

JULY 2020

# TROJAN OPERATIONAL PLAN

Safely Preparing Students for the 2020/2021 School Year



# FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY ARE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

## BY DR. LARRY MCLEMORE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

*"Be flexible, but stick to your principles." - Eleanor Roosevelt*

The past several months, we have found ourselves in a new normal for how we live our daily lives. One thing we have learned is the COVID-19 situation is unpredictable, and it has called on all of us - as students, parents, and teachers - to remain flexible and adaptable to the ever-changing factors of the situation. Health and safety has always been our priority, but never as much as it is today.

This summer, the faculty and staff at Saint James School have been diligently working to make sure that when we start school on August 7, we are doing it with the following principles in mind:

- **Safety is always our number one priority.**
- **Our students will continue to receive an outstanding education that prepares them for the future.**
- **The emotional health of our students is more important than ever.**
- **We must all prepare to be flexible.**
- **We're all in this together - parents, students, and faculty.**

The following pages outline the Trojan Operational Plan (TOP) we have created to safely prepare Saint James School for the 2020/2021 school year. The TOP has been carefully crafted with guidance from a number of official resources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). This guidance has evolved and will continue to evolve as more and more data is collected on the Coronavirus. We are also grateful to be utilizing medical professionals from within our Saint James family to guide us through these unprecedented times, and I am so thankful for their input to-date.

As you read through the TOP, it's important to note that in most cases division-level specifics are not included. With students ranging from Pre-K3 to 12th grade, there will be some variation from division to division. Therefore, we have asked each division-level principal to communicate any specifics for their division to you through their normal channels. Additionally, we have created a dedicated TOP Resource Board on our onCampus portal that will be your one-stop resource for Frequently Asked Questions, previous communications, and more. Please take time to read through the wealth of information available there to prepare you and your student(s) for our new school year.

Finally, let me wrap up with a heartfelt thank you. Thank you for trusting us with your students. Thank you for helping us navigate through these unusual times. Thank you for partnering with us to ensure that your students have a successful school year.

As always, please contact me or your division-level principal if you need anything. We are here for you.



## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We want every member of the Saint James family to feel comfortable returning to school either in person or in a remote setting. In response to COVID-19, we have created multiple approaches to how we will deliver our curriculum this year. Each plan was created with these principles in mind.

- **Safety is always our number one priority.** Our goal is to be on campus for as much of the year as possible. We are instituting a number of new guidelines to how we move throughout our campus, interact with each other in classrooms, and clean and sanitize our buildings so that when your students are on campus, the environment is as safe as possible.
- **Our students will continue to receive an outstanding education that prepares them for the future.** Whether we are on campus or engaged in remote learning, our curriculum will not change. Our goal is to make any required shifts from campus to remote learning as seamless as possible for your students. This includes creating a flexible learning experience for those students who, as a result of underlying health conditions or other special circumstances, are approved for Voluntary Remote Learning.
- **The emotional health of our students is more important than ever.** Since March, our students have experienced an unprecedented number of disruptions to their daily lives. While some children are able to easily adapt, many others struggle with change or feel anxiety in uncertain times. The emotional health of our students is a key focus for our path forward. Our counselors will be taking extra care to check on students and help them navigate through this school year in a healthy and positive way. If you are concerned about the emotional health of your child, please contact your division-level principal or counselor.
- **We must all prepare to be flexible.** Our mission has not changed. However, the path we take to deliver on that mission will be flexible this year. Based on guidance from the CDC and the ADPH, we know there may be times we are required to go to a remote learning scenario. Those times may last just a few days or they may last longer; however, we are confident we have a plan for the year that allows us to easily shift from one to the other with limited disruption.
- **We are all in this together - parents, students, and faculty.** This year, more than ever, communication between parents and Saint James School is critical. In this document, we have outlined a few things you can do now to prepare yourselves and your students for the school year, as well as several things we will need your help with throughout the year.

## RESOURCES

Saint James School is using a variety of resources to help us develop mitigation strategies, new safety protocols, and multiple operating scenarios for the 2020/2021 school year.

Those include, but are not limited to:

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

*Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)*

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

*National Association of Independent Schools*

*Southern Association of Independent Schools*

*Alabama Independent School Association*

*Alabama High School Athletic Association*

*Other public and private schools*

*Advisory panel of medical professionals within our Saint James community*

# PLANNING FOR FLEXIBILITY

Our plan is to start the school year on August 7 with all students on campus, or what you see as the **YELLOW scenario below**. Based on what we know today, our primary assumption is, at the time we open school, there will NOT be a government-issued order in place requiring a reduced campus population or a campus facility closure like we saw in the spring. However, we know this could change at any time during the school year based on community spread and government orders. We are also operating with an understanding that COVID-19 will impact all schools until a vaccine or therapeutic drug becomes widely available - and future outbreaks will likely occur.

That is why our plan for 2020/2021 is built with flexibility in mind and includes the four operating scenarios below. We are prepared to adapt and seamlessly flex between these scenarios, as the situation requires. **Every core classroom will be equipped with technology that allows us to teach students in the classroom and remotely at the same time.** This same technology also supports any potential need to move to a Remote Learning (Red) scenario during the year.

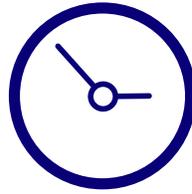
<p><b>GREEN</b> Campus Learning</p>	<p><b>YELLOW</b> Campus Learning with Voluntary Remote Learning Option*</p>	<p><b>ORANGE</b> Blended Learning with Voluntary Remote Learning Option*</p>	<p><b>RED</b> Remote Learning</p>
<p><b>Low Risk</b> - Cases are rare and spread is limited</p> <p><b>Campus Learning</b> School resumes following pre-COVID procedures.</p> <p>Large gatherings are permissible.</p>	<p><b>Moderate Risk</b> - Moderate number of cases with known origin</p> <p><b>Campus Learning</b> Hold classes on campus as normal with heightened safety measures.</p> <p>Limit large gatherings.</p> <p>Voluntary Remote Learning (VRL)* for those with underlying health concerns or special circumstances.</p> <p><i>*Prior approval required.</i></p>	<p><b>Medium Risk</b> - Campus population is required to be reduced due to an increase in community spread</p> <p><b>Blended Learning</b> Reduced number of people on campus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hybrid A / B Day Model (1st grade and above) - defined by division</li> <li>Flex Learning Model (Pre-K3 - Kindergarten)</li> </ul> <p>Voluntary Remote Learning (VRL)* for those with underlying health concerns or special circumstances.</p> <p><i>*Prior approval required.</i></p>	<p><b>High Risk</b> -Widespread outbreak locally results in a government-issued mandate OR outbreak within school community results in division-level closure for cleaning, as directed by local and state health officials</p> <p><b>Remote Learning</b> Everyone learns remotely.</p> <p>No students on campus.</p>

## CAMPUS LEARNING (GREEN AND YELLOW)

As mentioned on page 4, we are planning to begin the 2020/2021 school year on campus on August 7. We are following specific health guidance from local, state, and federal officials. Some of the specific safety measures we are taking can be found on page 7. Under both Green and Yellow Campus Learning scenarios, here are several things you can expect.



At this time, we do not plan to make any changes to the academic calendar for the 2020/2021 school year (first day of school or school breaks).



STJ WonderWorks (after school program) and Ninth Period will be offered as usual, with some modifications to allow for smaller group sizes.



Athletic offerings will be determined by the Alabama High School Athletic Association's recommendations and requirements.



Physical Education (PE) for all divisions, as well as elementary recess, will occur daily, with extra safety precautions. Masks will not be required when outside.

## VOLUNTARY REMOTE LEARNING

We are offering a Voluntary Remote Learning (VRL) program for students with special circumstances, such as an underlying health issue either personally or within their immediate family, that prevent them from participating in in-person instruction. VRL must be approved in advance by your division-level principal and will require a special orientation meeting via Zoom ahead of time as determined by your principal. To be considered for VRL, you will need to complete the 2020/2021 VRL Form on the TOP Resource Board in onCampus. Forms must be submitted two weeks prior to the start of each quarter.

A few important notes:

- VRL will last for the duration of the current 9-week grading period and must be re-approved two weeks prior to the start of the next grading period.
- Core classes in each division will be conducted / graded as normal. Elementary students approved for VRL will not participate in enrichment classes. Exploratory and elective classes for middle and high school students may need to be adjusted to allow for more effective remote learning.
- Students participating in VRL will not be allowed to attend any scheduled school activities in-person for the duration of their remote learning.

If a student is required to self quarantine for any reason, they will be granted emergency VRL approval that will last only for the duration of their required quarantine period.

If you have a specific health concern you need to discuss, please contact your division-level principal.

## BLENDED LEARNING (ORANGE)

Blended Learning under the Orange scenario will be implemented at any time we need to continue school on campus but with a reduced number of people. Under this scenario, we will still hold classes five days a week (in most cases) using a blended learning approach.

### **Grades 1-12 would follow a Hybrid A/B Model in an Orange scenario.**

- Classes will be divided into Groups A and B, appropriate for each division.
  - *Group A* will attend class on campus on Monday and Wednesday, and attend remotely via Zoom on Tuesday and Thursday.
  - *Group B* will attend class on campus on Tuesday and Thursday, and attend remotely via Zoom on Monday and Wednesday.
  - All students will attend class remotely on Friday to allow for enhanced campus cleaning measures.
- Special consideration will be taken to ensure that students within the same family in that division would be assigned to the same group, allowing for easier planning by parents.
- Every class will be equipped with technology that enables students in the class and at home to be taught the same information, on the same day, at the same time. This same technology supports both our Voluntary Remote Learning students and any potential Remote Learning, or Red scenario, during the year.
- Students enrolled in STJ WonderWorks / Ninth Period can only attend on their assigned days on campus.

**Students in Pre-K3 through Kindergarten would follow a Flex Learning Model.** We recognize that a consistent routine is a critical part of the learning experience in grades Pre-K3 through Kindergarten. Therefore, we are committed to keeping that consistent structure in place, while reducing class sizes, by using both the teacher and aide in each classroom.

- Students in Pre-K3 through Kindergarten will attend school on campus Monday - Friday, pending the need for extensive cleaning.
- Students in each classroom will be divided in half. One half will stay in their normal classroom with the teacher, while the other half will move to one of the open enrichment classrooms with the teacher's aide.
- Each day, we will alternate groups to ensure that all students stay on track with our planned curriculum.
- In this scenario, only students in Pre-K3 through Kindergarten will be allowed to attend class on campus on these days (meaning older siblings can only attend on their assigned days).

## REMOTE LEARNING (RED)

Saint James School will only be in a Remote Learning scenario if there is a widespread outbreak, a Stay at Home order, or a COVID-19 case on campus that requires us to close part or all of the campus for a short period of time, as determined by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and our local health officials.

In June, we sent out a survey to all parents collecting feedback on our Remote Learning efforts in March - May. We are so thankful for your feedback and are using that to improve our Remote Learning plans.

## ENHANCED SAFETY MEASURES

As a community, we are learning more about COVID-19 and ways to minimize exposure and risk almost daily. As noted on page 3, we are closely following guidance from a variety of sources, but most specifically the CDC and the ADPH. As more information is made available, we are adapting our plans to ensure that we are implementing the most thorough safety measures possible to keep our campus safe for your students. What might be necessary for our Pre-K-3 classes may vary for our high school students, so any specifics that apply to your division will be shared by your principal through normal channels. However, here are some of the enhanced safety measures that will be in place throughout the entire Saint James campus.



**Ventilation** - We are investing in new ionization technology that will be attached to all classroom air units throughout the campus. This new technology will improve air quality and help minimize the risk of circulation of viruses and bacteria.



**Masks** - All students and teachers will be required to wear masks on campus. This will include (but is not limited to) anytime an individual is entering and exiting the building, in hallways, or in classrooms or group situations where a safe distance is not possible. Reusable masks must be solid or a tasteful design or pattern in school colors of navy, yellow, or white. Solid color disposable masks are also acceptable. Masks must be the traditional style masks that cover the nose and mouth with bands that go around the ears or tie behind the head. Neck covers are not permitted.

99.4 F

**Daily Temperature Checks** - On-campus screening of faculty, staff, and students will occur each morning upon arrival. Anyone with a temperature of 99.4 F or higher will be required to go home and follow the instructions on page 8. *Please plan now to add a bit of time to your morning routine to allow us to complete this safety measure each day.*



**Dedicated Sick Rooms** - There will be a dedicated room in each of the main elementary, middle, and high school buildings where sick students and employees will be isolated and monitored until they can leave campus.



**Increased Sanitation Measures** - Rooms will be cleaned and sanitized multiple times a day. Individual supplies will not be shared, and any shared devices will be disinfected between each person. In addition, all traditional water fountains will be turned off and covered.



**Hygiene** - We will educate all students and teachers on proper hygiene at the start of the school year and reinforce as needed. Focus areas will include washing hands, not touching faces, avoiding close contact with classmates, etc.



**Lunch** - Flik, our campus dining service provider, will continue to prepare lunches. However, students and faculty will not eat in The Commons at this time. Instead, lunch orders will be placed utilizing an online ordering system, and each lunch will be boxed and labeled for that student. Elementary students will eat in their classrooms. Middle and high school students will pick up their lunches at a designated place and eat in a designated space.



**Visitor/Volunteers** - Visitors will be extremely limited for the foreseeable future. Parents will not be allowed to eat lunch with your student on campus, and on-campus volunteers will be restricted. If you need to pick-up or drop-off a child outside of normal carpool hours, details on how to do so will be provided by your division-level principal. Any approved visitors must have their temperature checked and have on a mask before admission into the building.

## WHEN TO STAY HOME

Keeping our students and campus healthy will take parents working hand-in-hand with our dedicated faculty and staff to keep students home if they are ill or have COVID-like symptoms. To help, we have outlined the following process all Saint James families are expected to follow this year.

Is the student or a member of the student's household:

- Confirmed positive for COVID-19?
- Awaiting COVID-19 test results?
- Unwell with OR experiencing COVID-like symptoms?

If the answer to any of these is YES,

- Stay home.
- Call your doctor and follow their instructions on self isolation.\*
- Inform the STJ office in your division (elementary, middle, or high school).

Has doctor approved the student's return to school?

- Notify the office (principal and assistant) in your division the day before you return to school.
- Provide a doctor's note authorizing your return.

Does the student:

- Have a 99.4 F fever or higher?
- Have other symptoms of illness such as vomiting or diarrhea without a fever?

If the answer to either of these is YES,

- Stay home.
- Call your doctor and follow their instructions, which may include a recommended quarantine period.
- Inform the STJ office in your division.
- Rest and recover.

Has the student been fever-free and symptom-free without fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours? Has the doctor approved the student's return to school?

- Notify the office (principal and assistant) in your division the day before you return to school.
- Provide a doctor's note authorizing your return.

**Per CDC guidelines\*, any student with a confirmed positive COVID test cannot return to school or participate in-person in any school activities until the following occurs.**

- If the student is positive WITH COVID-related symptoms: The student MUST have a doctor's note authorizing their return **10 or more days** after the test was administered and **ONLY AFTER** they have had a temperature lower than 99.4 F and improved respiratory symptoms for **three consecutive days** (and without fever-reducing medicine).
- If the student is positive with NO COVID-related symptoms (e.g., asymptomatic): The student can return to school **10 days** after the test was administered. They MUST have a doctor's note authorizing their return.

**IMPORTANT:** Any student required to quarantine at home, but who is feeling well enough, may participate in school remotely until their doctor authorizes their return to campus.

*\*Saint James School will be closely following the most recent CDC and ADPH guidelines at all times; therefore, these criteria are subject to change.*

# YOU CAN HELP

Creating and maintaining a healthy campus environment is essential to our school community. It requires the support and participation of every stakeholder - parents, students, faculty, and staff. Over the next few weeks and throughout the school year, you can help prepare your students by focusing on the following areas.

## Healthy Hygiene

- Encourage frequent and effective hand washing and use of hand sanitizer.
- Practice coughing and sneezing into elbows.
- Reinforce the importance of keeping hands away from faces.

## Physical Health

- Make sure all immunizations are current.
- Encourage physical activity and time outside.
- Check your student's temperature before you leave the house.

## Emotional Health

- Ask your student how they are feeling, and give them an opportunity to ask questions.
- Reassure your children that you and our faculty and staff are there to support their emotional well-being.
- Ask for help if you need it. Our counseling team is available to provide support if your child is exhibiting signs of anxiety or seems sad or depressed after the prolonged period of isolation from friends.

## Our Health Protocols

- Talk to your children about the importance of maintaining a safe physical distance from classmates and being respectful of personal boundaries. Encourage them to refrain from hugging, touching, or hanging on friends or classmates at school.
- Practice wearing a mask for long periods of time and not touching or playing with their mask.
- Prepare to arrive at school a little earlier which will allow us time to conduct temperature checks on all students prior to them entering our buildings.
- Commit to keeping your child home when they are sick.

## NOTIFICATION AND PRIVACY OF THOSE EXPOSED TO COVID-19

In the unfortunate situation that a student or faculty member is exposed to or confirmed positive with COVID-19, we are required to notify the ADPH and will follow their guidance on notifying those within our school community who have been in contact with that person. If you or your student are exposed, confirmed positive, or awaiting test results, it is very important that you notify your Saint James division-level office immediately (see page 8 for details) so we can communicate within the school as required.

**Under no circumstances will we release the name of a faculty member, student, or family member who has been exposed and/or tested positive.** This is in accordance with CDC and HIPAA guidelines and privacy laws.

## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

We cannot say this enough, we are here for you! We know one thing for sure - we cannot predict what is going to happen with the COVID-19 outbreak and what it will look like one day, one month, or one year down the road. However, we are confident our Trojan Operational Plan is flexible and adaptable enough to navigate even these most uncertain times. We are committed to providing your children with a safe environment to learn and an outstanding educational opportunity this school year, and we cannot wait to see them in a few short weeks on August 7.

As you prepare your children and yourselves for this school year, please feel free to reach out to the appropriate contact below should you need anything or have any additional questions. In addition, please make sure to check out our **TOP Resource Board in OnCampus** for a robust list of **Frequently Asked Questions** and additional information and communications on our 2020/2021 Trojan Operational Plan.

**Dr. Larry McLemore, Head of School**

lmclmore@stjweb.org

**Ms. Elizabeth Fritz, Business Office**

efritz@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Susan Atkins, Academic Dean**

satkins@stjweb.org

**Admissions Office**

admissions@stjweb.org

### High School

**Mrs. Jennifer Poplin, High School Principal**

jpoplin@stjweb.org

**Mr. Andy Clinton, Counselor**

aclinton@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Bethany Shalayda, Administrative Assistant**

bshalayda@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Joann Reifenberg, Counselor**

jreifenberg@stjweb.org

### Middle School

**Mrs. Shelaine Taylor, Middle School Principal**

staylor@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Cherie Meadows, Counselor**

cmeadows@stjweb.org

**Ms. Emily Cavanaugh, Administrative Assistant**

ecavanaugh@stjweb.org

### Elementary School

**Mrs. Andrea Harris, Elementary School Principal**

aharris@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Laura Gibson, Counselor**

lgibson@stjweb.org

**Mrs. Lytoya Tolbert, Administrative Assistant and School Nurse**

ltolbert@stjweb.org