



2020–2021 TEACHING AND LEARNING PLANS

St. Elizabeth's School | COVID–19 Task Force

JULY 17, 2020



COVID–19 TASK FORCE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Protecting the health and safety of every member of our community is our highest priority. St. Elizabeth's School created the COVID-19 Task Force to systematically research and generate solutions that allow for a dynamic, responsive, and safe learning experience. **Every decision the COVID-19 Task Force makes is guided by the following principles:**

- Prioritizing the health and safety of our students, employees, and families;
- Maintaining our close-knit community;
- Fostering equity and inclusion across every aspect of our school;
- Ensuring the delivery of a program that meets learners where they are and stretches and supports them;
- Demonstrating creative problem-solving around space and fiscal stewardship

COVID–19 TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The COVID-19 Task Force is comprised of the following members:

- Adriana Murphy, Head of School
- Ramsay Stabler, former Head of School (served until July 1)
- Susan Bross, Director of Development
- Diane Grove, Director of Admissions
- Kim Frantz, Head of Lower School & 2nd Grade Teacher
- Kim Johnson, Business Manager
- Kari Nichols, Dean of Middle School & 6th/8th Grade ELA
- Loree Lindsey, Administrative Assistant
- Julie Dani, Lower School Learning Specialist
- Missi Erskine, Kindergarten Co-Teacher
- Jackie Ives, Music Teacher
- Laurie Nakauchi, 3rd Grade Lead Teacher
- Taras Wynar, Middle School Science & 6th/8th Grade Social Studies

GUIDING ORGANIZATIONS

- ❖ American Academy of Pediatrics
- ❖ Association of Colorado Independent Schools
- ❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- ❖ Colorado State Executive Orders
- ❖ Colorado Department of Education
- ❖ Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- ❖ National Association of Independent Schools



SCENARIO OVERVIEW and DECISION–MAKING PROCESS

The COVID-19 Task Force divided into three sub-groups to explore three possible models for teaching and learning next year: school-based (full return to campus), remote-learning, and a hybrid model. We are ready to “mix and match” our models to deliver the safest and most robust curricular program to our students. We will continue to refine these models across the summer, reflecting on our remote-learning work to date, so we can use the most effective model required as circumstances dictate.

 School-based	 Remote-learning	 Hybrid
<p>All students and teachers return to school, with modifications to account for enhanced health and safety procedures.</p>	<p>All students and teachers work and learn remotely.</p>	<p>Students and teachers will operate in cycles of remote learning and school-based learning. Kindergarten–5th grade students will be given on-campus priority.</p>
<p>The School will employ a school-based model if it can adhere to applicable local and state orders, particularly enhanced safety and health measures, and screening for students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure.</p>	<p>The School will pursue remote learning if mandated by the state of Colorado or if advised by the local health department.</p>	<p>The School will use a hybrid model if the state of Colorado restricts students to fewer than 10 in a classroom.</p>



School–Based Teaching & Learning

All students and teachers return to school, with modifications to account for enhanced health and safety procedures.

The School will employ a school–based model if it can adhere to applicable local and state orders, particularly enhanced safety and health measures, and screening for students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure.

If the School were to reopen with School–Based Teaching and Learning, the following measures may be taken:

- Requiring face coverings for all employees and students unless they have a medical reason for being unable to do so
- Creating multiple entry points to the building, with temperature screenings on entry and students reporting directly to classrooms
- Enhancing sanitation and cleaning procedures
- Using outdoor space and City Park as much as possible
- Modifying supply lists for students to have individual, rather than shared supplies
- Transforming multi-class spaces (e.g., art and music rooms) to grade-specific classrooms
- Limiting student flow throughout the building, including lunch in the classrooms
- Staggering mask/movement breaks and transitions to minimize passing others in the hallways
- Marking floors in the hallway for waiting spaces when classes use the restroom
- Strategically placing signage for hygiene and physical distancing reminders
- Not permitting outside visitors in classrooms
- Postponing large assemblies and gatherings (e.g., Chapel, Monday Assemblies)
- Not using lockers; students will keep backpacks in their space/at their desk
- Implementing Google Classroom (Middle School) and SeeSaw (Lower School) for seamless transition to remote-learning or hybrid models
- Bolstering our reading program through Lexia, an online targeted reading program for students

The St. Elizabeth's SMALL SCHOOL



BIG ADVANTAGE

- Fewer unknowns; small community aids contact traceability
- Prioritizing outdoor time including recess, lunch outside when possible, use of City Park, outdoor classes, etc.
- Ability to create safe, clean classroom environments
- Quicker check-in and check-out procedures



Remote–Learning Model

All students and teachers work and learn remotely.

The School will pursue remote learning if mandated by the state of Colorado or if advised by the local health department.

If the School were to reopen with a Remote–Learning Model, the following measures may be taken:

- Upgrading technology to enhance the virtual classroom
- Training staff, parents, and students to increase proficiency with our remote-learning tools
- Providing live instruction through Google Classroom (Middle School) and SeeSaw (Lower School)
- Posting class schedules and lessons via Google Classroom (Middle School) and SeeSaw (Lower School)
- Prioritizing consistency of schedule through synchronous work and further exploring developmentally aligned class lengths
- Emphasizing project-based and inquiry work, where appropriate, as much as possible
- Continuing to emphasize our strengths in social/emotional learning, the arts, and social justice

The St. Elizabeth's SMALL SCHOOL



BIG ADVANTAGE

- Personalized training for students and parents to maximize success with remote-learning tools
- Offering meaningful and robust curriculum in social/emotional learning, the arts, and social justice
- Capacity for personal connections between teachers and students



Hybrid Model

Students and teachers will operate in cycles of remote learning and school-based learning. Kindergarten through 5th-grade students will be given on-campus priority.

The School will use a hybrid model if the state of Colorado restricts students to fewer than 10 in a classroom.

If the School were to reopen with a Hybrid Model, the following measures may be taken:

All measures for School-Based Teaching & Learning (page 3) in addition to the following:

- Enhancing the learning experience regardless of location, by upgrading technology such as using web cameras in classrooms to ensure continuity of learning
- Maximizing time Lower School students are on campus each day (5 days per week) by using flex spaces with co-teachers to achieve the proper numbers of students allowed
- Alternating school-based schedule for cohorts of Middle School students (Mon/Wed or Tues/Thurs) with the other two days being remote. All of Middle School would be remote on Fridays for advisory, work catch-up, and project- based learning projects.
- Exploring cross-curricular integration that can allow for multiple teachers to support a unit of inquiry/study

The St. Elizabeth's
SMALL SCHOOL



BIG ADVANTAGE

- *Ability to design a hybrid model that optimizes time in school for our youngest students*
- *Flexibility—able to innovate and implement quickly*
- *Continuity of student-teacher relationships*



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Health and Safety

How will you keep students safe in the building?

The safety and health of our students is our number one priority. We are putting into place new safety rules and protocols, which may be updated from time to time, within the school's discretion, to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Some of these measures include:

- Face coverings
- Handwashing
- Hand sanitizer
- Temperature check and symptom screening prior to school entry
- No outside visitors in classrooms
- Designated hand cleaning times throughout the day
- Teachers will be reviewing hygiene and cleaning routines with students at the beginning of the year to help them develop good habits and sanitary work spaces
- Direct instruction for students around social distancing protocols

What mental health and well-being steps are you taking?

The mental health and well-being of our students is paramount. We are working with Centus Counseling to provide students with support during the year. We will also provide resources on ParentSquare to assist you in navigating these unprecedented times with your children. This summer, faculty read *Permission to Feel*, a

book that centers around teaching students to recognize, understand, label, express, and respond to their feelings. This book will be part of our on-going professional development this year on trauma-informed teaching and resilience.

Regarding cleaning, is the school hiring an outside cleaning company? How often will the school be cleaned/sanitized?

We contract with Corvus Janitorial Systems and have an assigned team who cleans the school five nights a week (Monday-Friday). We have increased our contract time by 50% for the coming school year to add additional cleaning and sanitization each night. We also have cleaning supplies available to school staff during the day.

What happens if there is a presumptive case at school? What happens if there is a confirmed positive case in our school community? How or why will you decide to close a classroom or school?

Our first step if symptoms present while a student or faculty/staff member is on campus, is to isolate the person from the rest of the community to prevent further spread. For students, this means that parents will be asked to pick up their child immediately. Adults will be asked to go home immediately. We will also contact the Department of Health and Human Services and partner with them on closure, testing, and self-quarantine measures as needed. If a confirmed positive case of a student or faculty/staff member is reported to St. Elizabeth's School, we will work with the Department



of Health and Human Services to determine what steps should be taken as when symptoms present on campus. Teachers have prepared this summer to pivot into remote learning if a state and/or local decision about closures due to COVID-19 spread is required.

Do parents have a duty to notify the school of symptoms, exposure, positives test results?

Minimizing the spread of COVID-19 is a community effort; therefore, we ask that parents notify the school if they have symptoms, exposure, or positive test results. Specific names will never be shared with the community.

Program

Will there be any field trips?

At this time, we will only take field trips to places that will enable us to adhere to local and state health and safety regulations such as being outside and socially distanced. These places may include City Park, The Denver Zoo, and other local attractions that are open. Transportation and our ability to stay distanced from one another on our way to and from an attraction will also be taken into consideration.

What will lunch look like?

To minimize contact, lunch will be in classrooms or outside, socially distanced. Lunch itself will be served in pre-packaged, individual containers. In the Middle School, students will not be allowed to use microwaves. This is a safety measure.

Will students have the opportunity to have movement/mask breaks during the day?

Yes. St. Elizabeth's honors that physical movement is essential to students' physical and mental well-being. Teachers and staff members will work together to create schedules to effectively utilize outside spaces, including City Park, for fresh air and learning. Within the classroom, teachers will build in movement breaks into their teaching and learning time. In addition, children will be able to take a break from wearing their masks throughout the day, for example when they are outside, eating lunch, or on a bathroom break.

What will learning support/intervention look like in each of the models?

We have thoughtfully invested in an intervention/learning support framework that will transition seamlessly from in-person to remote learning. During in-school intervention, students will work 1:1 or in small groups with our learning specialist 2-4x per week. Small groups will be limited to students already in the same cohort together. During remote learning, students will have the chance to work 1:1 or in small groups with our learning specialist at least 2x per week. Parent education opportunities will be available to learn more about how to best support the needs of learner(s) at home.

Will there be EDP or what will it look like?

We are hoping to offer EDP and deciding what it will look like this coming school year. Students will be in cohorts in EDP, though they will be different from those during the school day.

- We are asking parents to only send their child/children to EDP only if absolutely necessary, i.e., no other means of childcare



- Parents would have to pre-register using BigSIS
- We will follow the State guidelines for the amount of children that we can have at any given time
- EDP will more than likely have to be in a few classrooms downstairs to meet the State guidelines for safety if there are more than 10 students
- Temperatures would be taken at the start of EDP
- Face coverings would be worn the entire time except while eating snack
- Hands would be washed before snack and wash/sanitizer used after snack
- Each EDP classroom would have one teacher who would help with homework, supervise students, and serve snacks
- Each student group would rotate outside for playtime

Building and Finance

What changes has the school made to the building?

We have been working hard over the summer to improve the safety of the building. These improvements have included:

- The purchase of additional desks
- Upgrading the bandwidth
- Ordering hand sanitizer dispensers for each classroom and common areas
- Increased our cleaning staff hours
- Renting storage units to increase open space and accommodate social distance
- Purchasing moveable shade structures for outside

We are currently working with HVAC contractors to evaluate options for cooling and improving fresh air flow.

Why are you charging the same amount of tuition for remote learning as in person learning? Where is my remote-learning discount?

This is a reasonable question as it would be rational to assume that our overall costs at St. Elizabeth's School were reduced during the final quarter of the school year, but that was not our actual experience. At St. Elizabeth's School the vast majority of our expenses are fixed expenses. Salary and Benefit expenses paid to the faculty and staff account for nearly 75% of our annual budget. The other types of expenses categorized as fixed expenses combined with Salary and Benefits account for over 90% of our total budget. Additionally, the school has incurred expenses to address the pandemic that we normally would not have expected. These pandemic related expenses will exceed the savings gained from lower variable expenses. For example:

- We are looking at upgrading faculty and student laptops to improve the quality of remote learning.
- The Board approved upgrades to our IT infrastructure which will allow us to build out and offer a more robust remote-learning program.
- The Board reviewed our process for addressing tuition adjustments for the 2020-21 school year. Consistent with our mission and past practices, we will adjust tuition for the 2020-21 school year on a case by case basis with families who are facing income reductions. These adjustments will be made based on current family income.

Sources: Icons made by www.flaticon.com