



**JANUARY 2021**

Ridgefield Academy/Landmark Preschool

# ROADMAP 2021: THE PATH FORWARD

Managing COVID-19

**THIS PLAN IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED UPON EVOLVING GUIDANCE, PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY OCCUR DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.**



**DETAILED ROADMAP 2021 CAN BE FOUND AT**  
[www.ridgefieldacademy.org/reopening-plan](http://www.ridgefieldacademy.org/reopening-plan)

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## Introduction

Dear Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool Families,

I hope this note finds you well! As I mentioned in a letter several weeks ago, we took some time over the last vacation to go back and review/update our Roadmap for Reopening. Having experienced the first half of the school year, we have learned a lot about managing a school during a pandemic. Additionally, some of the guidance has changed. Finally, it is clear that we are no longer reopening. We have been open, and our plan is now focused on staying open safely. Consequently, we have re-titled the plan, Roadmap 2021, The Path Forward.

Please take some time to again review this plan. It is detailed, but it is precisely these details that have helped us through the year thus far. We found, when reviewing the Plan, that the vast majority of it was still highly relevant and working! Social distancing, hand-washing, mask wearing, cohorting, and tight health guidelines remain at the heart of the Plan.

Educationally, the Parallel Remote Learning program has been a big success, allowing families choice. Each family can choose to have their children learning on site or from home. Feedback has been really positive for this program. In terms of changes, many of you know that the quarantining guidelines for close contact have changed, so you'll see that sort of thing among the changes in this updated plan. As always, let us know if you have any questions or concerns!

Sincerely,

Tom Main, Head of School





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A GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND A LEARNING SCENARIO DECISION TREE CAN BE FOUND IN THE FULL ROADMAP 2021 ON OUR WEBSITE.

THE LINK CAN BE FOUND AT THE TOP OF EACH PAGE IN THIS DOCUMENT.



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

### INTRODUCTION

The Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool campuses plan to remain open for in-person classes for the second half of the 20-21 school year. However, we remain prepared to implement four scenarios that, together, provide a continuity of learning regardless of modality: continued learning on campus, periods of fully remote learning, hybrid learning, and parallel remote learning. Each scenario ensures the highest quality educational experiences for students while prioritizing the community's health and safety.

Students will be engaged in meaningful learning whether on campus, at home, or switching between the two. Social & emotional well-being and readiness to learn continue to be priorities. Our school counselor and learning specialists remain available to students and their families to lend support regardless of the scenario.

### IN-PERSON LEARNING

On campus, in-person learning will continue to follow a daily schedule with modifications made for health and safety purposes, most notably keeping students and teachers in cohorts designed to limit the possible spread of COVID-19 and other diseases. Cohorts make it easier to manage possible exposure.

**Preschool:** Classes on the Ridgefield and Westport campuses will follow the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood guidelines. Students at the Bedford campus will adhere to New York State Office of Children and Family Services guidelines. Head and assistant teachers will remain with their class cohort throughout the day. Specialist teachers conduct classes in either the cohort classrooms, in the specialist's classroom, outdoors, or via Google Meet as determined to be the safest, most practical approach at any given time.

**Lower School:** Students will stay in grade-level cohorts and remain with head teachers throughout the day, keeping to a daily schedule with regular class periods. Assistant teachers and specialist teachers will join classes according to a set schedule. Cohorts may rotate through specialist classrooms each day, allowing time for proper cleaning and disinfection before another cohort visits the same space; specialist teachers exercise options of conducting classes from the primary classroom, outdoors, or via Google Meet.

**Middle and Upper School:** Students will stay in cohorts by floor of the Annex building: Grade 4 on the first floor, Grades 5 and 6 on the second floor, and Grades 7 and 8 on the third floor except for classes in a science lab dedicated for their use on the second floor. Students will remain in the classrooms assigned to their cohort, attending classes that follow the daily schedule with 40-minute classes.



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

(continued)

### PERIODS OF FULLY REMOTE LEARNING

If the school decides that local and state recommendations necessitate that campuses must be closed during the school year, students will participate in a fully remote learning scenario with offerings varying in developmentally appropriate ways. All families will need an internet connection sufficient for remote participation.

**Preschool:** Preschool families will be asked to ensure access to a tablet or other computing device. Prior to a day of remote learning, families of preschool students will receive the next day's asynchronous (not happening in real-time) activities by 8 pm. Students will participate in asynchronous activities using the Seesaw online platform. These asynchronous activities will be augmented by synchronous (real-time) one-on-one and small group remote meetings with their teachers via Google Meet during the school day.

**Lower School:** Grades K-2 families will be asked to ensure access to a tablet or other computing device. Prior to a day of remote learning, families of lower school students will receive the next day's asynchronous activities by 8 pm. Students will complete asynchronous activities on an online platform (K – Grade 2 using Seesaw and Grade 3 using Google Classroom) and participate in synchronous whole-class, small group, and one-on-one meetings via video conferencing. Grade 3 students will continue to use Google Chromebooks to facilitate online classes and assignments.

**Middle and Upper School:** Middle and Upper School students will participate in synchronous 30-minute remote classes following a similar but slightly modified, six-day rotating class schedule. Synchronous class meetings will occur via Google Meet, and homework and other asynchronous activities will be assigned in Google Classroom and posted to the Patriot Portal. Students will continue to use Google Chromebooks, and Upper School students will have the option of using a personally-owned computer.

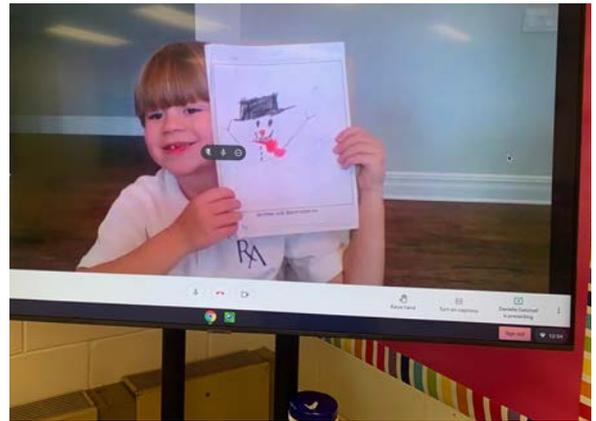
If technology requirements associated with remote learning cause a financial hardship, please contact Dave Suter, Director of Financial Aid.

### HYBRID LEARNING

Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool define hybrid learning as a period of time when some classes are taught on campus while others are taught remotely. This may be triggered by one or more cohorts needing to quarantine due to contact tracing or if local, state, and federal recommendations limit the number of students on campus at a given time. During a period of hybrid learning, portions of the student population will be on campus for in-person classes while the remainder of students will participate in remote classes.



## PARALLEL REMOTE LEARNING



When Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool are open for on-campus learning, students may need to remain at home because of exposure to COVID-19 or if they are experiencing symptoms. Some families may simply be uncomfortable sending their children to school. Parallel remote learning allows for the greatest level of flexibility in these cases, offering classes with multiple pathways for participation.

Preschool campuses and Kindergarten – Grade 8 classrooms are outfitted with technology that allows remote students to participate in in-person classes. Students learning in-person and students learning remotely engage together in learning experiences, group work, differentiated groups, and student support.

Families of students who participate via the parallel remote learning option will need an internet connection sufficient for remote participation.

**Preschool:** In-person students will participate in lessons and activities with their class cohort. Prior to a day of remote learning, families of preschool students will receive the next day's asynchronous (not happening in real-time) activities by 8 pm. Students will participate in asynchronous activities using the Seesaw online platform. These asynchronous activities will be augmented by synchronous (real-time) one-on-one and small group remote meetings with their teachers via Google Meet during the school day. Preschool families will be asked to ensure access to a tablet or other computing device.

**Lower School:** Students will participate in synchronous class meetings alongside their on-campus classmates via Google Meet. They will also participate in asynchronous activities and complete homework via Seesaw (K-2) or Google Classroom (3). Grades K-2 families will be asked to ensure access to a tablet or other computing device. Grade 3 students will use school-owned Chromebook computers.

**Middle and Upper School:** Students will participate in synchronous class meetings alongside their on-campus classmates via Google Meet. They will also participate in asynchronous activities and complete homework assigned in Google Classroom and also posted on the Patriot Portal using school-issued Chromebooks or personal devices.

If technology requirements associated with remote learning cause a financial hardship, please contact Dave Suter, Director of Financial Aid.



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

(continued)

### SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We know that prolonged periods of social distancing and alternative ways of interacting socially can produce negative effects on the emotional and social development of children. The pandemic and the resulting changes such as wearing masks and keeping social distance from one another have accentuated the importance of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and our commitment to educating the whole child, building partnerships with parents, and promoting a strong, supportive community.

The five essential components of the RA/LP'S SEL program are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Resilience

SEL remains critical to engaging students, strengthening relationships, and ensuring that everyone under our roof feels a sense of belonging, feels safe and heard, and can heal and thrive.



### COMMUNICATIONS

You should continue to expect to hear from us regularly this year as we keep you informed of educational and operational updates, changes to policies or procedures, and updates on the health and wellness of members in our community to make certain that safety notifications, guidelines, and changes are known and understood.

Communications from key members of our school will be delivered in a clear, consistent, and timely manner, via vehicles that may include text, email, virtual town hall events, and digital newsletters. A dedicated web page has gathered informational resources from the school for easy reference.



# COMMUNICATIONS

(continued)

Signage remains in key areas and campus access points such as building lobbies, dining halls, bathrooms, common areas, and parking lots to remind students, faculty, and staff of relevant safety protocols such as handwashing and social distancing.

The chart below details the key types of COVID-19 related communications that may occur during the second half of the 20-21 school year:

Situation	Who is informed?	By whom?	Vehicle
Student/Faculty/Staff Tests Positive or is Presumed to Have COVID-19	All parents on Affected Campus or Division/Building to be Referenced	School Nurse/Preschool Director	Text or Email to all
Institutional News	All Parents	Head of School	Email & Newsletter
Divisional or Campus News	Parents of the Division or Campus Impacted	Division Head or Preschool Director	Email & Newsletter
Grade Level News	Parents of the Grade Impacted	Division Head	Email
Class or Preschool Cohort News	Parents of the Class or Preschool Cohort Impacted	Division Head or Preschool Director	Email

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT - MASKS

Consistent with Connecticut, Office of Early Childhood (OEC), and New York State guidelines, all students will wear masks indoors, removing them at specific times (mask 'breaks' or lunch/snack, for instance). Two-year-olds will not be asked to wear masks. Faculty, staff, and students will all wear masks in accordance with public health guidelines. Specific staff (health care workers, kitchen, or custodial staff) will follow any special mandated PPE requirements for their jobs. Due to the frequency with which they slip off, bandanas and gaitors are not an acceptable substitute for a mask.

For more specific information on masks, please refer to the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document.



## ON-CAMPUS PROCEDURES

### CLASSROOMS

Classrooms remain arranged to allow for appropriate social distancing, complying with local and national standards. RA/LPS is fortunate to have small class sizes and fairly large classroom spaces, and is able to accomplish social distancing through careful planning of the layout of the classroom spaces, rather than reducing students' time on campus. In addition, when weather and schedules permit, faculty will continue to conduct classes outside.

### COMMON SPACES

Extensive thought and planning have been given to our common spaces: cafeterias, playgrounds, hallways, libraries, and places where students may congregate or gather. In each case, we will ensure that social distancing guidelines are adhered to, and that space will be occupied by one cohort, and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before being occupied by another cohort.

### LUNCH

Lunch is an important time in the lives of our students. It is a time to socialize and for us to promote healthy eating and nutrition habits.

- The Bedford campus does not serve lunch due to the hours of the program.
- Westport students will continue to bring their own lunches and eat in their cohorted classrooms.
- Ridgefield campus preschool students will continue to bring their own lunches or their parents will order through an online platform and students will eat in their cohorted classrooms.
- Students in K-8 will eat by cohort in the Dining Hall, Commons, classroom or outside. Students eating in the Dining Hall or Commons will be separated by plexiglass dividers.
- K-8 students will continue ordering from an online menu platform each morning and will receive their chosen individually packaged meal at their designated time and location.





## ON-CAMPUS PROCEDURES

(Continued)

### CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Disinfection measures include (but are not limited to):

- Hand sanitizers are available in multiple spaces in all buildings, classrooms, and additional locations.
- Disposable wipes are available in all classrooms, and other shared facilities for wiping down surfaces.
- Teachers have sanitizing kits in each classroom and continue to disinfect surfaces and materials as needed during the day.
- Students, faculty, and staff are reminded to wash hands frequently. Protocols are in place for hand washing/sanitizing steadily over the course of each day.
- Public spaces, corridors, office spaces, and bathrooms are cleaned regularly.

In accordance with the State of Connecticut's Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic, surfaces are cleaned throughout the day and a COVID-19-trained cleaning crew will do a thorough cleaning of each facility each evening.

To see the State of Connecticut's Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic, please refer to the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document

### HVAC

To the extent possible, the school has increased ventilation rates or the percentage of outdoor air circulating in ventilation systems, improve air filtration, reduce recirculation, and disable demand-controlled ventilation.

### OUTDOOR SPACES

With a 42 acre campus in Ridgefield, a beautiful slice of open land with play equipment in Bedford and two outdoor play areas which include a newly renovated playground in Westport, when weather and schedules permit outdoor spaces continue to be used for both play and learning.

For details on how the Ridgefield campus will use its outdoor spaces, please refer to the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document.



## ON-CAMPUS PROCEDURES

(Continued)

### TRAVEL

All students, faculty, and staff are advised to avoid non-essential travel domestically and internationally, and should essential travel be required, to inform the school of the details. Students, as well as family members, and employees who travel to a CDC or CT/NY Travel Advisory State or Country will be asked to remain off campus in accordance with government-issued quarantining requirements OR shall comply with their state issued negative test result requirements.



### VISITOR ACCESS

In a continued effort to limit the possible spread of COVID-19, our visiting policies remain in place based on the recommendations of health and government officials. We recognize that families miss the welcoming invites to classroom activities and performances, but it is important that we reduce the number of visitors for prevention reasons.

For specific protocols for visitors on campus, please refer to the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document.

### TRANSPORTATION

Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschools continues to follow the protocols for arrival and dismissal across all three campuses as outlined on the website. RA is working closely with designated busing providers to ensure appropriate safety and wellness policies for riders.

For specific details concerning drop-off and arrival and busing procedures, please refer to the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document.



## HEALTH, SAFETY & CONTAINMENT

Every member of our school community plays an important role in keeping our students and families, faculty, and staff safe. Even with the best safety measures in place, it is important for every member of our community to act responsibly and follow the latest health guidelines as they relate to mitigating the spread of COVID-19. As a community, if we are all highly attentive to these safety measures, collectively, we will be a safer place and more likely to be able to keep our campuses open for in-person learning. At this time, there is no known way to completely eliminate risk; safety measures focus instead on actions that keep risks to a minimum.

Prominent signage at the entrance to each campus will ask you to confirm your own health status before coming on campus. This is the sign:



Monitoring: The CDC recommends that students, faculty, and staff will:

- Avoid contact with those known to be ill from COVID-19 or any other communicable illness.
- Stay home when, and observe for possible symptoms of COVID-19.
- Practice social distancing and mask wearing and hand hygiene.

Testing: Currently, the school nurse or preschool director will request a student, faculty, or staff member suspected of having COVID-19 or having had close contact with someone positively diagnosed to either consult with their physician or self-initiate a COVID-19 test. As information on testing (or repeat testing, if applicable) of students, faculty, and staff evolves, RA/LPS's requirements will always be in accordance with recommendations from local and state health authorities, as well as CDC guidelines.



## HEALTH, SAFETY & CONTAINMENT

(continued)

### CONTAINMENT SPACES AND PROTOCOLS

**Ridgefield:** Students with symptoms are brought to the designated containment room near the gym entrance in the Summit Building to be monitored by the nurse until a parent or guardian arrives. An air purifier is utilized in the nurse's office and containment area.

**Bedford:** Individuals with symptoms are brought to a designated, unused classroom. The student is monitored by a designated staff member in PPE until a parent or guardian arrives. An air purifier is utilized in this containment area.

**Westport:** Individuals with symptoms are brought to a designated containment space with an adjacent bathroom. The student is monitored by a designated staff member in PPE until a parent or guardian arrives. An air purifier is utilized in this containment area.

Students who experience COVID-19 symptoms can return by following one of the alternatives below:

- A negative COVID test and free of all symptoms (must be symptom free of fever specifically for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication) *or*
- A doctor's note with a non-COVID diagnosis and clearance to return to school *or*
- 10 days at home from onset of symptoms and free of all symptoms (must be symptom free of fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication)

### CONTACT TRACING & REPORTING

**Contact Tracing:** Contact tracing for exposure will be conducted and coordinated through each campus' local, respective health department: Ridgefield, Westport, and Westchester County.

**Collecting Information About COVID-19 Cases:** If a student or employee is experiencing symptoms, has had a possible exposure to COVID-19, or tests positive for the virus, the parent/guardian or employee must inform the nurse (Ridgefield campus) or preschool director (Bedford and Westport campuses) by phone call or email.

- If a student/faculty/staff tests positive or is presumed to have COVID-19, the nurse or preschool director will notify the head of school, school administrators, director of facilities, and the local health department.
- The school will maintain a reporting and tracking form on each campus to record these cases and associated absences.
- A more detailed explanation of Health, Safety and Containment procedures can be found in the full Roadmap to Reopening on our website. The link can be found at the top of each page in this document.



## HEALTH, SAFETY & CONTAINMENT

(continued)

### VACCINATIONS

At the time of this writing, COVID-19 vaccinations are beginning to be made available to adults. While the CDC has issued guidance for who should be prioritized to receive vaccinations, each state is managing a hierarchy of distribution to its residents. The CDC notes that as vaccine availability increases, vaccination recommendations will expand to include more groups. As information unfolds, the school will communicate anything that impacts its students and families.



## CAMPUS SHUTDOWN

The pandemic has necessitated a flexible, multi-faceted approach that also allows for the possibility of a move to hybrid learning or a return to fully remote learning at any time during the year due to exposure within a cohort, building, or closed campus. Decisions regarding school closure will be made collaboratively with school leadership or at the requirement of local health officials or Governor orders, if it is determined that a statewide shutdown is to occur.

As noted, in any of the previous situations, if a part (cohort, building, or campus) of the school needs to shut down for any period of time during the school year, Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool is fully prepared to provide continuous instruction for all of its preschool through 8th grade students. The specifics of each scenario are detailed in the Educational Program section of this document.

If a serious outbreak occurs and orders of closure are from the local authorities, they will contact the head of school directly. The head of school will initiate established protocols of communication to alert the school community. Communication to a local health department will be handled by the nurse (Ridgefield), preschool director (town of Westport or Westchester County Dept. of Health), or head of school.

### RESOURCES

- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Connecticut
  - Department of Education Reopening Schools Plan
  - Association of Independent Schools (CAIS)
  - Office of Early Childhood: Guidance for Child Care COVID-19 Response
  - Reopen Connecticut
  - Trumbull, CT COVID policy draft , Lynn Steinbrick RN MSN, et al,
- New York
  - Child Care and Day Camps:
    - Childcare\_and\_Summer\_Camps\_Summary.pdf
    - Child\_Care\_Daycamps\_Detailed\_Guidelines.pdf
    - NYS\_BusinessReopeningSafetyPlanTemplate.pdf
- Pennsylvania Dept. of Education, Resources for School Communities During COVID-19

The full **Roadmap 2021** for Ridgefield Academy and Landmark Preschool can be found at:  
[www.ridgefieldacademy.org/reopening-plan](http://www.ridgefieldacademy.org/reopening-plan)

Please direct questions to Kara Morgan, Director of Communications at  
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