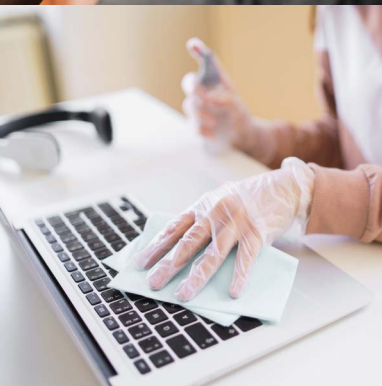


PCDS Smart Restart

2020-2021 Academic Year



The PCDS Recovery Council, in concert with PCDS administration and with the endorsement of the PCDS Board of Trustees, has developed a reopening plan that prioritizes the health and safety of our community. We are eager to welcome students back to campus on September 4 (for new students) and September 8 (for all students). To ensure the most favorable possible experience amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we have developed a comprehensive plan for resuming campus activities.

Our Approach

- The **health and safety** of everyone in our campus community will continue to be our top priority as we bring students and staff back to campus.
- This plan was shaped by a **number of factors**, including research on both learning and health and a growing consensus among peer schools on the best way to reopen this fall.
- To be successful in our efforts to remain on campus, we'll require all PCDS community members—students, families, and staff—to join together in a true **social compact** designed to keep our campus community healthy.
- Understanding that all guidelines and plans are constantly in flux, we ask for your **patience and flexibility** as we work through these unprecedented times.
- In all efforts, we must underscore that our work is aimed at **mitigating transmission of the virus and minimizing risk**, while understanding that we cannot eliminate this risk altogether.
- We **encourage the long view**. We should all be prepared for a disruptive year as the world continues to wrestle with a global pandemic. At PCDS, we will do all that's in our power to smooth out those disruptions for our students, families, and staff, knowing that in the future, we can all return to the steadier experience we all treasure.
- We will continue to be **transparent and communicate** regularly with families as details and decisions emerge.

While this coming school year will be different than anything we've seen before, we look forward to the special learning experiences that only a PCDS education can provide. And we thank you for the trust you place in all of us at Phoenix Country Day School as we weather this storm together.



Health and Safety



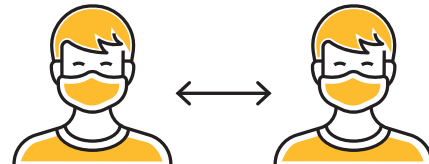
All persons coming onto campus will be required to complete a **temperature check and wellness survey**.



All faculty/staff and students will be **required to wear face masks**.



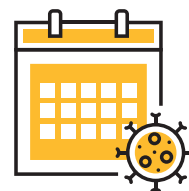
Enhanced **sanitizing and hygiene** protocols will be in place throughout campus.



All persons will be required to practice **social distancing** as feasible.



No parents or visitors will be allowed on campus until further notice.



Click here for the School's COVID-19 [sick and reporting policy](#).



Wellness Practices

- All health forms and vaccination updates must be submitted to the Health Center as soon as possible. Students may not return to campus without these forms.
- A daily wellness survey will be required of all individuals on campus. Details will be shared in future communications.
- All students and adults will be screened upon arrival using instant temperature checks. Anyone with a temperature of 100.0 degrees or greater will be asked to return home. Persons who develop symptoms while on campus will be isolated and should leave campus as soon as possible to go home or seek medical help.
- If a student or household member is exhibiting any [symptoms of COVID-19](#), or anyone in the household has come in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, the family must **inform the school and keep the student(s) home**. [Click here for the School's COVID-19 sick and reporting policy](#).



The influenza vaccine is strongly recommended by health experts for children and adults in anticipation of additional COVID-19 illnesses during the coming months. Avoiding influenza will also help students and staff avoid unnecessary quarantines.



Face Coverings

All individuals on campus will be required to wear face masks.

Students must bring two of their own clean cloth masks to school every day, labeled with their name. In the event an additional face covering is needed, the School will have extra supplies of masks available.

Pre-k only: face coverings are recommended but not required for pre-k students, but each pre-k student should still have their own face covering available at school.

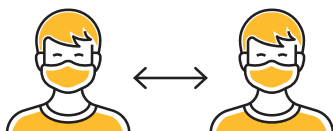
- Masks should cover the wearer's mouth and nose and comply with PCDS dress code*. Scarves and bandanas are not acceptable.
- Students not complying with these face-covering and other guidelines aimed at protecting community health will face consequences as determined by their respective division heads in conjunction with the Head of School.

* Masks are subject to PCDS dress code, and should be free of negative, offensive, or insensitive symbols or language (including references to violence, sexual activity, cultural insensitivity, tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs). Division heads will make final determinations on unacceptable wear. More division-specific information will be made available before the start of school.



Personal Hygiene & Campus Sanitation

- Every effort should be made to limit face touching.
- Handwashing will happen regularly. Students must wash hands with soap and water after each restroom use and before eating, and when soap and water are not available, students must use hand sanitizer.
- Hand sanitization will be required upon each entry to a building or classroom. Hand sanitizer will be positioned at all entrances and common areas and in each classroom.
(Pre-k students will use soap and water only according to pre-k licensing regulations.)
- Shared materials will be avoided OR will be cleaned between change of users.
- Classrooms will be stocked with cleaning supplies for sanitation of tables, chairs, and materials between each class.
- Frequently touched areas and restrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Comprehensive cleaning of all buildings will occur at the end of each school day.
- School buses will receive a comprehensive cleaning before each use.
- Only touchless water fountains will be available for use. Students must bring their own labeled water bottles that can be refilled at sinks/refilling stations.



Social Distancing

Our optimal learning environment entails having all students and faculty on campus, together. Thus, we will do everything we can to create safe classrooms, offices, and common areas with appropriate spacing. All unnecessary physical contact should be avoided.

Classrooms and Shared Spaces

- PCDS will leverage our small class sizes and larger classrooms, arranging furniture and student placement to maximize the space and create as much room between students as possible.
- Cohort grouping and/or seating charts will be utilized to facilitate contact tracing as much as possible.
- Upon evaluation, we will de-densify larger classes by relocating some to larger spaces to accommodate appropriate physical distancing (such as Dorrance Auditorium, Burch Hall, the Dining Hall, and the gymnasiums).
- Weather allowing, we will leave doors/windows open in classrooms, even as the air conditioning is running. As the weather cools, many classes can be held outside.

Visual Markers/Signage

- We will remind our community to follow safety protocols by posting visual markers such as signs, posters, and other reminders throughout our campus.
- Signage will indicate appropriate spacing in places where students wait in line, such as the Dining Hall and Upper School Student Center, and on shared work surfaces.

Group Gatherings

- PCDS will limit the number of persons assembling in classrooms and common areas and maximize distancing between individuals to abide by state health regulations whenever possible.
- All off-campus experiences (including field trips and class trips) will be postponed or cancelled.
- All faculty meetings and professional collaborations will be held either in a physically distanced fashion or virtually.



Campus Visitors

- All non-essential visitors, including parents, must remain off-campus until further notice. Should parents wish to meet with a teacher or administrator, they may do so virtually or via telephone.



Off-Campus Scenarios

While we remain hopeful that we can achieve our objective of having our students safely on campus throughout the 2020-2021 school year, PCDS is prepared to pivot to an alternative learning scenario quickly and efficiently.

In addition, despite our plans to create as safe an environment as possible, no school can guarantee a virus-free campus. We will respect individual family decisions to keep their children at home and will do our best to accommodate learning by providing remote access to the classroom via current technology.

Virtual Synchronous Learning (VSL)

- The School recognizes that there will be students and families whose health concerns will either prevent them from returning to campus when school resumes this fall or will cause them to be absent from campus at other times throughout the year. These students will engage in Virtual Synchronous Learning (VSL).
- To the fullest extent possible, VSL will entail synchronous virtual attendance in on-campus classes throughout the school day. This means that, even when not physically present, a student will participate virtually in class, with his or her classmates and teacher, at the regularly scheduled time. Unless ill, all students are expected to actively participate in their respective learning platform. Daily attendance is mandatory.
- **For planning purposes, parents must inform their respective division head that their child will engage in VSL to start the school year by Friday, August 28.** From that point forward, a decision to opt in or opt out of VSL must be discussed with the respective division head. Additional details will be shared in division-specific communications.
- Students who must temporarily learn from home will immediately move to VSL until they are cleared to return to campus.

Distance Learning

- While our strong desire is to remain on-campus for the entire school year, the pandemic's unpredictability compels the School to prepare for the possibility that state or local orders could mandate the closure of campus, and all learning and teaching may have to take place remotely at some point.
- To prepare for a range of teaching and learning scenarios, PCDS has invested heavily in professional development programs for our faculty and in technology in order to provide the best possible educational experience for our students, regardless of the way in which it occurs.
- In the event this scenario is implemented, distance learning plans will be communicated by each division.

Other Important Information

Food Service

PCDS will continue to provide lunch for students daily in partnership with our vendor, [Sage Dining Services](#), one of the nation's leading food providers for independent schools. At the start of the school year, all food will be "grab and go." Lunches will still be freshly prepared but pre-packaged; while options will be limited at first, vegetarian and gluten-free options will continue to be made available. All students will be eating with disposable, pre-wrapped silverware. All cold food will be prepackaged in disposable containers.

Students should bring their own labeled water bottles to use during lunch and throughout the day.

Touchless filling stations will be available to all students and faculty/ staff; regular drinking fountains will be unavailable.

In all three divisions, students will eat in socially distanced environments and outdoors as weather allows.

Lower School:

- Pre-packaged snacks will be delivered daily to classrooms.
- Parents will place lunch orders from a limited cold lunch menu each week.
- Lunch will be brought to each classroom, along with cleaned and pre-packaged items such as fruit, vegetables, yogurt, applesauce, and milk.

Middle School:

- Socially distanced dining will occur with one grade in each dining room or outdoors and with cleaning between groups.
- Hot pre-plated meals will be available, as well as pre-packaged sandwiches, salads, and sides.

- Once students go through the line, they cannot come back for seconds.
- Beverages will include juice, in cups, milk cartons, and water dispensed by staff with gloves.
- Pre-packaged snacks will be at a central pick up location or delivered—parent volunteers will not be involved in the snack bar.

Upper School:

- Students will have the option to bring their own nut-safe lunches or to purchase food in the Upper School Center or Dining Hall using a touchless scanning system.
- All cafe items in the Student Center and Dining Hall will be pre-packaged to go.
- Social distancing signs will be placed on the floor for students while in line.
- Disposable deli paper will be available for opening Student Center cooler doors.
- Students will be allowed to eat socially distanced either outside or in the gymnasium; no eating will be allowed in any other indoor spaces.

Tuition

PCDS will not be issuing discounted or reduced tuition for VSL or distance learning. Regardless of the learning scenario, PCDS's faculty and staff are working to deliver our enhanced and value-added program to students and families. The extensive planning and implementation of mitigation plans brings added, not reduced, cost to the school, and we are confident that our efforts will provide even greater value relative to other educational options.

Your Family's Commitment

Social Compact

Please keep in mind that any risk you take for your family could impact our larger community's health and safety, as well as our intention to remain on campus. The PCDS Social Compact outlines specific behaviors expected of our community on campus, including:

- Wearing a face covering at all times
- Maintaining physical distancing and avoiding crowds
- Frequent washing and/or sanitizing of hands
- Adhering to all guidelines and policies
- Staying home when sick; PCDS is offering Virtual Synchronous Learning (see above).

In addition to our campus-wide efforts, please consider beyond the PCDS campus the Social Compact we all share as we get through these challenges together.

- That shared responsibility includes following guidelines regarding facial coverings, frequent hand washing, and consideration of potential for PCDS community spread when attending social gatherings off campus.
- Community members should comply with all current public health and travel guidelines.

Attendance

- PCDS must be kept apprised of student attendance. We ask for your help in promptly communicating with your respective division assistants regarding the absences or illnesses of your student.

- Further, should a student be engaged in either Virtual Synchronous Learning from home (while classes are occurring on campus), or if the School is required to close campus and pivot to distance learning, it is an expectation that students are actively keeping pace with instruction at home.
- It is the responsibility of the student and parent to immediately (within 24 hours) inform a teacher or administrator if they encounter issues with technology, comprehension of presented material, or work completion. Students who fail to remain actively engaged without sufficient communication to teachers or administrators will jeopardize their continued enrollment at PCDS.
- Following an absence for any reason, returning to school will require clearance from the division and/or the Health Center, depending on circumstance.

Preparedness

- Should your student participate in Virtual Synchronous Learning while school is occurring on campus, or should PCDS need to close campus and engage in distance learning, the School advises you to consider, well in advance, any additional technology or supply needs that would ease this transition.
- In addition, families should ensure that they have a working thermometer at home; if students are found to have a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher at school, they will be sent home immediately.

Acknowledgment

Every family must sign a COVID-19 Acknowledgement Form/Handbook Addendum, which will be sent to families soon and must be submitted to the School before August 28.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is PCDS implementing a travel policy?

A: While the School advises caution with respect to unnecessary travel, PCDS is currently not requiring quarantine following travel. Given the ever-changing nature of where community spread is highest, families and staff should comply with travel policies that will evolve according to the latest public health guidance.

Q: Is PCDS increasing its Health Center staffing?

A: Yes. To accommodate our enhanced attention to health matters, PCDS is increasing its nursing staff. This will allow the Health Center to separate suspected COVID-19 cases from other non-viral treatments and to have backup support when necessary.

Q: How will daily temperature checks work?

A: PCDS has acquired multiple temperature monitoring stations, which each individual will need to pass through upon arrival on campus. More details will be provided regarding drop off instructions to prevent crowding or a bottleneck at these temperature stations. If an individual receives a reading above 100.0 degrees, they may receive another reading immediately. A second reading exceeding 100.0 degrees will result in the student needing to report to the Health Center and then return home. An additional temperature check will be conducted for all individuals on campus mid-day.

Q: What if my child is quarantined for 14 days due potential exposure?

A: If your student is quarantined based on the [PCDS COVID-19 Sick and Reporting Policy](#), they will attend school synchronously through our Virtual Synchronous Learning (VSL) program.

Q: What if my child is sick and cannot attend synchronously through VSL?

A: In the event a student's illness prevents them from attending classes synchronously, the student/parent should communicate with their teachers/advisor to develop an asynchronous learning plan and to complete any missed work. All classes will be recorded and uploaded to our learning management system, Canvas.

Q: Will families and staff be informed if someone on campus tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Based on health department guidelines, PCDS will report to all families and staff the occurrence of a confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus, specifying the division in which the case has occurred. Students or staff deemed to have had exposure to the individual (greater than 10 minutes of continuous interaction less than 6 feet away) will be contacted directly by the respective division and/or Health Center and directed to follow the School's COVID-19 policy. PCDS will not disclose the names of any individual students or staff with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 to the school community.

Q: Will changes be made to the School's ventilation?

A: Yes. PCDS is upgrading all air filters from MERV-8, which is standard for schools, to MERV-13 "hospital grade" filters. To improve air flow, all outside air dampers will be opened to their maximum, and doors and windows will also remain open as much as possible.

Q: What type of additional cleaning and sanitizing will be occurring?

A: PCDS is developing an enhanced cleaning protocol, which includes the use of electrostatic sprayers and EPA and CDC approved cleaning solutions effective in killing Coronavirus, frequent cleaning between class periods, and additional cleaning staff on campus throughout the day who are certified in proper disinfection techniques.

Q: Will drop-off/pick-up times be changing?

A: The standard school day will remain in place, however protocols regarding drop-off and pick-up are continuing to be fine-tuned. Please note that every student will pass through a temperature-checking kiosk each morning. You will receive more details about drop-off and pick-up processes closer to the start of school.

Q: Will Extended Day continue to be made available to Lower School and Middle School students?

A: Parents can still opt in to our Extended Day programs in Lower and Middle School, which will remain open until 6:00 p.m. each day. You may choose the billing option that works for you.

Q: Will organized sports be taking place when school starts? Or at any point during the year?

A: PCDS will adhere to guidelines set forth by the Arizona Interscholastic Association, as well as our own health and safety standards. Until further notice, MS and US athletics must remain on hold. We will share more information about how and when organized sports will resume as guidelines are published.

Q: Will non-athletic after-school activities like chess, robotics, and speech and debate take place?

A: The School is reviewing each after-school activity and the extent to which we believe we can provide such activity in a safe manner that follows our guidelines. Information regarding these programs will be shared in future division-specific communications.

Q: Will PE and recess continue as normal?

A: The School believes that physical activity is more important than ever. PE faculty will follow best practices, opting for activities that allow for appropriate physical distancing between students. Recess activities will be organized and supervised to maintain as much physical distancing as possible among students.

Q: Will anything change regarding bus service?

A: PCDS is taking into account public health guidelines for transportation, including riding with windows open, wearing facial coverings, and physically distancing students from one another and from the driver. Seat assignments will also be implemented to facilitate contact tracing.

Q: Can I send food to school with my child?

A: PCDS's existing policy for Lower and Middle School students will remain, which allows no outside food or drink absent documentation from a physician *and* approval by the Health Center and appropriate division head. Upper School students may continue to bring food if they wish, remembering that PCDS remains a nut-safe campus. Dining Hall staff and teachers/advisors will continue to work with families and students regarding allergies or dietary restrictions.

Q: Will there be an opportunity for students to remove their face coverings during the day?

A: We recognize that wearing face coverings throughout the day can be tiring, even for adults. We will remain cognizant of this and look for physically distanced opportunities to allow students to remove their face coverings for a short period of time, beyond when they are eating.

Q: Is there a date by which we need to let the School know if we wish to keep our student off campus and engaged in Virtual Synchronous Learning?

A: Yes, you would need to let your respective division head know by August 28 if you do not plan to begin on campus when the school year begins. Additional guidance will be issued by division heads regarding entry into in-person instruction.

Q: What about annual traditions like First Friday and Blue & Gold?

A: Unfortunately, social distance guidelines will prevent the School from being able to celebrate our annual traditions at the start of the year, and we will hold off on all large events until further notice. We look forward to resuming our treasured experiences as soon as appropriate.



3901 East Stanford Drive
Paradise Valley, Arizona 85253

602.955.8200
pcds.org



Guidance

Our plan will continue to be informed by continuous monitoring of reliable and expert organizations and authorities to enable PCDS to make decisions that are consistent with guidelines and recommendations, including:

- Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention ([Decision Tree](#); [Guidance for Schools](#))
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [National Association of Independent Schools](#)
- [Federal Government](#)
- [Arizona Government](#)
- [Maricopa County Public Health Guidance for Schools](#)
- [Independent School Management](#)

Recovery Planning Council

Charlene Whitfill, MD P'15, P'17, P'24, *Chair*

David Lewis P'14, P'16, P'20, P'23,
President, Board of Trustees

Martin Felli P'22, P'24

Tim Riester P'20, P'22

Steve Short P'19, P'22

Andy Rodin P'19, P'19, P'25, *Head of School*

Roz Abero '89, P'24, *Assistant Head of School*

Abby Pontius, *Director of Finance and Operations*

Administrative Leads

Curtis Fee, *Head of Lower School*

Ben Sullivan, *Head of Middle School*

Lynetta Binger, *Interim Head of Upper School*

Questions? Contact Roz Abero, *Assistant Head of School*, roz.abero@pcds.org