



The Road to Fulfillment:

Plans and Details for Opening



September 2021

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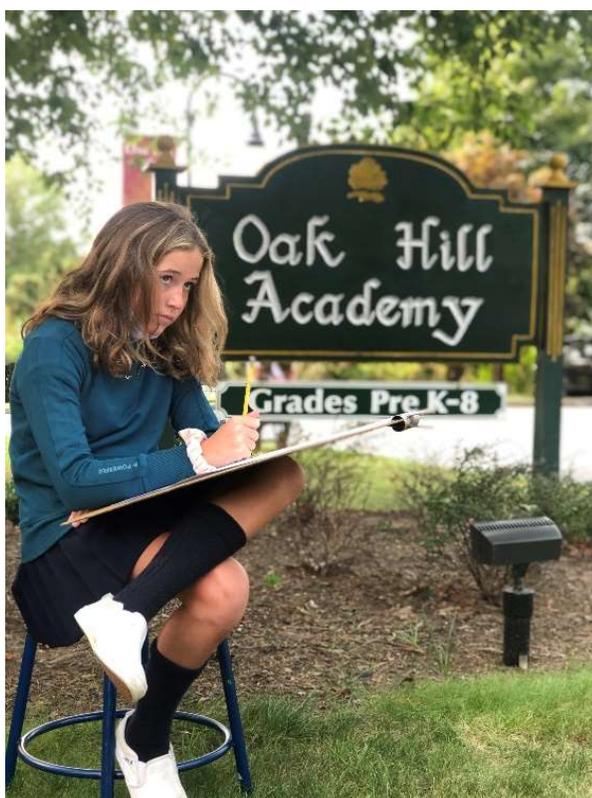
Our Mission:

Oak Hill Academy is dedicated to a traditional, challenging, and caring learning environment that encourages comprehensive thought processes and deep understandings; thus promoting the wholesome intellectual, emotional, moral, and physical lifetime growth of our students.

Our Vision:

As a community of learners, Oak Hill Academy believes that schools need to acknowledge their important role in students' lives. To this end, we must strive to teach the whole person as framed in our contemporary society - a society that balances issues of how the absorption of intellectual pursuits supports the wellness, stimulation, and growth of all persons in a democracy. We strive to foster in each student a passion for life-long learning. We seek excellence, respect for the individual, responsibility, and integrity. We are dedicated to creating an academically rigorous curriculum which is supported by a diverse and nurturing environment where students can flourish.

All children have an instinctive need to learn, a natural curiosity, and a desire to do work of significance. Our intention is to combine the strongest possible academic atmosphere with a supportive, caring environment in an effort to develop self-confident, motivated students who have a love of learning.



Introduction to “The Road to Fulfillment”

Excitement is in the air as we approach the 2021-2022 school year. With the assistance of everyone in the OHA community, we came through last year meeting the challenge that COVID-19 posed to all teachers, students, and families. We adapted and found new ways to stay safe and continue to learn deeply. We are all looking forward to a school year with less restrictions, more opportunities to return to normal, and a lot more community engagement and fun.

As we look ahead to this fall, we continue to take seriously our priority to remain safe, and, at the same time, to engage our community with the support and care that our school is known for. Protocols have been established to not only keep our campus open and safe, but also to be transparent and communicative, while remaining flexible and agile during possible ever-changing times.

As we have done for the past year, we will continue to follow the science and guidance given by the [Center for Disease Control](#) (CDC) and [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP), as well as our state and local health care agencies. However, Oak Hill Academy will remain adaptive, which proved to be important last year as external circumstances and COVID-19 guidelines impacted internal policies and procedures. We will remain focused and vigilant and will communicate any adjustments to policies if they become necessary to be in accordance with public health and government guidelines or mandates. To this end, we have established protocols to begin the 2021-2022 school year. (Complete details can be found on our “Road to Fulfillment” Summary located on our school website under the Home tab and COVID-19 drop down section, and shared with our community through an email on August 20, 2021.)

The use of masks in schools seems to be a constant topic of discussion and an ever-moving target. Currently it is even more important because Oak Hill’s student population is primarily below the age for vaccine eligibility and remains vulnerable. In my July 15 letter, it was indicated that it was our hope that masks would be optional for both students and staff. However, on August 6, 2021, NJ Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order #251](#) requiring mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors indoors for all schools in the state. This order is in agreement with the recommendations from both the CDC and AAP and is in consideration of increased local and state COVID transmission and infection levels. Therefore, for the beginning of the school year, we be requiring masks for all students, staff, and visitors. There will be limited exemptions allowed as outlined in Executive Order #251. Any medical

documentation should be forwarded to our school nurse, Mrs. Linda Malinowski (lmalinowski@oakhillacademy.com). We are hopeful that we may be able to remove this mask requirement if and when the CDC, AAP, and state and local agencies relax their recommendations and mandates.

Yes, we believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and as my mentor told me as a new teacher, “Joseph, time and patience!” I am asking that our Oak Hill community also have patience, and trust that we want nothing more than to return to a normal school environment. To this end, we will increase mask breaks, utilize outdoor space for teaching, and not require masks outside or during outdoor physical activity. The introduction of COVID vaccines for the below 12 age group will also help with the mitigation of this disease. We recommend that parents consult with their physician concerning whether to get the COVID vaccine when their children become eligible.

We are all in a state of uncertainty when it comes to the near path of this pandemic, which is so very difficult to predict and sort through. As we go through this transition, we want our community to know that our goals include continuing the full in-person OHA learning experience, while keeping everyone as safe as possible. We strive to do the best we can at this moment, since we cannot predict the near future and what this pandemic may bring to our children. Once again our community will come together and will utilize much of the plan that we used so successfully last year to keep our school safe with our children in school, learning, and happy.



It is important to note that these plans are working models that can be amended as we are given more information and guidelines from the CDC and AAP, as well as any requirements from state or local agencies and health departments.

Protocol for Returning to School in September

We wanted to share with you some of our plans for September. We have been through a lot together and have managed to maintain the heart of Oak Hill Academy, even in a continued unprecedented situation. We did it and will do it again! Through the collective efforts of our faculty, staff, students and parents, Oak Hill was successful in having in-person learning all year! We all learned a lot from the experience, but the most important aspect was to see our students on a daily basis learning, experiencing and enjoying each other! Oak Hill will remain a special environment that we all know and love.

It is important to note that these plans are working models that can be amended as we are given updated guidelines from the Center of Disease Control (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and requirements from the Governor's office and state.

Any changes in policy or procedures will be emailed to our parents and posted on the Oak Hill Academy website, under the "Home" tab and COVID-19 drop down section.

Because of the seriousness of COVID-19, Oak Hill Academy expects strict compliance with all of its safety protocols, as outlined in this "The Road to Fulfillment," and the "OHA Community Agreement" outlined in the 2021-22 Student Handbook.

These plans were created in large part using guidelines provided by the CDC, AAP, [NJ Department of Health](#), and [Middletown Department of Health](#). We will divide our plan into two categories, (1) Learning and Instruction and (2) Health and Safety.



Learning and Instruction:

Our Learning and Instruction plan has been built with a great deal of flexibility. We have a great advantage as a small school when it comes to teacher to student ratio, as well as the ability to spread out to make allowances for social distancing guidelines (again, as determined by the state and CDC).

Our Upper School students will enter a school day very similar to last year. Our curriculum, one that has been constantly enhanced over the last 40 years, will continue to engage and challenge them to strive for their personal best. In order to reduce student movement around campus, we will continue to use a six period day on a six-day cycle. These A-F days are identified and rotating on the school calendar.

Our Lower School will continue with the same curriculum as in previous years using a blended learning environment. Our children will be active learners as they use technology and activities to enrich their thinking skills. Engaging the student in deep thinking, reading, and math-reasoning skills will be the central goals. All of our “special” subjects will help our children to be well rounded in their scope of development. Research shows that these subject areas not only expand creativity but also support the basic skills. As in the Upper School, the Lower School specials will once again be held on a 6 day, A-F cycle.

All teachers have continued professional development training over the summer to enhance their technology and blended learning skills. OHA teachers who have become experts in an area have shared their knowledge with others. This helps create a consistent educational plan.

With concern for our students and their ability to cope with the current landscape, “Tuesday Talks,” which is a small group teacher led discussion, will continue to provide a forum for the social and emotional well-being of our students. It will include strategies for coping, creating a code of respect, celebrating of diversity, etc. The Lower School will use the Responsive Classroom to achieve similar goals. Our Advisors will keep our teachers abreast and give guidance on being understanding and showing empathy.

We will continue to offer modified after school activities (homework club, after-care, afterschool help, clubs) as we did last year.

At the present time, we will be having interscholastic sports in the fall. Our Soccer League is planning on having a season for our Upper School girls and boys. Our Cross Country team will also be able to train and compete. Close to the start of the winter and spring sports seasons, students and parents will be notified of any changes and adjustments.

Swivl Remote Learning:

In-person learning is vital for a child’s overall growth. Last year, it was a treasure to see the students on a daily basis and witness the opportunities they had academically, socially and emotionally!

Last year our faculty successfully conducted concurrent teaching both in-person and remote students simultaneously, however, the situation was challenging for all. I credit our students

(and their parents) who were at home and learned how to become independent learners. They managed and became part of their classes from afar. Our staff did an incredible job in juggling the different learning modules. They were creative, caring and worked tirelessly to make this all work. They are truly an amazing group of teachers!

With this said, concurrent teaching is not an optimum or sustainable option for the future. Even under the best circumstances a setting with both in-person and remote students logistically takes away some attention and valuable teaching time. There is strong evidence that the most favorable learning takes places when instruction and learning are fully live. Therefore, we will not offer the Swivl remote learning option for the 2021-22 school year.

In addition, we realize that there is no definitive timetable for the end of COVID-19. Thus some families could still be affected by COVID-19 and we will then offer the Swivl remote learning to the students under these guidelines:

1. The student has COVID-19
2. The student is exposed to a positive COVID-19 case, thus considered a first contact
3. The student needs an extended absence due to an illness, confirmed by a doctor's note
4. If the student is an immunocompromised person or lives with an immunocompromised person, confirmed by a doctor's note
5. If OHA asks the student to quarantine
6. At the complete discretion of OHA

However, if New Jersey or Oak Hill is pressed into an emergency situation, we always have the option to enact the Swivl remote learning model.

Health and Safety Plan:

Our Health and Safety Plan will continue to evolve as we learn more about the current guidelines from the CDC, AAP, state and local health department. In order to be proactive, we have made a series of plans available for implementation.

Some of the features include the following:

I. Monitoring for COVID-19

1. The school will adhere to 'Sick, stay home; sick, go home.'
2. Parents are asked to take the temperature of their children and check them for symptoms at home. Families will be given a refrigerator magnet to display as a daily reminder. Members of the OHA community should take responsibility for their own health (parents for the health of their children) on a daily basis.
3. For the time being, prior to entering school, there will be a daily temperature check for students and staff.
4. Any student or staff with a temperature over 100.4 °F will be required to stay home.

5. Absenteeism will be monitored to identify any trends in staff or child absences due to illness. The school nurse will maintain a log.
5. COVID-19 testing is required for all staff prior to the start of the school year.

II. What if there is a case of COVID-19 at OHA?

1. In the event a student or staff member shows symptom(s), (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) the individual shall be taken to an isolation room while the rest of the class is organized and led into a spare room while the classroom is disinfected. See COVID-19 Action Plan.
2. We will have a crisis management plan in place for when someone in our community tests positive for the coronavirus. The health department will provide our lead on best and necessary practices. See COVID-19 Action Plan.
3. Staff and families should report symptoms and exposures to our school nurse.
4. Our school nurse will be in consultation with our local Health Department if there is a case, exposure or contact of COVID-19.

III. Social Distancing

1. All classes will have tables and desks spaced as recommended for social distancing, currently at 3 feet. Partitioning may also be used to create added separation.
2. In the Upper School, change of class will continue to use a rotational plan with a one-way traffic pattern to ensure social distancing and avoid crowded hallways. Students will remain spaced according to guidelines. For the time being, students will not be using lockers so that a safe distance can be maintained. However, the eighth graders will be using lockers that will be spread out through the entire hallway. The Lower School will also continue to follow a one-way traffic pattern.
3. We will stagger use of communal use spaces, such as playgrounds and the cafeteria (or have lunch in classrooms and other designated areas). Routine cleaning will be performed as needed.
4. Physical education classes will be held outside as much as possible. Emphasis will be placed on non-contact sports and games with limited shared equipment. We will continue to use the multiple changing areas that provide separation between students.
5. Only one student at a time will be allowed in the restrooms.
6. Technology will help us collaborate in the classroom while still maintaining social distance.
7. Social Distancing will be maximized by using all available space including 12 outdoor classrooms.

8. Children's belongings will be separated and stored in individually labeled pencil cases and bags. These bags will be brought to specials.
9. Pre-K and Kindergarten will use head-to-toe positioning for nap and rest time.
10. No off campus field trips for the time being.
11. Brennan's Delicatessen will continue to provide catered lunches. All lunches must be preordered and will come prepackaged.



IV. Hygiene

1. We are limiting the use of shared objects and materials to the least extent possible. These items will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
2. Grades 1-8 will have 1:1 personal devices, therefore avoiding any sharing.
3. Current CDC and AAP guidelines, plus State mandates require students and staff to wear face coverings while indoors. Parents should put the name/initials of their children on all face coverings. Teachers and staff will schedule numerous mask breaks during the day with social distancing to provide relief.
4. When outside (recess, changing classes, physical education, and outdoor classes), masks may be removed.
5. In consideration of good hygiene, OHA strongly recommends masks remain sanitized and possibly replaced daily.
6. Students will use personal water bottles with their names on them. Filling stations will be available. All water fountains will be closed down.
7. All students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizers at the beginning of the day, before and after lunch, and after activities.
8. Starting on the first day of school, enhanced instruction for students on good hygiene procedures will be taught and demonstrated.

1. Wash hands often.
 2. Sneeze in elbow.
 3. Do not touch face, nose, or mouth.
 4. Dispose of tissues immediately.
 5. Feel sick, go to the nurse.
 6. Practice social distancing.
 7. Do not share items.
8. Social distancing and hygiene during:

Lunch – hands washed before and after lunch, sitting in a physically distant spot, no sharing of food/drink, cleaning of tables/seats in between lunches. Students are required to bring their lunch containers home each day to be cleaned.

P.E. – hands washed/sanitized before and after PE, multiple areas for changing, socially distant activities, outside as much as possible, equipment sanitized.

Recess –classes will alternate use of playground and soccer field. In between equipment will be cleaned. Hands washed/sanitized at conclusion.

V. Physical Plant and Other

1. At the present time, no visitors, except for necessary health officials and first responders, are allowed in school buildings during school hours. However, as the year progresses, we are hopeful to have parents attend events on campus with protocols and modifications in place. All approved visitors will be temperature checked and will complete the COVID-19 questionnaire.
2. We will post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19.
3. Four hand washing station are located in the hallways with two in the Upper School and two in the Lower School. This gives us six sinks in both Upper and Lower Schools plus sinks already in the Arts building, gym, cafeteria, Scire Center, Soler Science Center, Tech Center, and Center for Early Learning.
4. All hand sanitizer units will be filled and functional.
5. Desktops and surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day. Thorough cleaning and sanitizing is also done at night when school is closed.
6. Nurse's office will be sanitized constantly.
7. We will have continuous daily cleaning of commonly used surfaces (door handles, sinks, faucets, etc.).
8. Nanoseptic coverings are installed on high touch surfaces to ward off germ transmisson.
9. Rooms and equipment will be cleaned nightly according to recommended guidelines.

10. Upper School classrooms have slider windows to provide increased ventilation, and AC units in both Upper and Lower Schools will use the fan option to increase air circulation.
11. A second wall ventilator has been installed in every Upper and Lower School classroom for intake of fresh air and continuous exhaust.
12. Room A/C units will be used for air-conditioning as well as providing fresh air.
13. Ultraviolet light or Bipolar Ionization apparatus has been installed in all HVAC units.
14. We have serviced all A/C ventilation units: cleaning/filters/upgrading.
15. No use of lockers, except for eighth grade; only assigned cubbie space.
16. Use of outdoor classrooms when possible, using canopies or sails to provide shade.
17. Installation of COVID-19 signage for hygiene reminders.
18. Social distancing and/or Plexiglass shields in classrooms.
19. Air purifiers installed in all rooms where appropriate.
20. HVAC filters upgraded to the highest MERV level the system can handle.

VI. Travel

As of May 17, 2021, New Jersey's travel advisory is no longer in effect.

New Jersey residents returning home and travelers visiting New Jersey do not need to quarantine, but should follow travel guidance from the CDC, the NJ Department of Health, and all local health and safety protocols of their travel destination.

At this time, the CDC recommends delaying travel until you are fully vaccinated. For more information, refer to the [CDC's guidance for domestic travel](#).

International Travel

The CDC requires all air passengers arriving in the United States from a foreign country to get tested for COVID-19 no more than 3 days before their flight departs and to present the negative result or documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 to the airline before boarding the flight. For more information, visit the [CDC website](#).

VII. Vaccinations

1. OHA highly recommends, but does not mandate, individuals to be vaccinated for COVID-19 when they become eligible. Once vaccinated, the school would like to be notified for its confidential medical records.
2. Like other vaccination requirements in place, medical and religious exemptions will be considered consistent with state and federal law.

3. OHA highly recommends that OHA community members consult their physicians concerning whether to get the vaccination and for parents to consider the physician's advice when their child becomes eligible.
4. OHA highly recommends that all students and staff receive a yearly influenza vaccine to assist with maintaining good health. Check with your personal physician first.



A Final Note from Mr. Pacelli...

Having faith that all will be well in trying times is a life philosophy that not only helps navigate the unknown, but also brings us together as a community. The belief must always be in our hearts that our children are happy and are being well educated. They are our future and we must equip them to become not only problem solvers, but also problem finders. With the support of their families and school, they are destined to be tolerant and positive contributors to our society. "Improvement, not perfection," allows us to have greater and lasting successes in the long run. So, we all must take "The Road to Fulfillment," rather than settling for anything less. Yes, time and patience!

Here's wishing everyone an educational, profitable, and joyous 2021-2022 school year.

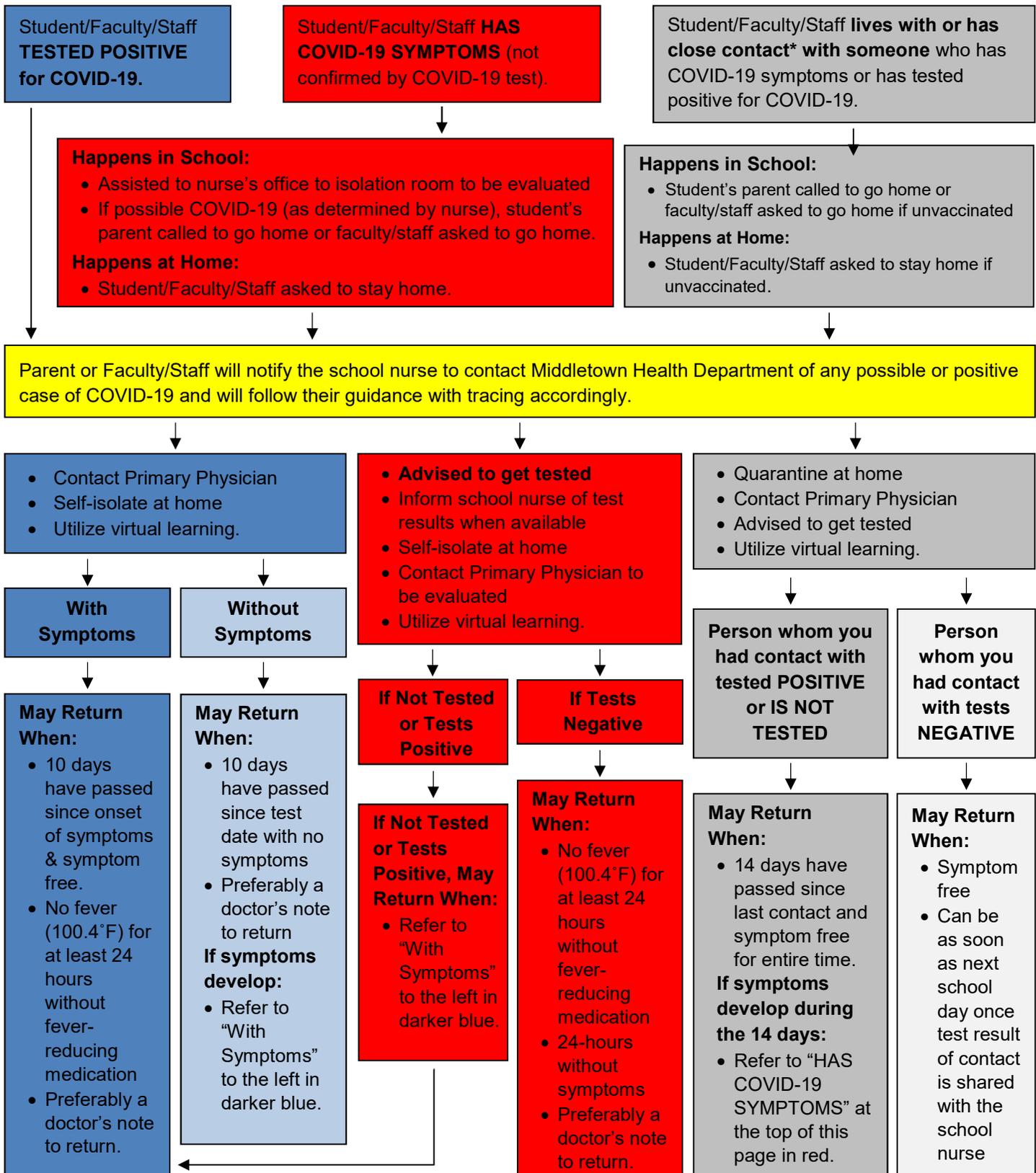
Sincerely,

Joseph A. Pacelli

Headmaster, *Oak Hill Academy*



COVID-19 SYMPTOMS: Fever 100.4°F and above • Cough • Shortness of breath • Loss of taste or smell • Sore throat • Headache • Significant body aches • Fatigue • Nausea • Diarrhea



***Close Contact** = individual within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 minutes or more over 24 hrs. Exception – K - 8th grade students within 3ft to 6ft of an infected student, if they wore well-fitting masks, are not a close contact. If fully vaccinated, no need to quarantine or test unless you show symptoms for COVID-19. State, local, and CDC guidance is ever changing and will be updated accordingly.