when/if necessary.

BUILDING TRANSFERABLE + CONSISTENT SCHEDULES

Our Program Committee (made up of Division Heads, Department Chairs, select Program Directors and additional faculty) has developed school schedules for the in-person, modified, and connected learning models to maximize consistency and ease of transition. Design considerations included:

- + Transferability and stability of the curriculum between models to minimize change and reduce the stress;
- + Offer consistency in start/stop times, curricular progression and assessment, and opportunities for 1:1 student/teacher interactions;
- + Limit transitions and group mixing;
- + Time to build and engage in community activities, such as clubs and assemblies;
- + Alternate on/off campus time if necessary.

More specific details about the schedules that we will use for ES, MS, and US in each model will come in early August.

preparations

In order to ensure that we are prepared for any reality we may face, our faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees have been focused on providing top-flight modified and connected learning experiences, while adhering to health and safety protocols. In addition, we plan to provide learning opportunities and support for parents and families, so that in the event of a partial or full school closure of the physical campus, students have the support they need to engage remotely.

ON-SITE HEALTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

Because the health and well-being of our community is paramount, we are in the final stages of hiring a full-time Health Services Coordinator who will be responsible for promoting and monitoring the health of our school community. We will have more information on this hire in August.

TECH SUPPORT + INVESTMENT

While we are committed to the in-person academic experience, we do understand that if and when we are forced to turn to our modified or connected learning models, we need to be able to provide the very best possible experience for our students. We will offer tech support to families as needed in preparation for and during connected learning should we have to pivot to that model at some point(s) during the year.

We have prioritized investment in technology, infrastructure, and support that will also benefit the in-person academic experience. These investments include the following:

- + Upgraded our current WiFi network with new access points installed both on Trail Creek Campus and at Dumke Family Sagewillow Barn to match what we had at Rufus M. Brown Hall.
- + Upgraded our network infrastructure to ensure internet connection reliability on campus.
- + Increased internet bandwidth to a fiber connection to support necessary streaming of classes and a more reliable connection while on campus.
- + Adopted in-class camera systems to aid in remote content delivery.
- + Invested in learning platforms that support in-person and connected learning.
- + Enacted a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) model for grades 3-5 by making recommendations and helping guide families through the purchase process.
- + Provided teachers with a stipend to purchase new devices.
- + Provided school-owned iPads for teachers to successfully deliver math instruction.

OUR COMMITMENTS: ON-CAMPUS SPACE FOR LEARNING + REMOTE ACCESSIBILITY

We are committed to staying open and welcoming students to campus as allowed by local and state government and public health officials. However, if we must pivot to a modified schedule where we work to reduce densities in classrooms (or re-imagine classroom spaces), we are fortunate to have 40+ acres of space and a number of large spaces—gyms and common areas—where we can effectively distance students who cannot be in class, but who for various reasons cannot remain at home. Students whose parent(s) qualify as “Essential Workers,” as defined by the State of Idaho, will qualify for access to our campus during our modified or connected learning models. More details about this program will be provided in the early August communication. By the same token, we understand that some students may not be able to attend in-person classes because of their own health or because of an at-risk family member. We are committed to providing the highest quality SVCS education possible to those students who cannot attend in-person classes either due to illness or due to choosing to be remote due to health concerns. Further details will be shared on this model as we approach the start of school.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

If you are a part of the learning specialist program, we will work with you to develop a reliable and sustainable schedule to meet your learning goals and needs. If you are not a part of the Learning Specialist Program but want more academic support, please work with your teacher(s) to establish a sustainable schedule and utilize the “office hours” option available in all divisions.

by division



ELEMENTARY

ECC: The ECC is licensed as a child care facility and thus deemed an essential service by the State of Idaho. This designation will most likely allow the ECC to remain open if the daycares in the State of Idaho remain open. We understand the difficulty of delivering a top-flight educational experience to preschool children remotely, and we expect to remain in operation for as many students as possible even under quarantine conditions. To do so, we have established cohorting and cleaning protocols that will mitigate potential spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19.

Aftercare: We understand that after-school care is an important offering for working families. At this time, we are confident that we can offer Aftercare for ECC students from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. by keeping the children enrolled in this program within their cohorts, as recommended by various public health agencies, such as the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and SCPHD. It is our hope that we will be able to return to our normal Aftercare program, which is usually until 5 p.m., when guidelines and protocols permit us to do so safely.

K-5: We will be prioritizing plans which keep as many elementary students and teachers on campus as possible. In the event of a move to connected learning, the entirety of the ES program, including specials, will be provided.

More information to come in our early August communications, which will have division-specific information.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School students need a learning environment that includes attributes of both the Elementary and Upper School levels. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends similar school structures for both middle school and high school students.

We have created an in-person schedule for Middle School that allows us to provide our programming while taking into consideration the various precautions and measures outlined throughout this document. With that said, we are also preparing modified and connected models in the event circumstances require us to pivot. Other key design considerations take into account health precautions as well as the schedule's transferability and consistency between in-person, modified, and connected models. We are aiming for consistency in matters like class length, start-end times, curricular integrity, time for community-building activities, and ample opportunities for student-teacher interaction. **We will share the specifics of these various schedules and revised policies in our early August communications, which will have division-specific information.**

UPPER SCHOOL

As stated earlier, our first priority is for Upper School students to be on-site for school to the greatest extent possible. We have created an in-person schedule that allows us to provide our programming while taking into consideration the various precautions and measures outlined throughout this document. With that said, we have also prepared modified and connected models in the event circumstances require us to pivot. The upshot to these approaches is that Upper School-aged students are best suited, developmentally and academically, to manage asynchronous (independent) learning. Our key design considerations take into account health precautions as well as the schedule's transferability and consistency between in-person, modified, and connected models. We are aiming for consistency in matters like class length, start-end times, curricular integrity, time for community building activities, and ample opportunities for student-teacher interaction. **We will share the specifics of various schedules and revised policies, including Google Classroom use, lunch procedures, off-campus privileges, etc., in our early August communications, which will have division-specific information.**



RESIDENTIAL

As a residential program, we strive to create a safe, nurturing, fun, inclusive, and engaging environment for all of our boarding students and families. This year will be no different in terms of our goals. With the health and safety of our boarding students at the forefront of our minds, we have made a few changes to our daily policies and procedures to mitigate risk to our students and staff. By limiting the total number of boarding students in the Residence Hall, we have made it possible for our students to be a “family unit” or cohort that can remain intact even if the school pivots to a connected learning model. We are also taking the following steps to mitigate risk.

- + Due to the communal living and travel factors included for our boarding program, residential students will be asked to test for COVID three to five days prior to arrival at the dorm and submit negative results to our Health Services Coordinator before coming to campus. Students will be tested again upon arrival at the dorm. More information regarding dorm procedures will be shared with residential families at the Residential Family Town Hall in August.
- + We have designated infirmary spaces where we can move students who are exhibiting signs and symptoms and keep them isolated until they are evaluated by our Health Services Coordinator.
- + We have enhanced our daily cleaning protocols to ensure that all common areas and frequently touched places (i.e. door handles, railings, etc.) are thoroughly cleaned.
- + We will limit outside visitors in the building’s common areas and prohibit visitors from entering students’ personal rooms and pods.
- + We have created a detailed list of kitchen protocols to ensure that food safety guidelines are followed.
- + We plan to use distancing standards during community activities and use our outdoor spaces as much as possible. This could include dinner times, dorm meetings, and study halls to name a few.
- + Students will be required to wear masks in all common areas if state or local health regulations call for it. Students’ individual rooms will be “mask free” areas.

co-curricular programs

OUTDOOR

By design, the Outdoor Program teaches us to be prepared for and responsive to dynamic environments. It plays an integral part of the Sun Valley Community School experience and will remain so throughout the pandemic. We find ourselves in a unique position to leverage our Outdoor Program to take advantage of the unified public health guidance that being outside is a beneficial first step in helping reduce viral transmission. In the Outdoor Program, our work in mitigating risk for students and trip staff, while honoring our responsibility to the greater community, will involve modifying some trip locations, itineraries, and curriculum as needed. These decisions are governed by our ability to monitor and reasonably adapt our operations to public health conditions here at home, and of the destinations to which we travel all over the Intermountain and Pacific Northwest. We are taking a detailed look at how we can accomplish many of the objectives of our Outdoor Program through local day trips and/or shorter multi-day experiences where travel and logistics are simplified. Additionally, we'll mitigate our risk by reducing student densities in vehicles and sleeping shelters when reasonable and possible, build upon our culture of personal hygiene as part of taking care of oneself and the group in the outdoors, conduct vigilant screening and surveillance of student health in the field, refine and simplify our menus, and create sanitizing schedules and rotations for the equipment we use. A decision regarding the school's storied tradition of Fall Campout for grades 6-12, along with revised protocols, will be communicated in our back-to-school email coming in early August.

ATHLETICS

Fall Sports

With guidance from Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA), Upper School fall sports are scheduled to begin practices on Monday, August 10. Middle School athletics are scheduled to begin practices on Monday, August 24. IHSAA presented recommendations from steering committees for each fall sport to the Association's Board on how to safely conduct athletics for the upcoming season, which have been approved. While we cannot eliminate all COVID-related risk that comes with participating in athletics, we will follow IHSAA guidelines and have strict protocols and policies in place to mitigate risk to our athletes. If the health situation moves the IHSAA to delay or cancel athletics, we will offer competitive intramural activities for both Upper and Middle School students to keep them physically and socially engaged.

Winter Sports

The state has yet to make a determination on winter athletics. More details to come.

SVSA

Sun Valley Ski Academy staff will continue to work together with our partner, Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation, to provide the very best programming to our skiers and snowboarders. Use of Sun Valley Community School's Dumke Family Sagewillow Campus, Julia Argyros Training Center, and Rufus M. Brown Hall will be available to skiers and snowboarders as training locations if they are deemed safe and operational within Idaho state guidelines.



ARTS

The arts are a vital part of the SVCS experience and are not expendable when times are tough. The pandemic has forced us to rethink every aspect of our curriculum and our methods of delivery, and the Creative Arts Department is no different. Our creative arts faculty (visual, performing, and dramatic) have spent the summer developing creative ways to deliver arts curricula online if necessary. This includes rethinking the way we host performances in light of the pandemic. In order to reduce the risk of community spread, our shows will live stream rather than having a live audience. We plan to provide robust and meaningful artistic experiences across the disciplines for all of our students.

TRADITIONS + EVENTS

Many of our signature in-person events will be canceled or modified in the year ahead, especially those that bring large groups of adults onto campus or into close proximity to each other in an effort to protect our ability to operate in-person educational programming as often and as long as possible. We are committed to rethinking how we provide an approximation of as many community-building events as possible, while prioritizing the health and wellness of our students, faculty and staff, and families. We will send a comprehensive list of fall events in our early August communication.

Back-to-School Events + New Student & Family Orientations:

Instead of one large all-school Back-to-School Bash following the new student and family orientations in August, the school and the Parents' Association are working together to plan class-specific mini-welcome events that will allow for physical distancing. More information to come, but all mini-welcoming and orientation events will happen the week of August 24.

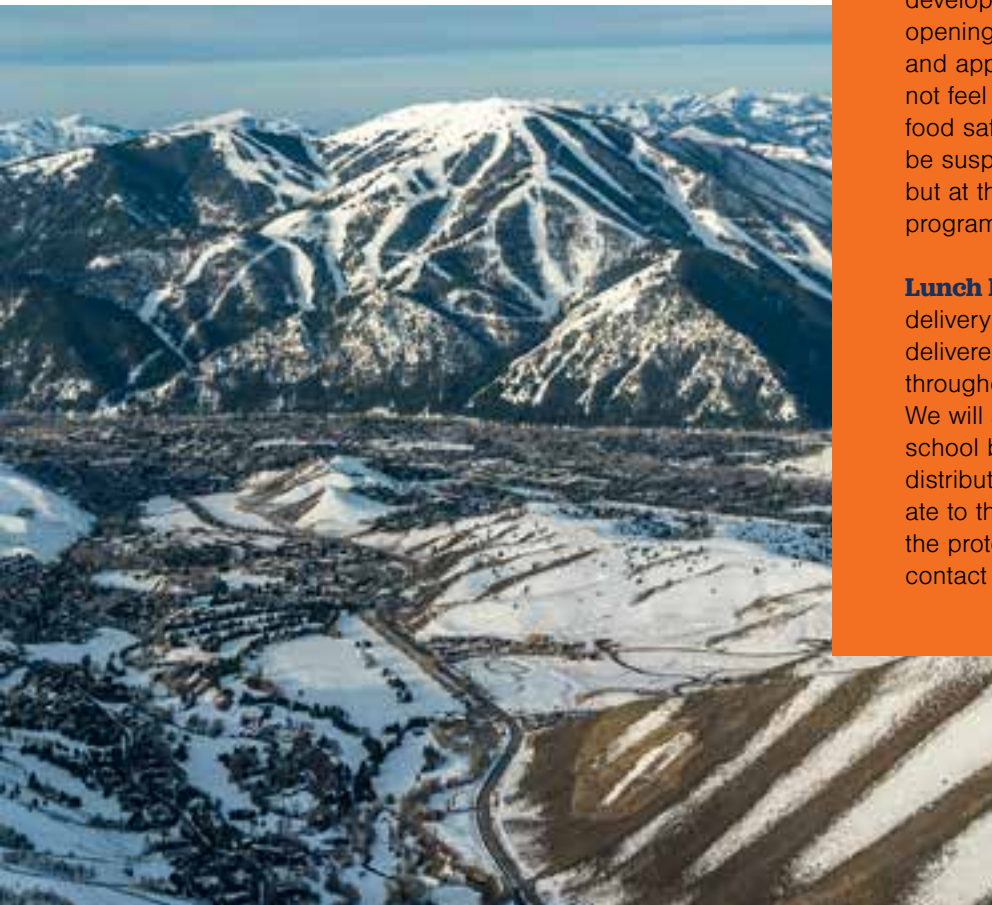
Grandfriends' Day: The in-person version of Grandfriends' Day is canceled, but we are committed to sharing a meaningful look "inside" the K-5 experience with our Grandfriends. Throughout the year, K-5 classes will work to connect with grandfriends remotely, providing glimpses into the daily life of students, offering authentic opportunities to participate in the curriculum through interviews, projects, and read-alouds.

Residential Parents' Weekend: The in-person version of Residential Parents' Weekend is canceled, but we are committed to having a Residential Parents' experience in some form to ensure that parents get a meaningful look "inside" residential life. More information to come.

FOOD ON CAMPUS

Cutthroat Cafe: We are working with our food-service team to develop contingency plans for the delivery of meals to classrooms or other areas where social distancing is possible. Moreover, we are developing strict kitchen protocols in advance of the opening of school in August to ensure food safety and appropriate precautions. If school leaders do not feel comfortable with the level of hygiene and food safety precautions possible, food service may be suspended for the duration of the pandemic, but at this time we plan to offer the Cutthroat Cafe program on a modified basis.

Lunch Deliveries: We will continue our lunch delivery program as all of the restaurants that have delivered to SVCS in the past have been operating throughout the pandemic safely and effectively. We will ask the deliveries to be left outside of the school buildings and each division will manage distributing the lunches in a safe manner appropriate to the division level. If you have questions about the protocols these restaurants are using, please contact the restaurants directly.



IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH + WELLBEING



Our Priorities: Our Community's Health and Well-Being

Safeguarding the health and well-being of our students, families, and staff is, as always, our priority. Sun Valley Community School's Board of Trustees and Leadership Team have sought the advice of medical professionals and researched guidelines provided by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the South Central Public Health District (SCPHD), and others in developing safety protocols. Because the COVID situation is ongoing and developing, we will constantly monitor guidelines from our state and local governments and health officials as we establish policies. Therefore, protocols are evolving and will continue to be updated based on the most recent requirements and recommendations.

With that said, we have imagined the work of protecting the community within the following categories:

- + Safety of spaces and materials
- + Monitoring and tracking of illness
- + Maintaining physical distancing
- + Personal hygiene and safety measures
- + Reevaluation of policy
- + Safeguarding social and emotional well-being

SPACES + MATERIALS

Sun Valley Community School has established heightened deep-cleaning and disinfection protocols. Not only has every building been deep-cleaned and sanitized over the summer in advance of our return to campus in August, special care will be given to areas used during the summer by faculty, staff, and students. Once the school year begins, we will reevaluate and continually monitor our staffing, both in terms of the number of cleaning professionals on staff and in terms of what time of day they clean and disinfect surfaces. Our protocols will also include the frequent deep cleaning of school vehicles and sanitization of classroom surfaces. We will also alter traffic patterns to reduce risk; changes will include the use of exterior classroom doors when possible, traffic pattern modifications in hallways when possible, and the temporary elimination of "hang out" areas in the Middle and Upper Schools.

In addition, we will follow CDC recommendations to:

- + Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces multiple times per day.
- + Avoid the use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
- + Verify and maintain that all ventilation systems continue to operate properly.
- + Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep products away from students.
- + Install barriers in some areas and/or traffic guides to encourage safe distancing.



Monitoring + Tracking of Illness

Screening and reporting illness within our community will be a significant factor in our ability to keep our campuses operating with in-person instruction in 2020 and beyond. Therefore, to monitor effectively, we will implement daily parent-report screenings to determine the health and exposure of students and staff entering campus buildings. We will also ask all families to strictly adhere to our Illness Policy (below) to help reduce potential community spread. Identifying and isolating students and staff with COVID symptoms or positive COVID tests will be an essential tool in our efforts to keep our campuses open and our community healthy. We will continue to work closely with the South Central Public Health District to determine the best course of action that ensures the health and well-being of our school and larger community.

If anyone in your home presents with symptoms or has a known exposure to a person with COVID, we strongly encourage every member of your household to self-isolate, be tested for COVID, and notify our Health Services Coordinator.

SVCS ILLNESS POLICY

In an effort to protect the health and well-being of our school community, please adhere to the following Illness Policy. Compliance with this policy is critical in maintaining a healthy community, reducing the spread of illness, and provides the greatest chance for the Sun Valley Community School to continue in-person learning.

COVID-19 Symptoms or Positive COVID Tests

Persons will not be admitted into school facilities or participate in school activities and will be asked to stay home if they have any of the following COVID-19 symptoms in the LAST 72 HOURS:

- + Cough
- + Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- + Fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or above
- + Chills
- + Muscle pain
- + Sore throat/and or swollen lymph nodes
- + New loss of taste or smell
- + Diarrhea
- + Vomiting
- + Nausea
- + Other signs of new illness that are unrelated to a preexisting condition (such as seasonal allergies)

If a student or staff person tests positive for COVID-19, notify the School's Health Services Coordinator immediately to allow the school to take appropriate steps in consultation with South Central Public Health District.

After being ill with COVID-related symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19, students and staff may return to school under the conditions below. *Note: We strongly encourage a COVID-19 test in this situation.*

- + If ill students and staff have NOT had a test to determine if they are still contagious, they may return to school after these three conditions have been met:
 - No fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or above for at least 72 hours (three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers);
 - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved);
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- + If ill students and staff HAVE HAD a test to determine if they are still contagious, they may return to school after these three conditions have been met:
 - No fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or above (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)
 - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved)
 - Two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart.
- + People who DID NOT have COVID-19 symptoms, but tested positive and have stayed home (home isolated) may return to school under the following conditions.
 - If they had a test to determine if they are still contagious, they can return to school after these two conditions have been met:
 - At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive test
 - They continue to be asymptomatic (no cough or shortness of breath) since the test.
 - If they had a test to determine if they are still contagious, they can return to school after they receive two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart. Their doctor will follow CDC guidelines.

Please make sure that your emergency contact information is kept current and that you can be reached immediately whenever your child is at school. If your child becomes ill while at school, they will be isolated per our policy, and you will be notified and expected to pick up your child immediately.

PART TWO

MONITORING

We will use an online platform for daily screenings with questions and prompts recommended by the CDC. This allows us to chart, log, and track students' symptoms in our entire community as recommended by the CDC and Idaho State Health guidelines. Families are asked to self report any COVID signs and symptoms and adhere to all of our student health and illness protocols.

In the event that a student or staff member exhibits symptoms associated with COVID-19 while on campus, SVCS will adhere to CDC recommended protocols to:

- + Create an isolated area for anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms during hours of operation, ensure that students exhibiting the symptoms are not left without adult supervision, and establish a plan to transport home.
- + Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any positive case of COVID, while maintaining privacy and confidentiality.
- + Close off areas used by any sick person and not use them until they have been disinfected. Advise infected and/or exposed students and/or staff members not to return until they have met the current CDC criteria for home isolation.
- + Inform anyone exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID to stay home and monitor for symptoms, and to follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
- + Anyone who exhibits symptoms associated with COVID should consult a doctor and seek a COVID test. See our illness policy (inserted earlier).



MAINTAINING PHYSICAL DISTANCING

According to the CDC, “keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the virus.” In order to practice physical distancing, the CDC and the AAP recommend:

- + Stay at least 3-6 feet from other people.
- + Do not gather in large groups (lunch, recess, assemblies, meetings, and dances will be reimagined.)
- + Rearrange furniture and seating spaces to maximize space between students.
- + Follow visual aids in lobbies, hallways, and stairwells that reflect traffic flow (one-way systems).
- + Avoid communal supplies.
- + Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least 3-6 feet apart in lines and at other times.

We understand that schools are less than perfectly conducive to physical distancing procedures. However, we will do our utmost to adhere to guidelines to maintain a safe learning environment.





COVID-19 TESTING

One area of preparation the school is evaluating for the start of the 2020-21 school year is testing. Though testing is recognized as an important pillar of the world's Coronavirus pandemic response, it remains a complicated matter. Because test results only show whether a person is infected at the moment the test is administered, a negative result does not ensure that a person is not about to develop COVID-19. The CDC has stated that serologic blood testing for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 should not be used to determine a person's immune status until the presence, durability, and duration of immunity is firmly established. Specifically, the CDC has stated—in agreement with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission—that antibody testing should not be used to make decisions about returning persons to school; or to make decisions about grouping persons residing in or being admitted to congregate settings, such as schools and school dormitories.

The CDC has recently announced that it will soon provide PK-12 schools with further guidance regarding school-based point of care testing protocols. We plan to formulate our testing strategy in relation to this guidance, and in further consultation with outside experts, and will share that information as soon as we can. **At present, we do plan to require pre-arrival "gateway testing" for students whose journeys to campus necessitates air travel, owing to data that suggests air travel is an especially dangerous transmission environment.** Because of the communal nature of dorm living, residential students will be asked to test for COVID three to five days prior to arrival at the dorm and submit these results to our Health Services Coordinator before coming to campus. Students will be tested again upon arrival at the dorm. More information regarding dorm procedures will be shared with Residential families at the August Residential Family Town Hall. **At this point, this is limited to a few of our residential students.** With this said, SVCS is asking all families to closely monitor their travel and exposure during the two weeks leading up to the

start of school. In a community predominantly made up of day students, our ability to cohort students and control their exposure is limited to time at school, thus our request of all families to take personal measures that will allow the school to experience as much in-person learning as possible. As a day student family, we strongly encourage you to be tested if you have any question about potential exposure due to travel prior to the start of school.

Because, according to the CDC, testing in school settings may not offer any reduction in transmission of the virus beyond what would be expected using other preventive measures which are easier to administer, the CDC does not currently recommend universal testing of all community members in schools.

The considerations for testing are informed by the level of accuracy, the turnaround time for results, the benefits to the community, the cost, and ability to complete testing for many community members within a short time window. We will continue to evaluate the efficacy of testing in conjunction with recommendations from the AAP, CDC, SCPH and local and state requirements.

Given the social crossover in our valley, and access to testing being limited to only symptomatic patients at this time, we currently plan to employ an aggressive low threshold for off-site individual testing of symptomatic people once the academic year begins. Specifically, community members who report concerning symptoms by way of the daily symptom check, or who manifest concerning symptoms during the day, may be required by the School to engage in viral testing before being permitted to return to campus.

As a precautionary measure, all faculty and staff will be tested before the school year begins, during the week of August 17 pending the availability and turnaround time on testing.



PERSONAL HYGIENE + SAFETY MEASURES

Heightened hygiene practices (coughing/sneezing etiquette, handwashing, wiping down tables, desks, chairs, and equipment) will be promoted consistently throughout the school day through ongoing training and signs around campus. In addition, we will take the following precautions:

- + Upon entering and exiting each building, students and staff will be required to utilize sanitizing stations provided by the school.
- + Before and after recess, lunch, and other outside activities, all SVCS community members will be required to wash their hands upon entering any building.
- + Recommended by the CDC, “handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the restroom; before eating; and after blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing.”
- + While the SVCS custodial team will deep clean spaces after hours as well as wipe down door handles and hard surfaces during the day, students will partner with faculty/staff to prioritize regular cleaning practices for desks, equipment, writing utensils, and other classroom materials.
- + Physical education equipment will either be provided per cohort or sanitized between uses.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (FACE MASKS/COVERINGS)

All K-12 students and all faculty and staff as well as visitors to Sun Valley Community School’s campuses will be required to wear a mask while indoors and while outdoors if unable to stay physically distanced for long periods of time. ECC children will be encouraged to wear masks while indoors.

The CDC advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who are asymptomatic (infected with the virus but showing no symptoms) from unknowingly transmitting it to others. As a school with campuses in Sun Valley and Ketchum, we also fall under the ordinances of each local mandate which currently require masks.

The American Academy of Pediatrics’ *COVID-19 Planning Considerations: A Guideline for Opening Schools* acknowledges that there are many factors that make wearing a mask in a school situation challenging for some students. AAP recommends that parents of younger children practice the wearing of masks so that, in the event that guidelines require it in August, children are ready to learn while wearing a face covering. Again, the current local ordinances require masks for ages five and up.



ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROTOCOLS + CAMPUS SECURITY

In looking at the transition to an unprecedented 2020-21 school year, SVCS is evaluating security measures and traffic control on our campuses.

In order to control our school environments in the current dynamic health conditions, we are going to have to implement new policies regarding visitation and site access for parents and visitors. We do so in an effort to preserve the in-person experience and to safeguard our community's health and well-being. Movement on and off campus will have to be reshaped. We will ask parents coming to campus to observe all of our safety protocols; these protocols will be clearly outlined on doors to each building.

Additionally, parents are discouraged from gathering on the school grounds or going into school buildings unless invited, including at drop-off and pick-up. On-campus parent volunteerism will be limited and may be eliminated temporarily, and parent/teacher conferences may be moved online. External visitors to campus, including vendors, substitute teachers, college representatives, and others will need to be vetted and subject to strict protocols. These precautions are due to the higher likelihood of adult-to-adult transmission, which could jeopardize our ability to operate school in-person.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR + LEARNING SPECIALISTS: SAFEGUARDING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, & EDUCATIONAL WELL-BEING

The SVCS Learning Specialist program and school counselor will continue to provide robust student support, regardless of physical school setting. Learning and developing academically and socially against the backdrop of a global pandemic can be stressful and isolating, and students can experience challenges in a number of different ways. Some students feel anxious, disconnected, confused, and overwhelmed and may need help dealing with feelings or problems that seem beyond their control.

The SVCS counselor follows the American School Counseling Association's recommendations for Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success which are more essential than ever in light of the uncertainty of the times. Our school counselor is collaborating with school leadership and faculty in all divisions to proactively build students' emotional vocabulary and skills for responding to and regulating emotions, while developing resiliency in the face of adversity.

In the event that we move fully online to our connected learning model, our school counselor and our learning specialists will turn to the system of remote sessions and classroom support. Our school counselor and our learning specialists help students identify effective strategies to cope with difficult situations and achieve their goals. Helping students thrive during and despite obstacles lies at the very core of school counseling and learning support services.



THE FINANCIAL REALITIES OF EDUCATING DURING A PANDEMIC

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If you are wondering why there is no discount or refund if we pivot to a connected learning model during the school year, you aren't alone. Independent schools and universities around the country are dealing with the reality that preparing for and delivering a connected model—and being prepared to pivot between models as the health situation necessitates—is an even more expensive proposition than operating with one “business-as-usual” dynamic.

Except for the ECC, unused activity or Outdoor Program fees, there will be no refunds given if we have to switch to a connected learning or modified program. By way of explanation, it may be helpful to consider the fact that expenses fall into one of two categories: fixed costs and variable costs.

Fixed costs are the types of expenses that are incurred regardless of the type of education or, to a large extent, the number of students enrolled in the school. For example, salaries and benefits, insurance, internet access fees, etc.

Variable costs have a degree of fluctuation depending on the type of programming that we provide and, to a limited extent, enrollment numbers. For example, outdoor trip expenses, electricity, water, photocopies, etc.

At SVCS, the vast majority of our expenses are fixed. Salary and benefit expenses paid to faculty and staff account for over 75% of our annual budget. All together, our fixed expenses make up over 90% of our total budget.

While we have worked hard to realize some small cost savings on our variable expenses, the school has incurred expenses in the 2019-20 school year and will continue to incur costs during the next year to address the pandemic and to best prepare to deliver our educational program during this unprecedented time. These pandemic-related expenses will exceed the savings gained in the variable category. These extras expenses include but are not limited to:

- + Extra Chromebooks for student usage
- + Upgrade to a fiber optic network to enhance connected learning
- + Additional furniture
- + Cameras and microphones in all classrooms
- + Additional cleaning expenses
- + Hiring a full-time Health Services Coordinator, additional assistants and substitute teachers to ensure supervision and program continuity.

FUNDRAISING

While we are committed to raising the funds we need to deliver on our mission, we understand that the pandemic has put some families in a difficult financial position. Indeed, many families have already donated or pledged to ensure that SVCS can continue to serve our students and families even in a difficult economic climate. In the fall, we will launch our yearly Annual Fund campaign to support the school and its programs. Our hope is that our faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees, alumni, and current families continue to wholeheartedly support our school and participate in this important fundraising event which makes our annual budget work.



THE CUTTHROAT COMPACT: OUR COMMUNITY STANDARD

Community School Cutthroats have long upheld a community standard—a social compact of shared understandings and values among students, their families, and faculty and staff. This standard promotes trust, respect, belonging, inclusion, and citizenship. Under normal circumstances this Community Standard is fundamental to our sense of community. In times like these—certainly anything but normal—our adherence to this standard will protect what is most vital to us—each other.

Membership in the school community requires each person to take personal responsibility for herself or himself, as well as for other members of the community. The school community is defined and measured by how each of us acts every day. Every person at Sun Valley Community School has a responsibility to uphold the trust and mutual respect on which all of our relationships are founded. These relationships are vital to maintaining an atmosphere in which everyone feels that he or she is an important and meaningful member of the community.



Every member of Sun Valley Community School, including students, staff, alumni, and parents, agrees to:

- + Act in an ethical manner worthy of trust
- + Extend kindness, empathy, care, and respect towards each member of the school community
- + Be honest in all situations – academic and personal
- + Protect and care for our local and global environment, including the school's facilities
- + Accept responsibility for his or her actions
- + Pursue a healthy lifestyle

This school year will require all of us to commit to acting in accordance with these principles. We have already demonstrated to ourselves and each other that this is possible during our response to the COVID pandemic this spring. We can do it again, Cutthroat Nation!

#CutthroatsTogether | #CutthroatStrong