



WARDLAW + HARTRIDGE

Opening Plan | Fall 2021

(Issued August 23, 2021)

1295 Inman Avenue | Edison, NJ 08820 | 908.754.1882 | WHschool.org

A WORLD-CHANGING PREP SCHOOL SINCE 1882

W+H's Opening Task Force

The Wardlaw+Hartridge School's Opening Task Force is charged with reviewing our procedures and protocols as we look to the 2021-2022 school year. We are planning again for the Fall in the four areas we considered for the 2020-2021 school year: Health & Wellness, Facilities, Schedule & Calendar, and Extra- & Co-Curricular Activities. Our process and practices are aligned with guidance from national, state, and local authorities, and safety is our top priority. The following faculty, staff, and administrators make up The Wardlaw+Hartridge School Opening Task Force:

Mr. Andrew Webster

Head of School
Chair of the Opening Task Force

Dr. Bob Bowman

Head of Upper School
Chair of Academic Schedule & Calendar

Mrs. Sharon Byrne

Performing Arts Department Chair
Chair of Co- and Extracurricular Programs

Mr. JohnEric Advento

Head of Lower School

Ms. Jennifer Rose

Head of Middle School

Mr. Ryan Oliveira

Athletic Trainer
Pandemic Response Coordinator
Chair of Health & Wellness

Mr. John Pratt

Chief Financial Officer
Chair of Facilities

Ms. Zoe Bongiovanni

School Counselor

Ms. Donna Brack

Assistant to the Head of School/
Office Manager

Ms. Dina Congregane

School Counselor

Dr. Corinna Crafton

Associate Head of School for Curriculum and Instruction

Mrs. Angela Farese

School Nurse

Mr. Kostas Georgiou

Board of Trustees - Vice-President

Mr. Gerard Gonnella '89

Director of Admission & Financial Aid
Director of the International Student Program

Mr. Karl Miran

Athletic Director

Mr. Kyle Modes

Upper School Science Department
Scheduler

Mrs. Kerry O'Neill

Board of Trustees - Treasurer

Mr. Rob Rizzo '89

Board of Trustees - Past President

Dr. Ayesha Sitlani

Board of Trustees - President

Mr. Marc Spivak

Director of Technology & Media Services

Mr. Leaford Thompson

Superintendent of Building & Grounds

Planning for the 2021-2022 School Year

As the summer has progressed, pandemic conditions have worsened substantially in some areas of the country, and to a lesser but still important degree locally. The rate of transmission and the number of cases per 100,000 population have been on the rise for the last month. Breakthrough infections among the vaccinated have been more numerous than expected, though it remains clear that the vaccines have sharply minimized infections and even more so the severity of illness. We now know vaccinated individuals who become infected can transmit the virus readily. The vaccines are still not approved for use before the age of 12, and it is unlikely that our Pre-Kindergarten through Sixth Grade students will be able to be fully vaccinated until late Fall at the earliest.

We move toward opening day, then, with climbing rates of infection and a substantial level of transmission. We have operated safely before in this type of environment. As ever, our goal is to provide an outstanding learning experience in an environment that prevents transmission of the COVID-19 illness, and to take measures needed to preserve our ability to provide in-person learning. We had reason to hope that the school year would open with less need for stringent protocols, though always with close monitoring. That is not the case, however. As the year unfolds, we may yet reach improved conditions, and we will remain flexible where and when the data and guidance allow. As we open, our students aged 12 and over and our employees who are vaccinated will be safer than last year at the start of school, but that is not so for our younger ones, and our policies will be based on the safety of all.

We will continue to provide multilayered interventions:

- All students and employees will be masked for all indoor activities. For some socially distanced (minimum of 3 feet) outdoor activities, masks may be optional. Multiple studies indicate that the fit of a mask is even more important than the exact type, and that additional layers of material increase the effectiveness of the mask. Vented masks are not allowed, nor are gaiters.
- For athletics, outdoor sport participants will be allowed to remove their mask while participating in strenuous activity.
- We will maintain social distancing of at least 3 feet.
- We will maintain last year's emphasis on frequent hand-washing and cleaning and disinfection of spaces.
- We will provide ongoing surveillance testing, contact tracing, and enhanced sick policies that align with or exceed federal and state guidance and regulations. The cadence of testing may vary throughout the year as local levels of risk grow or fall, and will reflect degrees of risk inherent in certain activities, such as athletics.
- Throughout the year, students and employees with respiratory symptoms will need to complete testing prior to their return to school. Our medical counsel advises that initial symptoms of Delta variant infections are very similar to colds, most often with runny noses, coughing, perhaps slight fever, and that there is no way to be confident the symptoms are not from COVID-19 except to test. The rapid antigen tests may be used for this purpose if the doctor so chooses.
- Parents will continue to complete and submit the Parent Locker symptom screener every day prior to arrival at school, and we will scan the QR codes at drop-off.
- We continue to use cutting-edge air filtration and purification technologies to provide the healthiest air possible.
- Students 12 years or older and employees are required to submit up-to-date records of COVID-19 vaccination status to the Pandemic Response Coordinator so we can do our contact tracing efficiently and

accurately and so we can properly assess risk factors to our student body and among our employees. Attendance will not be allowed without this documentation. Anyone who is not vaccinated should submit a note to that effect. These records are kept only with the Pandemic Response Coordinator and are used for no other purpose.

- Vaccination will not be mandatory for enrollment at this point, though this may be subject to change once vaccines are available at all ages. Vaccines may be required for higher risk, optional activities, though we have not made any requirements for any programs this fall.
- Efforts to use outdoor space for classes will continue in 2021-22.
- The lunch program will continue to feature Plexiglas dividers and a limited number of students in each lunch period and at each table.
- We anticipate opening in person on September 10, 2021, without a phase-in period.
- Our Pandemic Response Coordinator will continue to manage all interventions and communications regarding pandemic issues and concerns, continuing through 2021-22.
- Visitors with appointments for approved purposes will be allowed in our buildings, with the requirement of proof of vaccination and/or recent COVID tests, masks, and symptom screening.
- No outside food or drink will be permitted during the school day, with the exception of lunch in the AP Room. Water bottles will be allowed and students may refill water bottles at water stations.

With these interventions in place, we will expect all students to attend classes in person, as will all teachers. While we have proven it is possible to provide a strong academic program in a hybrid model, it is far from optimal for teachers and students and we do not wish to provide it as a common option. We may adjust attendance expectations for periods of time as conditions warrant. If a student has an ordinary sickness, such as a cold, strep, or the flu, they will not attend classes via Zoom. Instead, they will rest and recover, and make up any needed work afterward, as was always the case before the pandemic. Likewise, ill teachers will not teach online. If extended absences are necessary, such as for quarantines, this rule may be waived to provide Zoom access. International students who are unable to join us in person yet will have Zoom access.

2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR	2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR
• Daily Symptom Screener	• Daily Symptom Screener
• QR Code Verification Upon Arrival	• QR Code Verification Upon Arrival
• Temperature Screening	• Temperature Screening
• Masking at All Times	• <i>Masking for all indoor activities and some outdoor activities</i>
• Frequent Hand Washing and Sanitizing	• Frequent Hand Washing and Sanitizing
• Social Distancing of 6 Feet	• <i>Social Distancing of at least 3 feet</i>
• Remote Option - On-Demand	• <i>Remote Option - Rare Circumstance</i>
• Some Teachers Teach Remotely	• <i>All Faculty In-Person</i>
• Ill Students Attend Via Zoom	• <i>Students with Short term illnesses Recuperate and Return</i>

● International Students Attend Via Zoom, If Needed	● International Students Attend Via Zoom, If Needed
● No MS Sports; Intramurals Instead	● <i>MS Sports Resume</i>
● Performing Arts Classes and Events Extensively Modified	● <i>Performing Arts Classes and Events Resume</i>
● No Sharing of Classroom Materials	● <i>Limited Sharing of Classroom Materials</i>
● No Group Science Laboratory Experiments	● <i>Full Program of Science Laboratory Experiments</i>
● Field Trips Eliminated	● <i>Field Trips Permissible, but Limited</i>
● International Education Programs Eliminated	● <i>International Education Programs Under Investigation for Resumption</i>
● Lower School Lunch in Classrooms	● <i>Lower School Lunch in the AP Room for Grades 1-5</i>

Protocol For When Illness Occurs At School

- Students or staff will be observed by the school nurse and will be isolated from others when necessary.
- Symptomatic individuals, when age-appropriate, will be asked a series of questions, regarding:
 - potential exposure to anyone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - close contacts (people who were within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period over the previous 48 hours).
 - close contact with someone who is ill
 - Other questions deemed necessary according to changing guidance.
- Individuals with COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home and referred to a physician. Test results (rapid antigen permissible) will be required for return to school . ***All outcomes must be reported to the school at PandemicResponse@whschool.org.*** See outcome chart below.

<u>Negative Test Result</u>	<u>Positive Test Result</u>
Remain home until 24 hours after symptom resolution.	Isolate for 10 days from date of positive test or symptom onset AND ensure at least 24 hours after resolution of fever above 99.9 without the use of fever reducing medication, as well as improvement of all other symptoms.
Provide proof of negative test and written medical clearance to return.	Provide written clearance from your doctor dated from the end of your quarantine.

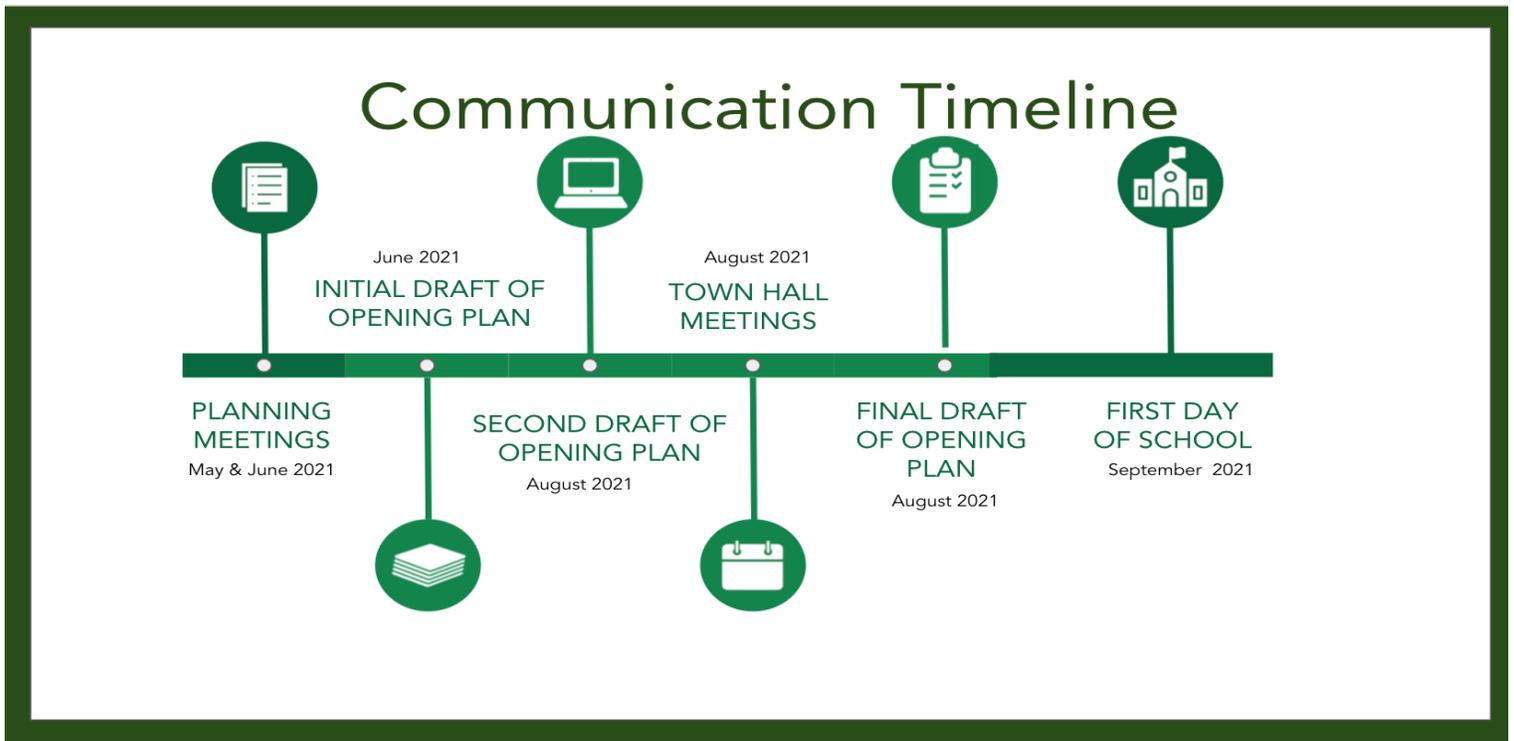
Close and Household Contacts

A close contact is defined as someone who is within 6 feet of an ill person for more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period or someone who has made direct physical contact (such as hugging or kissing) with someone who is ill, up to 48 hours prior to the person becoming symptomatic or testing positive.

Close contact (vaccinated)	Close Contact (unvaccinated) *see below for household contacts
No quarantine required	Minimum 7-day quarantine
Required COVID test 3-5 days after last exposure to positive case	Required COVID test 5 days after last exposure to positive case

*Household Contacts: If a member of the school community is required to quarantine, all other *unvaccinated* members of that household must stay home and monitor symptoms. They will be allowed to return upon completion of quarantine as long as no symptoms appear.

Communication Timeline



Any questions or concerns can be directed to pandemicresponse@whschool.org. We look forward to providing additional clarity in subsequent iterations of this plan.

These plans are subject to change based on the latest guidance.



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