



July 2, 2020

Dear Pacific Ridge School,

As we head off to 4th of July weekend, I wanted to provide you with further important information about the coming school year. This update will focus on general plans for the daily/weekly schedule, our phased reopening plan, and how we intend to handle remote/hybrid learning via instructional technology.

Due to the many restrictions schools are operating under and the fluidity of the Covid environment, we have had to make a number of modifications to our schedule. Schools must be prepared for a return to remote learning at any time and have a schedule that can offer a seamless transition between remote and on-campus learning. In addition, we can assume that sometimes only a percentage of our students will be able to be on campus. It is to meet these circumstances and deliver our program in the best way possible that we have developed this year's schedule. We understand that these modifications will impact our families; we will work with you to make the school year go as smoothly as possible.

Daily / Weekly Schedule –

Based upon the OnPath survey data we received in May, we know that our community wants students on campus as much as is safely possible. Using the survey data and researching what independent schools around the country are planning, we have used the following principles to build our schedule.

Staggered – Due to the need to health screen students and staff before they come onto campus, we will have to stagger the start of the school day so that we don't have all of our students arriving at the same time. Depending upon the grade, the school day will begin between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m., and we will be asking families to plan to arrive 20-30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time for a student's grade. We are still developing our drop-off and pick-up plan.

Scalable – Due to the changing landscape of Covid-19 risk we can expect throughout the school year, we must be able to scale our density (the total number of students on campus) at any time. We have constructed a schedule that can accommodate three, four, or six grades on campus on any one day – while the rest of the grades are studying remotely. The schedule we are employing will allow us to scale the density of our student population up and down AND maintain the same schedule whether or not our students are remote or on campus.

Full-Day – We want to make sure that our students are getting ample time for learning. We also have to recognize that staggering our schedule and likely switching back and forth

between remote and on-campus learning means our “full” school day needs to be shorter than it typically would be. In general, we expect students to be on campus about 5 ½ hours a day. As we learned in the spring, a shortened schedule in the remote learning setting is essential to the health and wellbeing of our students. School days (remote or on campus) will include four periods, lunch, and opportunities for our signature co-curricular programming (advisory, service learning, affinity groups, clubs, etc.).

Flexible – As mentioned, our schedule needs to work for on-campus learning, remote learning and a combination of the two without significant disruption each time circumstances change.

Information to come - Finalize risk assessment/response grid, master schedule of classes, rooms, students, teachers. Further our planning for co-curricular programming (i.e. service learning, clubs, affinity groups, advisory, and purpose period). Determine what’s happening with athletics (we have to wait for CIF to make its plans, but we are preparing for multiple scenarios). Create pick-up and drop-off plans and develop transportation protocols.

Phased Reopening –

In order to get all of our students up to speed and comfortable with the various models we will employ this year, we are going to “ramp up” our use of campus. The goal will be to use grade-level orientations (August 25-29) and the first four to five weeks of school to get comfortable with new on-campus protocols, familiar with what it means to be remote, and used to toggling back and forth.

We will start school a day earlier than originally intended -- **Tuesday, September 1** – with three grades (likely 7, 11, 12). September 2 will be the first day of school for the other three grades (8, 9, 10). September 3 will be for the second day of school for the original three grades, and Friday, September 4 will be the second day for the rest of the school. By doing this, all of our grades will be on campus twice prior to Labor Day (plus orientations). When we return from Labor Day weekend, grades will come to campus 50% or 66% of the time through September 23 or 25 – when we will welcome all six grades of the school to campus for the first time.

Of course, this entire schedule will be sent to you later this month -- once it is finalized. Depending upon the schedule we choose during the first four weeks of school, students will either be on campus 11 to 13 times (with between 4 and 6 remote days). Once we get through the first four to five weeks, we will publish our intended schedule through Thanksgiving. We plan to get students on campus as much as is safely possible and maintain a safe, positive, and comfortable campus atmosphere.

It is important to note that **new CDC guidelines** have recently been released for schools. If a member of the Pacific Ridge School Community who has been on campus tests positive for Covid-19, the school campus must be closed for a minimum of 2-5 days. We have to expect that this will be a reality this year, so we want to learn how to operate both on campus and remotely early in the year.

Instructional Technology –

We have tested and reviewed a variety of resources to make our classroom instruction available to those outside of the class. Based upon the schedule we have created, we do not need to make our classes available for a formal “hybrid” (half of the students in a class are on campus and half are not) environment. However, we must recognize that some students will fall ill or need to quarantine themselves for periods of time. And, based upon the needs of scaling “density” on campus, there may be courses with mixed grades that will have some students off campus and some on campus. We are actively researching how best to make our classrooms interactive from the outside with both audio and visual components – once we have the precise solution determined, and its impact on instruction, we will communicate with the broader community.

Upcoming Communications –

We will send another email next week with more details about next year. You can expect our reopening plan and website to be ready in mid-July. Going forward, these will serve as your primary resources for reopening information. And, starting August 3 (after our planned, two week “quiet” period for our administrative team), we will hold a series of “town hall,” and “coffee talk” Zoom calls for families to join as another way to gain information and ask questions.

We have about two months to get ready for the new year, and we are on track with our planning. I am sure you have questions, and we intend to answer them as best we can throughout the month of July. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if I can help at all. Thanks for your patience and support.

Happy 4th of July!



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