



THE NEW SCHOOL

Curiosity · Character · Community

The New School (TNS) Ready-to-Open-Campus Plan 2020-2021

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

We will continually update these FAQs, depending on the questions we are hearing!

Whom should I contact when I have questions?

- Front Desk Phone (479-521-7037)
- Health/Medications - [Nurse Sarah Wilson](#)
- Enrollment, Admissions, Tuition & Financial Assistance Questions/Inquiries - [Jack Sweeney](#) 407-416-4596
- Development and Community - [John Gourlay](#) 479-856-3445
- Program-Related Questions/Inquiries - Teachers and Division Heads
 - EC - [Mary Sweeney](#)
 - LS/MS (K-6) - [Jade House](#)
 - US (7-12) - [J.R. Neiswender](#)
- College Counseling/AP/Standardized Testing - [Marshall Gray](#)
- Counseling Support - [Cailey Gray](#)
- Tech Support - tech.support@thenewschool.org
 - Tech Support Hours are now 8:00am-8:00pm

Do I have the option to keep my child home for the fall semester and engage in distance learning (DL) even while campus is open?

Yes. The signup deadline for DL is 9:00am Monday 8/3/20. Those who request the DL option are committing to remain in that mode through the first quarter (10/16/20). We need the best information possible to finalize cohort assignments and get all information into Blackbaud for

the start of the year. If you want to opt for DL and have not signed up, please contact Jack Sweeney and your division head asap.

What are the screening procedures? Do I need to self-quarantine if I travel?

Due to licensing requirements, all students, staff, and parents in ECE will be screened daily, including temperature checks. K-12 students, staff, and parents (if on campus) will be asked to self-screen/self-disclose, using a provided checklist. This checklist will be updated and shared before the start of school. Just recently, the ADH [guidelines](#) removed the recommended self-quarantine after travel.

All employees, students, parents, and visitors must self-screen utilizing the provided checklist, unless screened in person at the ECE entrance. The most updated version of the checklist for employees, parents, and students can be found [here](#). The updated version for visitors is posted on school entrances.

Who is required to wear face coverings?

- All adults and visitors in buildings
- All employees and students (K-12), in common areas and indoor spaces, as well as outdoor spaces, when 6 foot distancing is not possible, as determined by the teacher.
- All students riding the bus are required to wear face coverings while boarding and exiting the bus and at all times on the bus.
- Children over the age of 2 who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms on campus will be provided a mask until their parent/guardian can pick them up
- Note that anyone is welcome to wear face coverings, even when not required.
- Please do not wear or send your child with a mask with a valve.
- We discourage use of single gaiters and bandanas. These are not allowed in ECE, due to licensing. If you prefer these, please consider doubling the layers.
- We may decide to exclude single gaiters and bandanas. For now, we are asking that families re-evaluate their mask/face covering choices. The best options are 2-layer cloth masks that are washed after each use. As a reminder, face coverings must fully cover the mouth and nose.

Can you guarantee the safety of students and employees?

No. While we are focused on risk mitigation strategies, we cannot guarantee safety. Our ready-to-open plan is informed by CDC, WHO, ADH, and ADE guidelines and recommendations, as well as by extensive sharing of practices among schools in the NAIS and ISACS associations. ECE plans meet all DCCECE licensing requirements.

How will meals/snacks work?

For details about ECE, see the Ready to Open Campus Plan. For K-12, breakfast will be available 8:00-8:20am, grab & go style in the Dining Hall. Students may pick up breakfast and take it to their classroom. Lunch orders will be taken every morning. Students have a choice of the hot meal, the sandwich meal, or the salad meal. SAGE will publish a menu that is regular and predictable. Allergies/restrictions will be accommodated. Lunch schedules are staggered to allow K-6 students to pick up lunch in the Dining Hall and 7-12 students to pick up lunch in the Innovation Center. At the start of the year, students will eat in classrooms (or outdoors by class, at the discretion of teachers).

Can I send my child to school with a lunch or snack from home?

Yes. ***All food sent to school must be nut-free.*** We have enough members of our community with dangerous nut allergies, and we are not willing to add any further risk to safety by introducing nuts to classrooms.

How do I sign up for the bus, van, extended day, and afterschool activities?

In ECE, there is no additional sign up needed. Teachers will reach out to ask about individual family plans for pickup times.

Signups for the bus, van, and K-12 extended day are available through [our website](#). Activities will not start until Labor Day at the earliest. Some exceptions may include individual lessons.

Will tuition rates be adjusted for the 2020-21 school year? Will there be refunds for any days campus is closed?

Tuition rates will not be adjusted for the 2020-21 school year. Recall that, even in non-pandemic times, the cost to educate a student, at all levels ECE-12, exceeds tuition rates and relies on our annual fund. COVID-19 is incredibly expensive. Our experience to date, and all that we are learning from other schools and NAIS legal counsel, is that added expenses far outweigh what might look like obvious savings. If we have to close parts or all of campus for K-12, for short or longer periods, students will continue to learn through our Distance Learning (DL) program.

All of that said, we certainly do not aim to make a profit in this moment. We continue to analyze budgeted vs. actual costs and are using that information to plan for the 2020-21 school year. If the coming year brings greater disruption than anticipated, we will re-evaluate and consider our options. As always, we aim to support our students, families, and employees and do the right thing.

Our priority is to avoid long-term campus closure at the ECE level. If we are not able to do that, we will re-evaluate and consider options to do right by all involved.

What if my family is experiencing significant hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic and we need special consideration?

We very much want to take care of our families and our faculty and staff to the best of our abilities. We are working with individual families who are experiencing significant financial hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic. If you would like to apply for financial aid, please contact [Jack Sweeney](#).

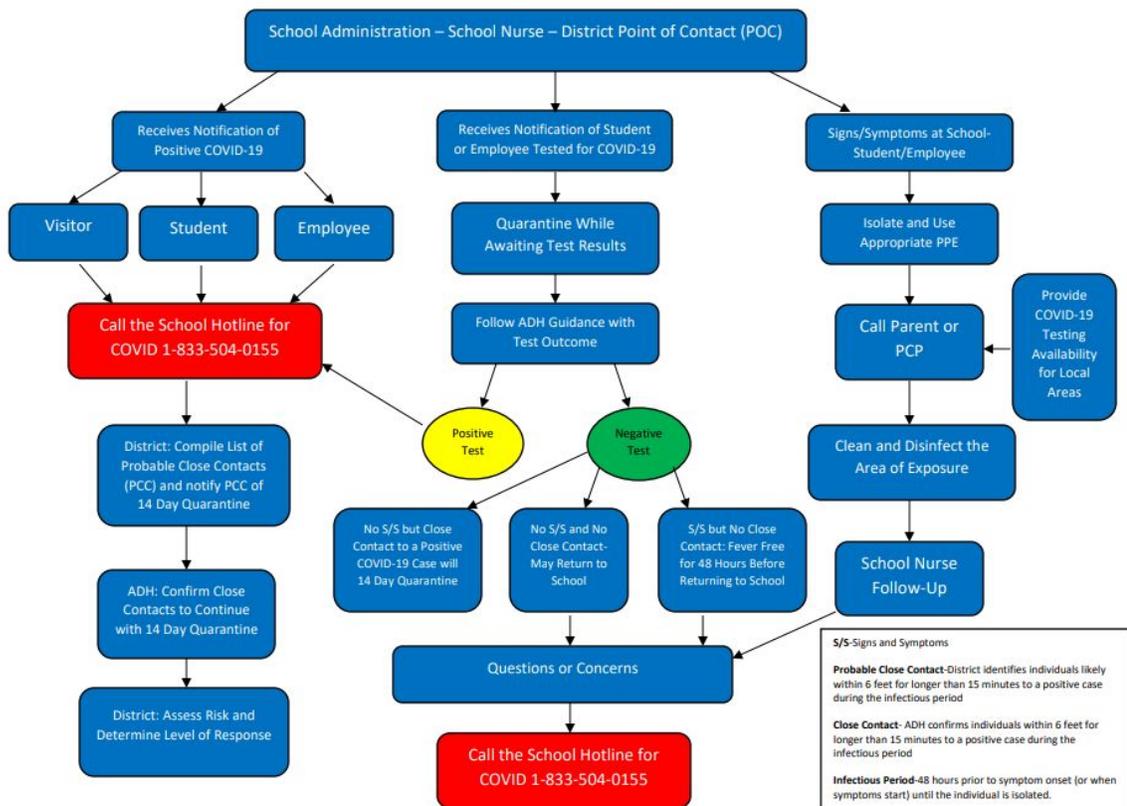
What is happening with admissions and enrollment at this time?

The Admission Office is continuing to work with prospective families through the admission process. We continue to receive inquiries and applications have resumed modified on-campus tours, utilizing social distancing guidelines. If you have questions about admissions or enrollment, please contact [Jack Sweeney](#).

What procedure will the school follow if someone has symptoms, gets tested, and/or tests positive for COVID-19?

We will follow the guidelines set by ADH, as outlined below. We have also shared our decision matrix, which helps guide decisions about partial or full closures. We will communicate general information about positive cases to the community, but will do our best to keep specific information to any groups who need that information. Along the way, each decision will be made in collaboration with ADH. While we will aim for discretion, confidentiality about cases cannot be guaranteed during this pandemic. If information needs to be shared for contact tracing, we will do as advised.

If we have a positive case, there will undoubtedly be a need for a group to quarantine. How big that group is will depend on the case and exposure. If exposure has been limited, we may not need to close campus for one case. That said, each case will be handled individually and run through ADH. Please see below for details on families and siblings.



How is TNS making decisions about siblings/family members of close contacts?

While we will work with families individually, we do have greater clarity around the criteria for family members of close contacts to return to school. We come to this work within ADH guidelines and consultation. Moving forward, return will be based on testing on the 5th day (or later) after the close contact has had exposure, the family’s ability to distance at home, and guidance from ADH. The expectation is that if one member of a family is identified as a close contact, the members of the family will not come into TNS for 5 days. On the 5th day, the family (close contact and anyone hoping to return to TNS) should test. Once negative results are shared, the family members may return. The close contact must remain in quarantine for the full 14 days.

How is TNS making decisions about campus closures and options for distance learning and supervision?

Factors/Criteria for Consideration

Internal

- Number and location (level) of known positive COVID-19 cases within TNS community
- Number of cohorts in quarantine
- Absentee rate among employees
- Absentee rate among students
- Percentage of students engaged in distance learning vs. on-campus learning
- Availability of risk mitigation supplies (PPE, cleaning/sanitizing supplies, equipment, etc.)
- Culture/atmosphere within TNS community

External

- Directives or advisories from local, state, or federal government officials/agencies
- ADH guidelines (informed by CDC guidelines)
- COVID-19 spread and impact in NWA
 - Trends in spread (numbers, percent changes, etc.)
 - Availability/accessibility of testing (and result report time)
 - Availability of ICU beds and ventilators in local medical facilities
- Decisions made by other local schools

TNS Decision Matrix for Operations Level

Operations Level	Ranges of Factors/Criteria Possible at this Level	Operations Mode	Risk Mitigation Measures
Green	Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No COVID-19 cases on campus; no cohorts in quarantine ● Low absenteeism ● Supplies available External: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No mandates/advisories ● COVID-19 spread in control (possibly a vaccine) 	On Campus Normal Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced cleaning & sanitizing ● Some cohort mixing ● Face covering expectations likely relaxed ● Meals & eating in DH ● Preparing for post-COVID operations ● Activities resume fully
Yellow	Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 0-few COVID-19 cases in TNS community ● 0-few cohorts in quarantine ● Low absenteeism ● Supplies available External:	ECE Open K-12 On Campus, with DL option available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>This is our current level</i> ● RTOC Plan outlines details ● Enhanced cleaning & sanitizing ● Cohorts & Distancing in effect

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mandates requiring stricter operations Local cases of COVID-19 managed within medical facilities Local schools offering some on-campus learning 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings required Limited use of bus, before, and after school care advised Limited activities
Orange	<p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple COVID-19 cases in TNS community Multiple cohorts in quarantine High absenteeism High percentage of students in DL Supplies in demand <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisories impacting decisions Local cases of COVID-19 stressing medical facilities Local schools closing buildings 	<p>ECE Open if Possible</p> <p>K-12 DL Learning, with limited on-campus supervision available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing K-6 families sign up for childcare on campus during school hours 7-12 students on campus by invitation or appointment School hours adjusted (shorter) Students in “study hall” type settings to do DL, with supervision and support Low numbers on campus If ECE open, operations will follow RTOC plan and any updated licensing guidelines
Red	<p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple COVID-19 cases in TNS community Multiple cohorts in quarantine Extreme absenteeism Supplies not available <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandate for closure Local cases of COVID-19 stressing medical facilities Local schools closing 	<p>ECE Depends on Situation</p> <p>K-12 Campus Closed</p> <p>DL for All K-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing Campus closed If ECE open, operations will follow RTOC plan and any updated licensing guidelines

	buildings		
--	-----------	--	--

Why is TNS opening on August 13th, when the Governor has mandated that public schools delay opening until August 24th?

The Governor clearly stated that the purpose of the delay is to ensure that all districts are ready to start school. He did not indicate, nor is there any clear evidence, that the delay of 11 days would increase the level of safety in any in-person learning. In making this decision, we determined that TNS will be as ready on August 13th as we would be on August 24th.

That said, the rate of change of circumstances and information continues to be rapid. While we are on track for an August 13th on-campus and distance learning (DL) start, that could still be delayed or altered to an all DL start. We have a very good plan. We also must acknowledge that there are many things beyond our control that could impact our operations.

Why not start the year in DL mode for all families and shift to in-person when COVID-19 is under control?

We do have a process to guide any adjustments to our plan, including regular meetings of our risk management team. The voice from parents seeking on-campus learning has been consistently loud and clear. While we will not offer on-campus learning if it crosses a safety line, we do believe that, with the risk mitigation strategies we’re employing, on-campus learning is manageable. We encourage parents who are not comfortable with on-campus learning to take advantage of the DL option available. Those who choose on-campus learning must do so fully anticipating disruptions that will necessitate a partial or full transition to DL mode.

No matter how we approach this school year, it will not be what we consider “normal.” Acknowledging that in-person learning is better for most students, we are planning to provide that whenever possible. All schools will have factors that would trigger a closure, and we are no different. Our goal is to do the absolute best we can for our students, balancing the needs of teachers, students, and families.