

OPENING FALL 2020

Plans as of August 5, 2020





INTRODUCTION

In late spring, we began scenario planning for the opening of school in fall 2020. The planning for our 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 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 and maintaining our academic excellence.

PARTNERSHIP

Families and school form a partnership. We all must acknowledge that 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.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM SPRING 2019-20 DISTANCE LEARNING

1. Constancy is crucial for students and families
2. Academic workload and screen time must be balanced. The importance of setting clear expectations of behavior, attendance, and holding students accountable for their work
3. Community building activities must be prioritized
4. Schedule additional time for extra help and informal gatherings
5. Inspiring crucial physical activity was difficult
6. Learning platforms must be consistent

TEAMS

In the spring of 2019 three small teams were created to explore three possible fall 2020 scenarios. *These teams have been reconfigured for the 2020-21 school year as positions and titles have changed.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Helen Marlette, Head of School
Jim Cody, Director of Facilities
Kim Skomra, School Nurse
Denise Merrell, Business Manager

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Kanika Durland, Assistant Head and Director of Equity & Inclusion (DEI)
Joanie Wienckowski, Science Department Chair
Caitlin Littlefield, Director of Teaching and Learning

STUDENT LIFE PROGRAMMING

Natalie Stothart, Assistant Head
Molly Greene, College Counselor
Jess Silverstein, History Faculty
Karen Knab, School Counselor

SCENARIOS

SCENARIO 1

On-campus learning model. Students return for in-person education with adjustments.

SCENARIO 2

Hybrid learning model. Residential students and/or students who are not returning to campus learn remotely while others learn in-person at school.

SCENARIO 3

Remote learning model. All students shift to remote learning due to a mandated shutdown by the state.



THEMES FOR ALL THREE TEAMS

1. Social/emotional well-being of all is a priority - teaching and learning are impossible without it
2. Identify the essential learning that must take place in each individual class
3. International students and students who cannot return must have the opportunity to participate fully in our programs.
4. Program will have a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

SUMMARY

The academic program committee concluded that to address the ambiguity of the future and to ensure the best educational outcomes for our students they would focus upon an academic delivery method which could be adapted to any scenario.

REPORT

The task of the Academic Committee was to advance the planning needs for the 2020-21 school year. As guidelines for this work, we were asked to consider three scenarios:

SCENARIO 1

Our campus is open. We are able to resume business as usual for the most part, but there are a couple of adjustments: (A) We attend to the disruptions that the end of the 2019-2020 school imposed (B) We follow new health and safety standards.

SCENARIO 2

Some students, faculty and staff work from home and others come to school.

SCENARIO 3

The building must remain closed, and we do more remote learning.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Within the parameters of these possible scenarios, our guiding question was, “How do we maintain our teaching and learning standards, under each scenario?”

While in opposition, it was important for us to address both the need to chart a clear path forward and the reality that the future is full of ambiguity. Given potential variables, we focused on approaches that would serve us well under most, if not all scenarios. Our conclusion is that investing in flipped learning is the most successful and stabilizing way to keep up our learning standards in the face of so much uncertainty.

What is flipped learning? Flipped learning is instruction where students take in most of the content that teachers usually deliver in class at home (lectures, lessons, readings, etc.) and during in-person class time, students apply what they’ve learned independently with the teacher/expert by their side the teacher offers guidance as needed, while the work is being done. This type of instruction requires educators to think about what is essential for teachers and students to do together, how to hit the learning objectives, and to know how to create and provide the content.

If it becomes necessary to spend less time in school and reduce the number of people in the building, we can more easily make the necessary scheduling changes to be sure that everyone is safe using flipped learning. It can accommodate the diverse needs of faculty, students, and families while maintaining our high academic standards. Rather than having to learn and plan for three different instructional strategies for each of the scenarios, committing to flipped learning simplifies things. How much we will apply this method depends on which scenario we face.

We have provided resources for our faculty to explore this summer and will do specific training in August during our opening faculty meetings. Orientation and the first week of classes will be dedicated to training students in flipped learning and in their responsibilities as students. Using technology to create a good experience for students who are not sitting in the classroom will enable them to participate fully in the activities and discussions. All class sessions will also be recorded and accessible. Platforms we have used with success for most are ZOOM, the SEM portal, and Google Classroom.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

SEM will open as scheduled and devote time the first week to training and orientation to the new schedule, building usage requirements, and Covid-19 prevention.

We reserve the option to adjust vacation schedules (shorten vacations to reduce travel, add teaching time, or allow for complete shutdown). The school year at-a-glance calendar can be found [here](#) and on the [mySEM portal](#).

WEEK & DAILY BELL SCHEDULE

We have created a 5-day schedule with 7 periods and flex time to allow for sanitizing after classes and to reduce congestion in our hallways. This schedule can be used in all three scenarios (on campus, hybrid, all distance). It is available [here](#) (“Bell Schedule” on the purple accordion file) on the mySEM portal page.

We can move from one scenario to another seamlessly to permit a student at home to remain engaged with school.

One day each cycle (Wednesday) will include time to do the work of community building and address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Our new schedule is designed to build the sense of community which is an essential component of the SEM experience. We have allocated more time in our daily schedule to allow for extra academic support, casual conversations, and informal interactions amongst students and faculty.



EXCHANGE AND TRAVEL PROGRAMS

All exchange programs and trips beyond WNY are on hold.

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

1. Weekly Health & Wellness team (Asst. Head Natalie Stothart, Community Counselor Karen Knab, School Nurse Kim Skomra, Dean of Students Eva Cunningham) meetings will continue
2. Faculty training will be provided about how to best support students
3. Added a part-time associate counselor position

TRANSPORTATION

As of 8/5/2020, we are awaiting plans from individual school districts.

SEM has two, 14-passenger buses. All students will be seated safely distanced apart and are required to wear masks in school vehicles. All drivers will be trained in all Covid-19 protocols. There is no need for drivers to touch our students, but in case of an emergency each bus is equipped with gloves. Hand sanitizing stations will be placed near the vehicles to ensure all passengers and drivers have sanitized their hands before boarding the bus. All SEM vehicles will be disinfected after transporting students.

ATHLETICS & FITNESS

Buffalo Seminary will follow all CDC guidelines and New York State Education Department (NYSED) return-to-school guidelines for athletics and fitness as they pertain to Covid-19. We believe that physical education is crucial to the health of our students and we are committed to creating opportunities for physical fitness that focus on safety, student learning, and well-being. We will incorporate one of our oldest traditions, Hornet/Jacket, to create fitness driven competitions that focus on teamwork, socialization, leadership, and fun.

According to NYSED organized sports will not begin before Sept. 21.

MEALS & FOOD SERVICE

Personal Touch, our food service provider, has worked with us to create a food service health and safety protocol that meets and exceeds all NYS guidelines, while maintaining SEM's commitment to a mealtime that serves to build our community.

1. Residential students will have breakfast in their houses
2. Residential student dinner will be served with physically distanced seating, on china, with silverware
3. Lunch will comprise pre-made salads, no self-serve food, one served hot entrée and a served soup (dietary restrictions accommodated)
4. Disposable plates and pre-wrapped utensils at lunch for safety and efficiency
5. All food serving areas are fitted with protective coverings
6. Students will eat safely physically distanced throughout the building and have staggered lunchtimes
7. SEM will provide monitoring, appropriate signage, directions, and floor markers. Sanitization will be performed by food service personnel throughout the day and between meals; after school it will be provided by outside cleaners

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Opening plans posted on our website
2. Emailed to our parents and alumnae
3. Discussed in town hall Zoom meetings
4. Translations will be provided for international parents and agents and supplemental meetings scheduled for other time zones



MESSAGE HERE

YOUR MESSAGE

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

AFTER **ONCE**
ALTHOUGH **RATHER THAN**
AS **SINCE** **WHILE**
BECAUSE **THOUGH** **WHETHER**
BEFORE **UNLESS** **WHEREVER**
EVEN IF **UNTIL**
EVEN THOUGH **WHEN**
IF **WHENEVER**

SOME, NOT ALL

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."
-James Baldwin

Rhetorical Devices...

- ANAPHORA** Repeating a sequence of words at the beginning of neighboring clauses.
ex: It rained on his long journey, and it rained on the way to his church. It rained all over the place.
- EPISTROPHE** Repeating a word or phrase at the end of neighboring clauses.
ex: a government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.
- CHIASMUS** The grammar of one phrase is inverted in the following phrase.
ex: He sat at the table, and the table will be his seat.
- APOSTROPHE** Directly addressing someone or something that is not present.
ex: Turn back, little star, Hail to thee, bright and fiery planet that doest shine.
- PERSONIFICATION** Giving non-human things human characteristics.
ex: John Death comes and takes all the bright stars.

STOP 2:09

5-minute break
2:15 start
3:10 exam ends

PARALLEL

ANADIPLOSIS

Repeating at the beginning and end of neighboring clauses.
ex: Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering.

ALLITERATION

Repeating consonants at the beginning of neighboring words.

CONSONANCE

Repeating consonants anywhere in neighboring words.

ASSONANCE

Repeating vowels anywhere in neighboring words.

ANTITHESIS

When two phrases are placed side-by-side to create a contrast.
ex: It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

OVERALL SAFETY

We will abide by all mandates from the CDC, NYS Department of Health, and Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH). We will be guided by and often exceed their recommendations. We will also be informed by updates from the [American Academy of Pediatric Medicine](#) as we implement our plan to prioritize the health and safety of all members of the SEM community. These plans are flexible and will be adjusted as necessary to respond to the most current recommendations and advice.

SUPPLIES THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING

1. Paper masks for those who need one
2. Hand sanitizing stations throughout the building
3. Sanitizing sprayers for disinfecting
4. Sanitization supplies provided for each classroom and teaching space

ACTIONS WILL INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

1. Maintain our small classes, average size 12 students
2. Multiple (4) entry points to school building
3. Daily temperature and symptom checks upon entry
4. Utilize our unique spaces differently to adhere to the requirement for physical distancing (6 feet)
5. Create new traffic patterns and adjust timing to decrease density in our hallways
6. No lockers. Teachers have ordered online texts as much as possible. Students will need to carry their laptop, calculators, and supplies with them.
7. The Magavern-Sutton Courtyard will be tented to create outdoor space for classes, meetings, and safe distance socializing
8. Relax our dress code to maximize flexibility and mobility and to eliminate the need to change clothes for PE
9. Educate the community and practice for the prevention of the spread of disease. Nurse Kim will lead sessions by grade level during orientation and the first week of school.
10. All faculty will be trained in Covid-19 prevention at our August faculty meetings preceding the start of classes
11. Adherence to the [ECDOH](#) Covid-19 response plan in case of exposure at SEM or in the SEM community

CLEANING AND CAMPUS USE

1. Extra cleaning throughout the day in high touch surfaces and areas
2. Logs which include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfecting will be kept. The facilities department, Jim Cody and Ed Embler, are the responsible staff. The school will be sanitized throughout the day by in-house personnel, students, and faculty. After school the building will be cleaned by a hired cleaning company. The hired cleaning company will supply us with a daily NYS cleaning checklist. Once a week the school will be disinfected by in-house personnel.

THE PRODUCTS LISTED FOR USE ARE ON THE NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION (DEC) PRODUCT LIST AS EFFECTIVE AGAINST COVID-19:

1. Dilutable 6836-78-10350 3M QUAT DISINFECTANT CLEANER CONCENTRATE
Used by Hired Cleaning Company
2. Dilutable 10324-154-8325 FRESH & CLEAN HI-CON 64 NEUTRAL DISINFECTANT & DETERGENT Used by in-house personnel
3. RTU 87742-1-92595 BIOESQUE BOTANICAL DISINFECTANT SOLUTION (LEMONGRASS GRAPEFRUIT SCENT) Used by in-house personnel

VENTILATION

1. All HVAC equipment is checked quarterly by MJ Mechanical and all filters are the best possible filter per industry standard
2. Residential house filters are changed monthly by our internal facilities staff in-house personnel
3. Most classrooms have overhead fans and windows can be opened for fresh air if no air transfer system is in place

SAFETY DRILLS

1. We will hold all required safety drills
2. Additional gathering space has been added and existing space has been adjusted to allow for physical distancing of 6 feet

IN-SCHOOL ILLNESS

1. The space(s) where the individual interacted on campus will be closed for 24 hours
2. Complete disinfecting of the space will be performed after 24 hours and before the space is reopened
3. School will be closed, and distance learning started immediately if required or necessary to ensure the safety of all
4. We will adhere to all mandates and may continue distance learning for longer than required if it serves our small community. The transition to distance learning can be seamless with our schedule and academic program
5. The individual can return to school after 72 hours symptom free and a negative COVID-19 test

PERSONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. All students, faculty and staff must have the diagnostic test for Covid-19 before they arrive at school. This is NOT the antibody test.
2. Cloth masks (no valves) will be required in all areas of the building except when eating meals and during approved safely distanced mask breaks - ideally alone and outside
3. All individuals who enter the school will have their temperature checked each day
4. Visitors will not be allowed on campus when school opens. Once a school routine is established we may allow some visitors but with strict guidelines and protocols. We will implement mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks of students, faculty, staff, and, when applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have Covid-19 or who may have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus.
5. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100°F, the individual will be sent directly to the Potomac Avenue entrance to go directly to the nurse's office. Parents or a guardian will be required to pick up their daughter within 30 minutes of being notified. All faculty and staff will use our daily screening questionnaire to be submitted before entering the building.
6. Physical distancing of 6 ft in all classrooms and public areas will be maintained and physical barriers will be placed in some spaces according to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. Space throughout the building will be reallocated to ensure social distancing.
7. It is our goal for all students to return to campus for the first day of class. The nature of our instruction makes cohorts impractical. Small classes for all with 6 ft of physical distancing are possible.
8. Extra cleaning throughout the day on high touch surfaces and areas. Logs which include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfecting will be kept.

CONTACT TRACING

1. The state and local health department will be notified immediately of any positive Covid-19 diagnostic test by anyone within the facilities or on the school grounds, including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, and visitors.
2. Contact tracing will be done by our school nurse and athletic director who will follow the protocols, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law.
3. To facilitate contact tracing and for safety reasons, attendance is taken in each class throughout the day. In addition, to maintain 6 ft of physical distance, when students have a free period, they will be assigned a specific space rather than choose where to spend free time.

TESTING

1. All members of the community will be required to take the diagnostic test for Covid-19 within the week prior to the school opening to create a baseline of health to start the school year
2. All residential students will quarantine for 14 days and will be taken for a diagnostic Covid-19 test by our school nurse upon their arrival and 14 days later
3. Returning residential students will quarantine on campus for 14 days before entering our academic space and participating in any school activities. One residential house will remain unoccupied and reserved for the year in case it is necessary to isolate or quarantine a residential student at any time. Our school nurse will provide the care if necessary.
4. We will require testing of symptomatic individuals, close contacts of Covid-19 suspected or confirmed individuals, and individuals who have recently traveled outside of WNY. We will follow all required quarantine and testing measures and may exceed the recommendations.

RECOMMENDED TESTING SERVICES

We recommend testing by the [Erie County Department of Health](#), call (716) 858-2929 or at the neighborhood health centers at the following locations:

[Neighborhood Health Center](#) | Blasdell
4233 Lake Avenue, Blasdell, NY 14219
Monday - Friday from 2 - 4 PM

[Neighborhood Health Center](#) | Mattina
300 Niagara Street, Buffalo, NY 14201
Monday - Friday from 2 - 4 PM

[Neighborhood Health Center](#) | Northwest
155 Lawn Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14207
Wednesday & Friday from 1 - 4 PM

[Pediatric & Adolescent Urgent Care of WNY](#)
1800 Maple Rd, Suite 100
Williamsville, NY 14221

[Pediatric & Adolescent Urgent Care of WNY](#)
3055 Southwestern Blvd, Suite 104 Orchard Park, NY 14127



RE-ENTRY TO CAMPUS

Any person who has been in isolation or quarantine may not return to school until they have an evaluation from their health care provider and a negative Covid-19 test result. Discharge from quarantine will be coordinated with the Erie County Department of Health (ECHOD).

1. If a student/faculty member has symptoms and tests positive for Covid-19, they will be required to remain in quarantine until 14 days after they are symptom free.
2. If an individual tests positive but has no symptoms, they must remain in quarantine for a minimum of 14 days following the positive test.
3. No person who has been in isolation for any reason may return to campus until their 14-day isolation has been completed, the individual has been symptom free for 72 hours, and has a negative Covid-19 test result.

RESIDENTIAL CLEANING AND HEALTH PROCEDURES

1. Residential deep cleaning at least twice a week, completed by our outside cleaning service
2. Disinfecting once a week done by in-house personnel
3. Sanitization supplies provided for daily sanitization
4. Single occupancy in rooms and as few shared bathrooms as possible
5. All students must maintain 6 ft physical distancing and wear masks in residential houses except when in their own room
6. Allentown Pediatrics partners with SEM to provide medical care
7. One house reserved as an infirmary/quarantine space
8. Residences will remain open for short holidays and possibly all long breaks to decrease travel - all current quarantine requirements will be followed if someone does travel (this also applies to day students and families)
9. Air circulation filters are replaced monthly in all residences

These plans are flexible and will be modified, as necessary.

SEM

BUFFALO SEMINARY

EST. 1851