



# **Friends Academy Reopening Plan**

for submission to

The NYS Department of Health

July 31, 2020

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## Introduction

Friends Academy, located at 270 Duck Pond Road, Locust Valley, NY, is a Quaker, independent, day school serving 680 students in grades PreK-12 on a 65 acre campus on the north shore of Long Island. We have prepared this comprehensive plan for reopening in compliance with the New York State Department of Health standards for the year 2020-21. At present, Friends Academy intends to conduct a reduced density phased reopening of its campus for in-person instruction, allowing students in grades PreK-8 to return to campus for in-person instruction, while requiring students in grades 9-12 to engage in virtual learning from home. Students in grades 9-12 will come to campus on a rotating schedule of days for in-person learning and community activities which will occur in compliance with all social distancing requirements.

This document addresses the “Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction At Pre-K To Grade 12 Schools During The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency” published by the NYS Department of Health on July 13, 2020. Our plans, including detailed pedagogical approaches, will be included in our submission to the NYS Education Department on August 7, 2020. Questions on Health and Safety can be directed to Ken Ambach, Director of Technology, at [ken\\_ambach@fa.org](mailto:ken_ambach@fa.org) and Mark Preziosi, Director of Facilities and Security, at [mark\\_preziosi@fa.org](mailto:mark_preziosi@fa.org).

Friends Academy is steadfast in our commitment to educational excellence, and equally, to the safety of our community of students, their families, and our faculty and staff. In this document we share the thinking that ensures that Friends Academy sets the standard in the health and safety of our entire community.

### *Responsible Parties*

The designated Responsible Party for the execution of Friends Academy’s reopening plan is Andrea Kelly, Head of School.

### *Capacity and Reduced Density*

Friends Academy has worked closely with our school architect, The S/L/A/M Collaborative, to map our campus buildings and classrooms for social distancing to determine appropriate capacity of each space. We plan to reopen school to students in a reduced density phased approach that will allow us to test our protocols and adjust as necessary.

## *Communicating our Plan to the Friends Academy Community*

Friends Academy maintains a healthy dialogue with its community and will leverage all our usual communication methods to message out our reopening plans, as well as safety information pertaining to mitigating the risk of COVID-19 infection. In addition to our website, we send out a weekly e-newsletter, and use YouTube, Instagram and Facebook to reach our families.

Specifically, we will:

- Publish our reopening plans on our website, and update them as they evolve
- Provide resources and education on COVID-19 prevention and safety, including information on CDC and NYS DOH COVID-19 guidelines
- Ensure that students and faculty are trained in how to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene
- Use verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings, when social distance cannot be maintained.

## Section 1: Health and Safety

### *Admittance to the Building*

As discussed above, Friends Academy will be limiting the number of students who will be on campus each day by resuming in-person learning for students in grades PreK-8, and requiring students in grades 9-12 to engage in distance learning, coming to campus for occasional in-person activities, such as advisor meetings.

For the safety of our students and faculty, only faculty, staff, and students who are permitted to report to campus on any given day will be permitted to enter campus buildings. Non-student family members, outside tutors, vendors, contractors, or other individuals will not be permitted entry, without prior permission from the Director of Facilities and Security and/or member of the Leadership Team. All permitted visitors will be directed to enter campus at our main building at 270 Duck Pond Road to check in and complete the screening process.

### *Mandatory Daily Screenings*

For those entering campus buildings, including students, faculty, staff, and where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors, Friends Academy will implement mandatory health screening to identify any individuals who may be presenting symptoms of COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

All individuals entering campus buildings must have their temperature checked before they enter the building each day. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual will be denied entry into the building. If the individual is an adult, they will be sent home immediately. If the individual is a student, they will be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area to wait for their parent(s)/guardian(s) to pick them up.

Our screening program will have the following components:

- A daily screening questionnaire filled out at home via an application and submitted before departure for school in the morning. Any student enrolled in the school or faculty or staff member who would normally be present at the school, whether or not they are in attendance that day, will be required to complete the screening questionnaire via the application. For individuals who forget to complete the screening questionnaire at home, the School will have paper copies of the screening questionnaire available.
  - For faculty and other adults, the questionnaire will provide a short list of symptoms or situations that might indicate an individual has COVID-19 or has otherwise been exposed to COVID-19, and the individual will certify whether or not any apply to them that morning. The short list of symptoms/conditions in the questionnaire will include (but is not limited to):
    - Having tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
    - Having knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19.
    - Having experienced symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days;

- Having traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.
  - For students, parents/guardians will complete an online questionnaire for their child(ren) which includes a short list of symptoms or situations that might indicate their child(ren) has COVID-19 or has otherwise been exposed to COVID-19 consistent with those outlined above, but may also include some *child-specific* symptoms. The student’s parent/guardian will certify whether or not any of the listed symptoms/conditions apply.
  - These forms will be updated periodically to make sure they reflect any updated guidance issued by the CDC and/or NYS DOH as it relates to symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19.
  - The school will not retain individual medical or health information from this questionnaire, regardless of whether the individual uses the application or a paper form. Only the “clear/not clear” status of the individual as determined by the questionnaire will be available to the school or kept on file.
- Students will be greeted daily at our entry points by a staff member who will verify the questionnaire has been completed and indicates a “clear” status, and if not, provide a form for the parent/guardian to fill out on the spot. Additionally, all persons entering a school building will have their temperature checked at a no-touch kiosk which will indicate whether they are clear to enter or not.
- An immediate review each morning of all the data from the questionnaire by the staff responsible for attendance, including follow-up calls to employees and families of children who are not in school that day if those families have not already submitted their daily questionnaire or if they were reported “not clear.”
- Reporting of any “not clear” statuses of any employees or children who have been turned away or have stayed home to the school nurse for follow-up according to DOH guidelines.

### *Positive Screens*

Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing. Students who are being sent home because of a positive screen will be immediately separated from other students and supervised in an isolation space adjacent to our Nurse’s Office until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can

retrieve them from school. When possible, the school nurse will provide such individuals (or their families) with information on health care and testing resources. The school will immediately notify the local health department about the case if the individual's diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.

If an individual begins to experience symptoms during school hours, they must report immediately to the nurse's office. Teachers will receive training prior to the start of the school year in how to identify pediatric symptoms of COVID-19, and will refer any students they see exhibiting such symptoms to the nurse.

Friends Academy will follow the local DOH requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment. At a minimum, a return to school will require documentation from a health care provider evaluation and symptom resolution. If the student tested positive for COVID-19, the protocol will include release from isolation.

#### *Protections for Individuals Conducting Screenings*

Friends Academy will ensure that any personnel performing in-person screening activities, including temperature checks, are appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious individuals entering the facilities. Personnel performing screening activities will be trained by individuals (identified and approved by Friends Academy) who are familiar with CDC, NYS DOH, and OSHA protocols.

Screeners will be provided and use PPE, which includes a face mask, and may also include gloves, a gown, and/or a face shield.

#### *Vulnerable Populations*

Friends Academy will ensure that any student, faculty or staff member at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, or with family members at increased risk, is able to safely participate in educational activities and/or that appropriate accommodations are provided.

#### *Staff and Student Testing*

Following strong recommendations by the CDC and NYSED, Friends Academy will not require routine mandatory COVID-19 testing or antibody testing of students, faculty, and staff as a screening mechanism. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted should only be

determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. Friends Academy may, however, require testing to prove that an individual who has previously tested positive for COVID-19 is “clear” to return to the building, or that an individual who has been quarantined as a result of exposure to COVID-19 is clear to return to the building.

### *Management of Ill Persons*

Friends Academy has developed protocols for caring for a student, faculty, or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. These protocols include:

- A dedicated room adjacent to the nurse’s office to isolate students, faculty, or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness;
- Plans to ensure that symptomatic students who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is socially distanced;
- PPE requirements for school nurse office staff caring for sick individuals, which include both standard and transmission-based precautions. When Nassau County has moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield) will be added. When caring for a suspected or confirmed individual with COVID-19, appropriate PPE must be worn, to include gloves, a gown, a face mask, and a face shield or eye protection.
- Cleaning and disinfection as specified by CDC guidelines.
- Development of protocols to care for students with asthma that reduce the need for nebulizers or suction, or make provision for the use of these items in a safe location.

### *Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols*

If COVID-19 cases are discovered at school, the immediate response will include closing off areas or classrooms occupied by infected individuals and engaging in a process of “deep cleaning” either in the affected area, portions of the school, or more broadly the entire school, as determined in consultation with DOH guidelines or conversations with our local DOH contact.

### *Contact Tracing Support*

In the case of an individual testing positive, and as required by NYS, Friends Academy will support the Nassau County DOH in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with



the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. Friends Academy will also cooperate with state and local health department isolation, and quarantine efforts.

Whereas State and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of COVID-19 infected or exposed persons, Friends Academy is responsible for notifying faculty or families of students that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19. While Friends Academy will not reveal the name of the individual who has tested positive (unless that individual voluntarily elects to have their identity disclosed) Friends Academy will only reveal that the student or faculty member has come in close or proximate contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, and how we came to know this information (school tracking systems, governmental contact tracing, or another mechanism).

#### *Return to School*

If a person demonstrated symptoms of COVID-19, but tested negative for COVID-19, they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, they have felt well for 24 hours, and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

Individuals who Were Symptomatic and Tested Positive for COVID-19: Individuals who showed symptoms of COVID-19 and tested positive for COVID-19 must stay home until either:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)); **and** at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; **or**
- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and two negative results from COVID-19 tests collected more than 24 hours apart.

In either instance, the individual must present a written note from a healthcare provider that they are cleared to return to school.

Individuals who Were Asymptomatic and Test Positive for COVID-19: Individuals who did not show symptoms of COVID-19 but did test positive for COVID-19 must stay home until either:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 test (and assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test); or
- Two negative results from COVID-19 tests collected more than 24 hours apart.

In either instance, the individual must present a written note from a healthcare provider that they are cleared to return to school.

### *Face Coverings & Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)*

All persons on campus who are not able to maintain a social distance of 6 feet must wear masks, as a general rule. This applies to all students (including PreK), faculty, staff, and any other individuals on campus. There are exceptions and special circumstances as outlined below, and with the youngest children, mask-wearing is balanced with other ways of maintaining safety in a developmentally appropriate way at the discretion of the teacher.

Masks must always be worn when entering “public areas” such as hallways, stairwells, bathrooms, or other spaces multiple individuals or groups may pass through, or in situations where social distancing may be difficult to maintain, such as riding in elevators, entering/exiting classrooms with others, or in narrow halls and passageways. Individuals should have their masks with them at all times, as they must be prepared to put them on if someone else who is unmasked is unexpectedly unable to socially distance (as when stepping into an elevator).

Exceptions to general mask-wearing are outlined below.

- Students, especially younger ones, may be given “mask breaks” at the discretion of the teacher. Mask breaks will be provided in safe and appropriate intervals for all students.

- Students of any age learning or playing outside in low-risk activities may not need to wear masks. This includes activities that do not involve prolonged close physical contact.
- Students engaging in activities considered “high risk” as defined by the DOH guidelines must wear masks even when outside, and will be required to maintain a social distance of 12 feet.
- A student who is having difficulty breathing should immediately be given a mask break and if the difficulty continues, be evaluated by the nurse.
- Students may remove their mask to eat, provided that it is done in an area of the school determined to have the appropriate capacity for social distancing during mealtimes.
- A teacher has discretion in determining if a child is safe or not to remove their mask, as all teachers receive training on COVID-19 specific hygiene.

#### *What Types of Masks and Protection Are Appropriate*

Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection against COVID-19 and should not be used except in combination with an acceptable mask.

Faculty and students, especially in Pre-K and the younger grades, may use face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., circle time, speech work, or speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (e.g., hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the faculty or staff member.

For staff engaged in workplace activities that require a higher degree of protection due to the nature of the work (e.g. health screenings, nurse’s office work), PPE will be used in accordance with existing industry standards and OSHA guidelines.

### *Provision of Masks*

Each family is asked to provide five face masks (one for each day of the week) per child to reduce environmental waste. Face masks should be labeled with the child's name or initials so it is clear to whom the mask belongs.

For children who forget their masks or for families who prefer to use disposable masks, the school will have a supply of disposable surgical masks on hand (adult and child-sized) that community members can use at no charge.

Teachers are provided surgical masks by the school since teaching often involves projecting the voice, leading to greater aerosolization. Teachers of older children are required to wear these masks when leading class. Teachers of younger children may be provided with face coverings that are transparent around the mouth, since facial expression and lip reading is extremely important to Pre-K development. If either of these options is uncomfortable or difficult for faculty, they may wear any of the other acceptable face coverings as outlined above.

Face masks should be washed, disinfected, or replaced after each day's use and must not be shared. Students and families should take responsibility for maintaining their individual face coverings.

Friends Academy will provide all students and faculty with training on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including face masks.

### *Hygiene & Handwashing*

Friends Academy follows all hygiene requirements as advised by the CDC and NYS DOH.

These include:

- Training all students, faculty, and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, including providing information to families and guardians on ways to reinforce this at home
- Creating extra time in the schedule for handwashing, especially after restroom breaks, recess, using shared equipment, eating, or other higher risk activities
- Many of our classrooms are equipped with sinks and bathrooms. We will create extra hand hygiene stations around the school as possible.

- Installing hand sanitizer dispensers filled with at least 60% alcohol-based sanitizer for areas where handwashing is impractical. Hand sanitizer use will be minimized in areas serving younger children, where hand washing is preferable for safety reasons.
- Providing hand sanitizer and wipes in common areas or near shared workplace items (copy machines, computers).

### *Cleaning & Disinfection*

Friends Academy is working closely with our custodial vendor to ensure the school is properly staffed both during the day and at night to thoroughly clean and disinfect all spaces. Our provider follows the guidelines of the CDC. All full-time and part-time employees are trained to provide, meet or exceed the required standards of disinfection issued by the New York State Department of Health.

The general framework for cleaning and disinfection practices includes the following:

- Training on cleaning, disinfection, trash removal according to established protocols
- Normal routine cleaning with soap and water
- Disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectant against COVID-19 to include frequent disinfection of high-touch surfaces
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand hygiene by cleaning staff
- Compliance with OSHA standards.

A comprehensive COVID-19-specific cleaning plan per State guidelines has been developed for the school and is available through the Facilities Office. Per DOH guidelines, custodial vendor will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of custodial cleaning and disinfection. In addition to the work of the custodial vendor, classrooms and common areas will be stocked with child-safe, CDC-approved disinfectant spray so that students and teachers can also contribute to cleaning efforts at periodic intervals during the day. Extra time has been built into the schedule for hygiene maintenance--both handwashing and the disinfection/cleaning of surfaces.

In addition to these measures, the following extra steps will be taken in classrooms, offices and common areas:

- Touch-free amenities, such as water-bottle refilling stations and paper towel dispensers have been installed where feasible.

- Water drinking fountains will be closed and touchless bottle refilling stations will be used instead. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to bring their own labeled water bottles for refilling.
- In general, students remain in their own classroom with their cohorts. However, shared items will be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort's use.
- Children will each have their own personal classroom supplies (of pencils, crayons, paper, etc) that they will draw from rather than using common materials. Each child's supply will be labeled and stored either in a desk, individual file, or other method that ensures separation of materials.
- Materials and tools used by staff or employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, Friends Academy will supply disposable gloves and/or place limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.

### *Food Service*

FLIK Independent School Dining, our school's dining partner is preparing for a successful reboot of our on-campus dining program. Flik is partnering with EHA Consulting Group, Inc a public health consulting, epidemiology and food service group to develop and employ a safe, welcoming environment at Friends Academy while continuing to provide the tasty and nutritious dining options our students know and enjoy. The following is a sample of the safety and sanitation protocols that will be in place:

- Management and staff to complete training/certifications for new COVID-19 standards
- PPE, sanitation and safety protocols to include
  - Temperature and symptom checks
  - Handwashing, glove changing and cleaning
  - Uniforms/safety stations and specifications
- Phased approach with simple menus at first, feedback surveys and optimized menus
- Classroom delivery of individual meals and Grab & Go services as appropriate
- Online mobile ordering to include options for dietary restrictions or allergies.

FLIK is continuously monitoring CDC requirements as well as state and local directives to be agile in their approach to compliance and are developing strategies that can be flexed up or

down pending future guidance and in partnership with the administration at Friends Academy.

Pre-K and Lower School students will have lunch delivered to their classrooms and they will eat while seated at their desks. Middle School students will pick up “grab and go” items in the cafeteria while maintaining social distance and then eat at socially distanced seats.

### *Cleaning & Disinfection After a Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case*

In the event an individual at the school is confirmed to have COVID-19 while at school, Friends Academy will immediately:

- Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, we will wait as long as possible to allow aerosolized particles to settle.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
- Reopen the area once it has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected.

If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.

### *Social Distancing*

Friends Academy will strive to maintain appropriate social distancing (generally 6 feet, 3 feet between edges of desks) between all individuals while in school facilities and on school grounds, unless safety or the core activity (e.g., instruction, moving equipment, using an elevator, traveling in common areas) requires a shorter distance or individuals are of the same household. Mask-wearing and barriers (sneeze guards, e.g.) will also help address cases where six feet of distance cannot be maintained. Friends Academy will ensure that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities requires projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity resulting in heavy breathing (e.g., participating in gym classes).

### *Creation of Cohorts*

Friends Academy has always valued our relatively small class sizes. In the context of COVID-19, the small classes allow us to make each class its own “cohort” with a specific schedule and space that does not overlap with any other group. When cohorting is used, social distancing can be slightly more relaxed within the cohort, allowing the children to walk around the room more freely, take mask breaks at the teacher’s discretion, and engage in developmentally appropriate play that is not considered “high risk.”

### *Space Configurations*

Space configurations and usage will change for the duration of the COVID-19 period. Some of the changes include:

#### *Classrooms*

- Desks moved to be as distant as possible, and all facing one direction so that students sit side-to-side rather than facing one another.
- Shared surfaces or workstations will be disinfected between student use.
- Outdoor classroom spaces provided in the form of tents with moveable seats provided.
- Reconfiguration of large gathering spaces (e.g. Gym, Field House, Commons and Theater) as “classrooms” for higher-risk activities (music, chorus, movement) that need an indoor space for the winter months.

#### *Common Areas*

- Larger classes may eat their lunches in the Commons, which has been reconfigured to accommodate up to 83 students socially distanced at large round tables that allow them to socialize while eating safely in a room with ample air circulation.
- Students will be encouraged to eat in available outdoor spaces whenever possible.
- As possible, hallways will be designated as “one-way traffic only,” and marked accordingly with signage and tape arrows on the floor.
- Stairways will be designated and clearly labeled as either up or down.

#### *Music, Wind Instruments, Sports*

Whenever possible, singing, the playing of wind instruments (including orchestral instruments and classroom recorders/flutes), as well as all activities requiring vocal projection and/or aerobic activity producing heavy breathing, should be performed outdoors.



When weather does not permit being outdoors, a distance of twelve feet in all directions is required between individuals, with spacing marked out on the floor of a large gathering space such as the Theater or Gym. All persons playing wind instruments should wash their hands immediately following their instrumental play.

### *Arrival, Departure, and Scheduling*

Friends Academy has planned staggered arrival and pick-up times to facilitate social distancing. Entrance and egress from each building will be through designated doorways specific to each age/grade level.

The use of no-touch temperature screening kiosks should facilitate speedy entry into the school buildings. If there is a line to enter the school outside the designated entryway, parents may wait in line with children outside the school. However, parents will not be allowed inside the building, and will be expected to say goodbye to their children outside.

Lunch, snack, and recess times will be similarly staggered to facilitate social distancing.

Finalized schedules will be released in August.

### *Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff*

In general, faculty and staff schedules will be arranged so that only faculty members who are needed on a given day are required to be in the building. Otherwise, faculty and staff whose work can be performed at home and who are not scheduled to be in the building that day will be asked to work remotely. A schedule of who is expected to be on campus will be provided for guidance before the start of the school year. Other changes include:

- The reconfiguration of shared faculty and staff offices to allow for social distancing within the space. If the size of the space makes this impossible, faculty members may be reassigned office or classroom space that allows for proper distancing.
- All faculty, committee, and board meetings will happen remotely until further notice, except when social distancing can be maintained appropriately for smaller groups.
- Non-Friends Academy employees, including outside tutors and other private service providers are not permitted to provide in-person services inside school buildings.
- District provided Learning Services Teachers will be permitted to provide in-person instruction to their assigned Friends Academy students in school buildings.

## **Section 2: Metrics Used in Decision-Making**

During the coming year, there may be times when we are ordered to close the school by the Governor. The State has established metrics that they will use to order a regional or state-wide lockdown.

However, there may be situations within our own county, neighborhood, or school community when community spread of COVID-19 needs to be addressed. Under guidance from the State and local authorities, Friends Academy has identified the following policies to help us track and trace the level of transmission in the school setting, so that we can responsibly provide for the health and safety of our students, families, faculty, and staff.

### *Metrics for Quarantining a Class*

Lower School and Middle School students will be grouped in cohorts (see [below](#) for more details) to allow for fewer opportunities for cross-exposure, and easier containment of the virus if there is an outbreak. If a student from a given class is confirmed to be COVID-19 positive, then the class will self-quarantine at home for the following two weeks and the school community will be alerted that we have entered “watchful” mode. The school may take extra precautions in the form of increased cleaning, changes in school schedules or space use, etc. during this time to mitigate the risk of spread.

If the student who tested positive has a sibling in a different class, the sibling will also self-quarantine for two weeks; however, the sibling’s classmates will not need to quarantine unless the sibling also tests positive.

Students who present with symptoms of COVID-19 during a period of self-quarantine need to follow the procedures for returning to school as outlined [above](#).

### *Metrics Used for School-Wide Decisions*

In deciding whether to close the school and enter a phase of remote learning, Friends Academy, in consultation with our local health officials, will use the following metrics (either alone or in combination, as circumstances suggest):

- Number of students out sick or in quarantine.

- Number of faculty and staff out sick or in quarantine.
- Number of classes in quarantine.
- The data provided on daily screening forms.
- Rate of new cases in our larger community (Nassau County), as determined by the DOH.

*Mental Health, Behavioral, and Emotional Support Services and Programs:*

Friends Academy is a special place where care for each individual student and their family is prioritized through both our unique school culture and our student life and wellness programs and practices. When we open our school this fall, student life and wellness will remain a top priority and our duty of care for each student and their family is heightened given the uncertainty of our community, nation and world.

At Friends Academy, mental health support for every student and faculty or staff member is readily available. This is always the case, but we know the protracted nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated fear of its spread, continues to challenge all of us in ways we never imagined. Our mental health and wellness team at Friends Academy is fully prepared to meet the needs of our students and families, now more than ever. The team is led by Ron Baskind, our Director of Student Affairs and school counselors that include Dr. Michael Quinland, School Psychologist, Lauren Foley School Counselor, and Limor Tintweiss, Nassau BOCES School Psychologist.

In addition to our curriculum, we will provide support for students and faculty to process reactions to COVID-19 in the upcoming school year by:

- Beginning the school year slowly, with ample time to re-orient students to the “new normal,” give them time to unpack and process the previous sixth months, and focus on rebuilding the social fabric of the classroom.
- Offering support to faculty, as well as families, through individual appointments with our school Psychologist and counselors as needed.
- Professional development for teachers in how to work with children in class during a prolonged crisis--lessons taken from other trauma-informed schools and settings. Expectations of what “normal” child development and behavior looks like under these

circumstances will be discussed, as well as opportunities for professional and personal growth around meeting children's needs during COVID.

- Professional development for teachers around identifying signs of depression, anxiety, and trauma in children of different ages, and how to appropriately refer them to support staff for follow up.

### **Section 3: Facilities**

#### *Restart of Operations*

Many of our campus operations were continued during the spring closure. Grounds were maintained and ventilation and water systems were checked regularly by essential employees. Other operations, like daily cleaning and disinfecting were restarted in June.

#### *Utilization of Space*

Friends Academy is fortunate to have a 65-acre campus with multiple classroom buildings, ample outdoor space, and several large spaces that provide venues for activities that may pose slightly higher risks. In these existing spaces, we are making sure they conform to NYS DOH guidelines for capacity. In addition to the existing spaces on our grounds, we will be installing several large tents to allow for outdoor classrooms and socially distant gathering.

#### *Safety Drills*

Friends Academy maintains an internal guide for conducting drills entitled "Emergency Management Plan." This will be reviewed and updated before the start of the 2020-21 school year to take into account social distancing requirements by, for instance, indicating that students and faculty are to maintain a distance of six feet when they gather on our athletic fields for taking attendance during evacuation drills, and by reviewing where each class should gather in order to preserve maximum distance.

#### *Ventilation*

Friends Academy has very good air circulation already in most areas due to numerous classroom windows and HVAC systems which will be configured to maximize fresh air intake. We also plan to upgrade all campus HVAC systems to use MERV-13 filters. In areas with more limited air circulation, we will open doors and windows as we are able, and provide HEPA Air Purifier Units in high-risk rooms such as the nurse's office.

## **Section 4: Transportation**

Friends Academy is not required to, and does not provide transportation to or from school.

## **Section 5: In-Person Instruction**

Friends Academy prioritizes an academic, social, emotional, and spiritual education and seeks to provide a full and robust experience for all of our students, PreK-Grade 12. Personal relationships between and among students and educators are the cornerstone of a Friends Academy education and therefore remains an important consideration for our reopening plans. Friends Academy has developed three potential models for reopening in the fall of 2020 and will remain nimble, adaptive and responsive while keeping health and safety at the center of our decision-making. All three models maintain what we call our “non-negotiables” for an exceptional educational experience: Quaker Pedagogy, Personalization, Parent Partnership, Enrichment, and Responsiveness. Friends Academy will stay true to our Quaker mission, values and ethos, no matter which learning model we need to employ. Keeping children at the center in our ever-changing world is critical and essential.

We have developed three learning models, Reduced Density, Virtual Learning, and Full Density In-Person, in preparation for this school year. These models will be described in more detail in our submission to the NYS Education Department.

### *Cohorts*

Each Pre-K class will be a self-contained cohort, creating siloed teacher/student groups that do not overlap either indoors or out.

Lower School Classes (Grades K-4) will be divided into self-contained pre-assigned cohorts and each assigned a room and lead teacher. Specialists will move between cohorts and maintain social distancing when teaching.

Middle School Classes (Grades 6-8) will be divided into self-contained pre-assigned cohorts and assigned to a classroom. Teachers will move between classrooms to teach their subject specific classes based on our block schedule rather than have the students move. Teachers will maintain social distance while teaching.

High School Classes (Grades 9-12) will be engaging in most classes via distance learning means.

In all grades, the use of outdoor and other large spaces for learning will be encouraged

### *Extracurriculars*

Our ability to provide extracurriculars will be guided this year by DOH guidelines as well as common sense preventative measures and attention to maintaining cohorts. At the time of this writing, interscholastic sports are prohibited. The Athletic Director is also in the process of developing low-risk alternatives to interscholastic sports, such as running and fitness activities.

Other after-school activities will move online (as in the case of our mandatory after-school instrument lessons) if possible, or will be offered on a rotating basis to specific cohorts or individuals with social distancing.

### *Before and Aftercare*

A recent survey of parents indicates that the number of students needing after school care will be small. This will allow us to offer aftercare of younger students and after school supervision of older students while maintaining social distancing and, when possible, respecting cohorts.

## **Section 6: Closure**

Friends Academy will work closely with the Nassau County Department of Health to determine conditions that would dictate that we need to close or scale back our in-person operations. We have designed learning models for all three divisions that will allow us to move seamlessly into a hybrid or virtual model as necessary. As demonstrated this spring, we can move quickly to virtual remote schooling and school administration. Should immediate closure be required, we maintain procedures for early dismissal as a part of our normal emergency preparations. We maintain multiple emergency communication platforms to reach both parents and faculty and staff, including email, voice and text messaging, website, and a crisis communication app, and will use these as warranted.

## **Conclusion**

Friends Academy is fortunate to have many positive assets as we face the challenges of the coming school year. We have a large and beautiful campus with well maintained and well resourced buildings and spaces. We have an engaged and supportive Board of Trustees, an experienced and dedicated Administration, talented and caring Faculty and Staff, and a

diverse and loving community of students, parents and alumni all committed to ensuring a safe return to school in whatever form that takes. As always, Friends Academy will rely on its Quaker values and long tradition of excellence as we make careful decisions for reopening. This plan represents our best thinking on these matters on July 31, 2020, and is subject to change as we innovate and adapt to new information, evolving directives, and our on-the-ground experience when school resumes.