



GOLDA OCH
— ACADEMY —
האקדמיה ע"ש גולדה און

THE ROAD BACK TO GOA

A guide for a safe and responsible return to
on-campus learning at Golda Och Academy

August 2020

Updated October 2020



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MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL

PAGE 1

RISK MITIGATION MASKS MANDATORY TESTING

PAGE 2

SYMPTOMS CHECK PHYSICAL DISTANCING HAND WASHING

PAGE 3

SANITIZATION

PAGE 4

SICK POLICIES

PAGE 5

CONTACT TRACING IMMUNIZATIONS, LICE CHECKS & REQUIRED MEDICAL FORMS

PAGE 6

LUNCH FACULTY SAFETY & WELL-BEING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING VISITORS

PAGE 7

TECHNOLOGY & HYBRID INSTRUCTION REMOTE INSTRUCTION

PAGE 8

WILF LOWER SCHOOL CAMPUS

PAGES 9-10

ERIC F. ROSS UPPER SCHOOL CAMPUS

PAGES 11-13

OUR COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER

PAGE 14

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PAGE 15

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1

MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Golda Och Academy Community,

Our team has been working tirelessly to ensure a safe and responsible return to on-campus learning for the 2020-21 school year. Creativity and thinking outside of the box has propelled us through these difficult times and enabled us to reach this point where we can envision our physical return to Gregory Avenue and Pleasant Valley Way.

This is an extraordinary and unprecedented time of challenge for our country, community and school. For us at GOA, this is our time to be kind, calm and safe. Our Jewish values of *Kavod* (respect) and *Kehillah* (community) are guiding us now more than ever as we look out both for ourselves and others. Ultimately, our return to campus requires partnership and collaboration and we ask that all members of our GOA community continue to be vigilant when it comes to physical distancing and all recommended health and safety measures.

The situation we currently find ourselves in is dynamic and ever-changing and we continue to monitor all of the pertinent information coming our way in an effort to ensure that we are making the absolute best decisions possible when it comes to the health and safety of our students, faculty and entire GOA community. With this in mind, please know that we are constantly reviewing our plans and know that we may still have to make additional adjustments in the coming weeks. **Above all, we will not waver in our mission to deliver an excellent educational experience for our students.**

In the pages that follow, we have laid out our plans and thinking given the most current information that we have at our disposal. In order to return safely and responsibly it means adhering to the guidelines set forth by the State of NJ, the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics and our own internal team of medical advisors.

We thank you for your ongoing partnership and support for our school and do encourage you to reach out should you have additional questions after reading through this document.

In partnership,

Adam Shapiro
Head of School



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2

RISK MITIGATION

We are creating multi-tiered efforts to mitigate risk for our students and faculty.

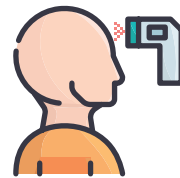
While there is no guarantee against the spread of COVID-19, we have adopted the guidelines and recommendation of the CDC and local health authorities, and are instituting multiple levels of protection to help mitigate risk.



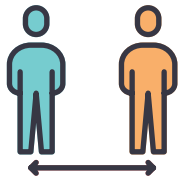
MASKS



MANDATORY
TESTING



SYMPTOMS
CHECK



PHYSICAL
DISTANCING



HAND
WASHING



SANITIZATION

MASKS



All faculty, staff and students are required to properly wear a mask (over the nose, mouth and chin) that meets CDC guidelines while on campus. Everyone should come to campus wearing a mask and have a supply of additional masks with them. GOA will maintain a supply of disposable masks in the event someone needs one.

MANDATORY TESTING



All GOA students, faculty and staff must show written proof of a negative COVID (PCR or antigen; not antibody) test before physically returning to school. Our medical advisors recommend that this testing be completed no sooner than 14 days prior to your first day back on campus.

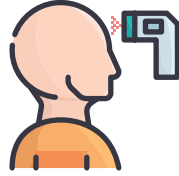
IMPORTANT: Please ensure with the testing provider that you will receive your results prior to Monday, September 7, so that results can be properly uploaded by parents to Magnus. **Once the testing process is complete, families should take all precautions to minimize exposure risks prior to the start of school.**

For NJ testing location resources, please visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/testing> and/or consult with your healthcare provider.

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3

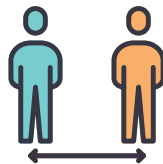
SYMPTOMS CHECK



All students and faculty will be required to complete a **daily** COVID health screening through the SchoolPass app on their phone by no later than 7:30 am. No one will be permitted on campus without first completing this screening process. **We will also be conducting daily temperature screenings for everyone as they arrive on campus. Those dropping students off must remain in their cars with their student(s) until the student(s) they are dropping off have cleared the screening process.**

Anyone with positive screening or temperature over 100 degrees will not be permitted to remain on campus. Should a student or faculty member present with COVID symptoms during the school day, they will be isolated, assessed, and sent home if confirmed. Anyone sent home with possible COVID symptoms will be directed about next steps from the nurse based on current CDC and NJ Department of Health guidelines.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING



While all classrooms and meeting spaces are set up to ensure that students and faculty are physically distanced from one another, we also understand that there will be times when physical distancing is not possible. As such, everyone will wear a mask at all times and we will work hard to ensure that we reinforce this vital message with everyone in our buildings.

We will also be placing signage throughout both campuses to remind everyone about proper physical distancing, and will designate which direction people should be moving throughout our buildings.

HAND WASHING



As a school we have always stressed the importance of good hygiene, and this year will be no exception. Hand sanitizing stations have been placed in classrooms throughout both buildings, and students will be asked to wash their hands at different intervals throughout the day. Additionally, everyone entering and exiting a classroom will be required to sanitize their hands. Teachers will remind students of proper hand-washing techniques when they return to school and signage will be in the bathrooms as a reminder.

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4

SANITIZATION



In addition to our regular cleaning and sanitization schedules, our facilities team will adapt the following procedures:

Restrooms Cleaned and disinfected 2x daily with electrostatic cleaners, and disinfectant spray along with a deep cleaning every evening. Occupancy will be limited to two students at a time. No hand dryers will be used, paper towels will be provided and restocked regularly.

Trash removal Touchless garbage cans have been added throughout both campuses and will be emptied regularly.

High touch surfaces Areas such as stairwells, building entrances and exits, water fountains (bottle filling stations only; water spouts will be turned off) and door handles will be disinfected 3x times daily utilizing electrostatic sprayers and/or disinfectant spray. There will also be a deep cleaning of our buildings every evening.

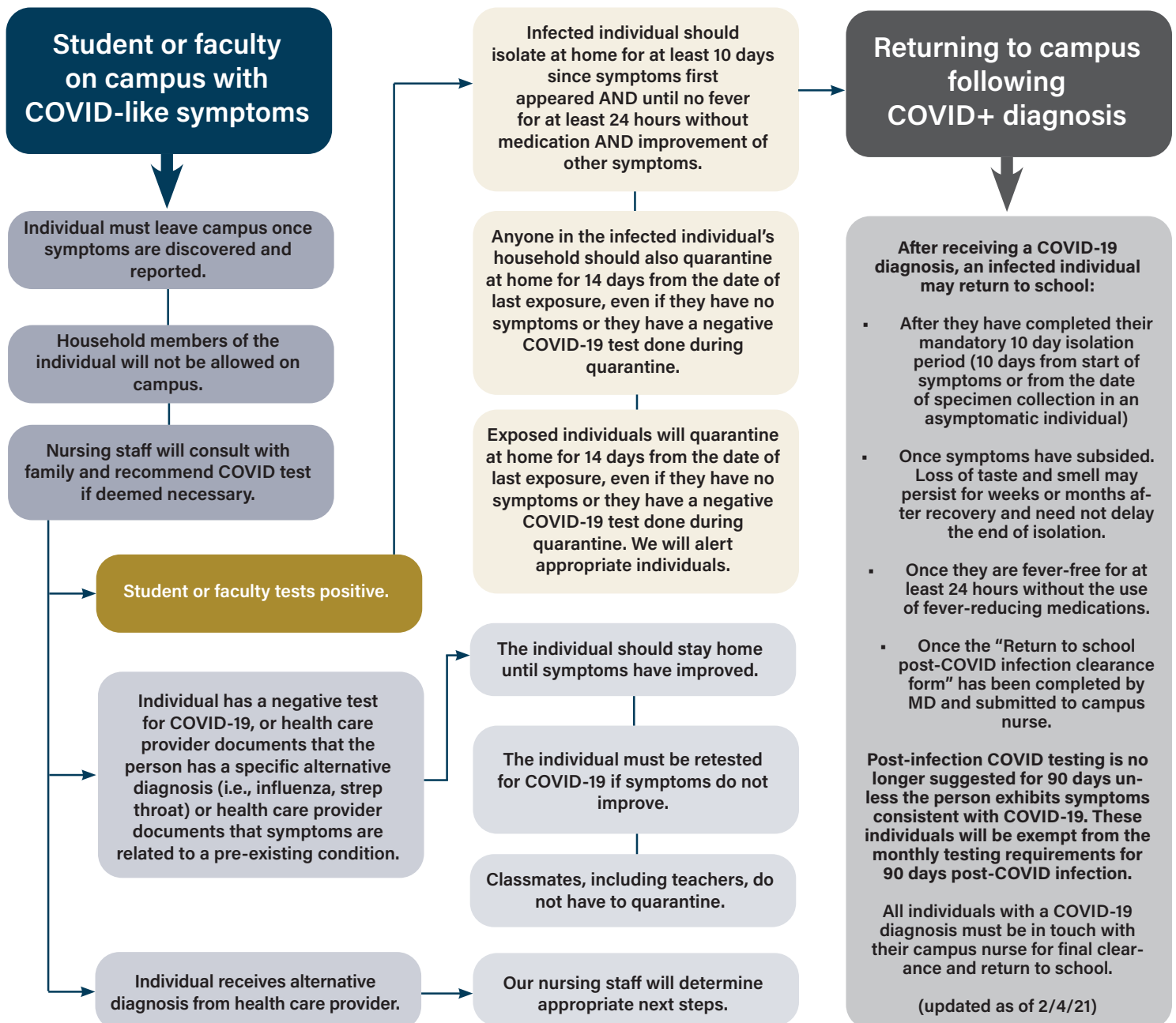
Playgrounds Will be cleaned regularly and sanitized between groups of students using the equipment.

Ventilation Classrooms have been outfitted with HEPA air purifiers. These purifiers and the entire HVAC system will be inspected on a weekly basis to ensure optimal airflow and filters will be changed regularly. Classroom doors will remain open at all times to ensure proper air circulation. Windows will remain open (weather permitting), unless there is a medical concern related to outdoor air quality.

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5

SICK POLICIES



These policies will remain fluid and in line with the changing directives we receive from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In every case we are committed to following and/or exceeding the stated guidelines and policies.

***Updated: February 2021**

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6

CONTACT TRACING



Recognizing that all situations regarding the transmission of COVID-19 will be unique, our team is prepared to address all potential cases (and possible quarantines) on a case-by-case basis which will include consultation with our team of medical advisors and our local board of health.

If a student, faculty or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they will be asked to isolate at home and we may then make the decision (if necessary) to close the school for a day in order to allow for additional cleaning and disinfecting.

After informing our local public health officials of the positive case, GOA will then support their contact tracing efforts in a manner that respects the privacy of the individual. The process of contact tracing includes an investigation of direct contacts (peers, teachers, siblings, or any individual seen face-to-face for a minimum of 15 minutes).

Recognizing that our student population comes from many different communities throughout NJ, our team receives reports and recommendations from all relevant local health departments throughout the state. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in our community, families must report that directly to either Nurse Ilena (Upper School) or Nurse Roberta (Lower School), and they will maintain a confidential record in order to track the case and coordinate return-to-school dates.

IMMUNIZATIONS, LICE CHECKS & REQUIRED MEDICAL FORMS

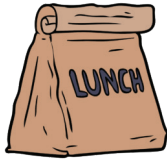


All age-appropriate childhood vaccinations (as noted in our Student Handbook) are required for students to return to GOA in the fall. **Flu shots are strongly recommended for all students and faculty no later than November 15.** Students must also have current physical examination forms on file in our Magnus database in order to be permitted into school for the start of the school year. **Lice checks for all students will be conducted on Tuesday, September 8** with additional details forthcoming regarding procedures and specific location.

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7

LUNCH



All students will be required to bring their own dairy or pareve lunch in accordance with our school's kashrut policy. We are asking that all families pack nut-free snacks and lunches. Weather permitting, lunch will be eaten outside. There will be no sharing of any food/snacks. Whether indoors (due to weather) or outdoors for lunch, all students will be taught proper protocol for removing and storing their masks.

FACULTY SAFETY & WELL-BEING



We take seriously the health and wellbeing of our faculty and it is our intention to set them up for success in the classroom from both a safety and educational standpoint. All faculty will be wearing masks throughout the entire day — just as their students will be. Face shields, should they choose to wear one, will be supplied by the school upon request. Just as our classrooms on both campuses vary when it comes to their shape/size, so too will the protective barriers that we employ for our teachers in our classrooms look different in order to ensure that we are assisting them in maintaining the proper physical distancing.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING



We recognize that this is a very challenging time for our students and families. Should you need any assistance, please reach out to your guidance counselor as they stand ready to help and connect you with any necessary resources in the community.

We are all in this together!

VISITORS



No visitors will be permitted on campus during the school day except under very limited circumstances. Any visitor arriving to campus will be required to comply with all school policies, including COVID and temperature screening and wearing a mask. Given this limitation on visitors to the school, all parent meetings/programs will take place virtually via Zoom.

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8

TECHNOLOGY & HYBRID INSTRUCTION



Our technology team has been preparing both for a hybrid scenario (where some families may choose to keep their children home to learn remotely) and a situation where students may be required to be at home due to quarantine at different times during the year. As such, all classrooms have been equipped with additional video and microphone capabilities so that students are able to use Zoom to join their classroom activities. Additionally, we will be integrating online learning platform software into our classrooms beginning on day one in order to reduce any possible confusion should we need to transition our learning from on-campus to remote instruction. Students in grades Pre-K through 3rd will be using Seesaw and students in grades 4th-12th will be using Google Classroom.

We recognize that for some students who choose to remain at home and learn remotely, they may change their minds once the school year begins. While we have space for all students to learn on campus, our teachers and administrators have to know who will be on campus at all times. To that end, should a student wish to switch from remote instruction to on-campus learning, they must request that change, via email, to Nurse Roberta (Lower) or Nurse Ilena (Upper). All requests must be reviewed (this process may take up to a few days) and approved before a student is able to return to campus. In an effort to ensure consistency for both students and teachers it's important that students do not constantly move from remote to on-campus instruction. As such, once a student decides to move from remote to on-campus learning our expectation is that they will not be making additional changes except for in extenuating circumstances that would have to be approved by our school administration.

REMOTE INSTRUCTION



Our team learned a great deal about remote instruction from our time out of school this past year and our teachers have engaged in a tremendous amount of professional development over this past summer in order to ensure that we are prepared for teaching in this medium. Recognizing that there is uncertainty surrounding the upcoming school year, we are prepared to transition to a full schedule of remote instruction at any point during the school year.

What are some of the factors that could lead us to making this transition?

- An order by Governor Murphy/State of New Jersey.
- A number of positive cases of COVID in a particular grade/division within GOA.
- A surge in cases of COVID transmission within our state and/or local community.

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9

WILF LOWER SCHOOL CAMPUS (GRADES PRE-K - 5)

ARRIVAL TIME



Our Lower School building will open at **7:50 am** and students (once they've cleared their screening as they exit their vehicle) will be directed to their morning classrooms where they will be able to quietly read, color, catch up on homework etc. Signage throughout our campus, and our school personnel who will be in the parking lot, will indicate which doors will be in use for which grades and/or which stairwells will be available. We ask for everyone's patience during this morning drop off as our youngest students may require more time to exit their cars. Parents should assist children as needed so that we can ensure everyone's safety. All families must follow the directions of school staff during this process.

DISMISSAL TIME



Students will be dismissed from their afternoon classes using our SchoolPass app. As busing, after-care and funtracks will be limited and/or not available, we expect carpool procedures to take longer this year. Please be patient and respectful of other families and carpools during this time. Parents of our youngest students will need to assist with entry and seatbelts if children are not yet able to be independent in these areas. Our highest priority is the safety of our students and we need everyone's cooperation to make this procedure run smoothly. Please follow the directions of our school staff and security. At this time, we expect to dismiss all students beginning at **3:15 pm**.

We are still in the process of finalizing our arrival and dismissal procedures and will share more information with our families in advance of the school year. Please also note that all procedures are subject to change as we make our way through the first days/weeks of the school year.

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10

WILF LOWER SCHOOL CAMPUS (GRADES PRE-K - 5)

CLASSROOMS, HALLWAYS & STAIRWELLS



While on campus, students will primarily remain in 1-2 classrooms each day. However, we will also use additional spaces for break-out groups, individual support, and larger meetings (appropriately physically-distanced). Students will not use specialty spaces as we begin the year. Instead, specialists will rotate into classrooms on a set schedule, equipped with appropriate PPE. Signage in hallways will also remind our students to keep appropriate distance and teachers will monitor stairwells if/when groups of students must use them to ensure only one group is moving up or down at a time.

OUTDOOR SPACE



Tented outdoor spaces will be used for a range of activities, including: lunch, recess, physical education and other classes and activities etc. (weather permitting). When we are unable to use outdoor spaces, we will utilize our largest areas on campus (ie. gym, cafeteria, multi-purpose room) for activities that require greater distance between students. **Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather as there will not be alternate arrangements available for supervision.**

AFTERCARE & FUNTRACKS



At this time, we expect to offer a very limited aftercare program. This program will be capped to ensure a safe number of students are supervised and appropriately physically distanced at all times. There will not be a drop-in option to begin the year. A virtual funtracks program may also be offered based on interest and we expect to share more details about that in the weeks ahead.

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11

ERIC F. ROSS UPPER SCHOOL CAMPUS (GRADES 6 - 12)

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL



Our Upper School building will open at **7:50 am** and students will be directed to specific locations where they will be able to remain prior to the first bell (more information will be shared regarding this process prior to the start of school). We ask for everyone's patience during morning drop off as all **students must wait in their cars to be screened prior to entry.**

At the end of the school day, students will be dismissed from their classrooms when their car arrives in the carpool line. Students traveling by bus and those participating in after-school activities will be dismissed from their classrooms to the designated staging area or club/activity space.

Should a student need to be picked up early from school, a parent/caregiver must notify the Main Office of the change. Upon arrival on campus, the parent/caregiver should remain just outside of the school doors (with a mask on) so that security is able to monitor all arrivals/departures. Students must sign out at the security desk before leaving.

We are still in the process of finalizing our arrival and dismissal procedures and will share more information with our families in advance of the school year. Please also note that all procedures are subject to change as we make our way through the first days/weeks of the school year.

BELL SCHEDULE



The daily bell schedule will include six academic periods on Monday - Thursday and four academic periods on Friday, plus tefillah and lunch. Periods will run between 45-55 minutes with a staggered schedule that will enable us to reduce traffic in the hallways during the passing time.

OFFICE HOURS



Teachers will be available (schedule permitting) to work with students during lunch. Additional (virtual) opportunities for academic help and support will be scheduled on a departmental basis.

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12

ERIC F. ROSS UPPER SCHOOL CAMPUS (GRADES 6 - 12)

CLASSROOMS, HALLWAYS & STAIRWELLS



Classrooms will be set-up to maximize physical distancing for both students and faculty. Larger classes will utilize spaces such as the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) and Library. Additionally, tents will be used for lunch and for some classes to meet outdoors. **While our dress code will still remain in effect, students should be dressed comfortably and appropriately for the weather each day. As in years' past, shorts will be permitted for the first part of the school year and students will receive additional guidance from our Upper School team as the year progresses.**

Students will follow signage while moving through the halls and stairwells of our Upper School building. Having everyone move in one direction will help us to maintain physical distancing during these times.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY



Students should plan to bring their own device (preferably laptop) to school every day. Phones will not be acceptable as a student's primary educational device. Devices should be fully charged before coming into school and chargers should be brought as well. There will be additional charging stations throughout the building as well. If a family needs assistance in obtaining a device they should reach out directly to our Upper School leadership team. All students will receive additional information and guidance regarding technology, including how it will be used in the classroom and a demo/tutorial on Google Classroom and Zoom during their orientations in advance of the school year.

TEFILLAH



Tefillah will take place both in classrooms and virtually. These virtual experiences will provide our students with the opportunity to learn from our GOA Faculty, community rabbis, cantors and GOA Alumni. We are hopeful that this program will provide students with a spiritual break in their day.

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13

ERIC F. ROSS UPPER SCHOOL CAMPUS (GRADES 6 - 12)

JEWISH LIFE & EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION



The communal celebration of Jewish holidays and experiential education is a core element of our school's mission. Shabbatonim and other overnight trips that occur during the first few months of the school year will be postponed or turned into virtual experiences with the hope that we will be able to reassess as the year goes on.

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES



As in previous years, clubs and activities that are still able to take place during the lunch period or after school, while following physical distancing guidelines, will continue with a similar schedule this year. Some clubs and activities will move to a virtual format which will take place outside of the school day. A club/activity schedule will be sent out at the beginning of the school year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ATHLETIC ACTIVITY



We understand the importance and necessity of physical activity for our students — both from a health and wellness and social-emotional standpoint — and are confident that we will be able to provide creative and safe opportunities for our students throughout the year. Students will have time for outdoor recess and health education classes will be continuing to meet as usual. We are looking forward to learning more from NJSIAA about their plans for interscholastic sports for the fall and beyond. In the meantime, we will provide support and encouragement to all of our GOA student-athletes as they continue to build their skills — both on and off the field.

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14

OUR COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER



As we look forward to welcoming our students and faculty back to school for on-campus instruction this fall, we must all recognize that being successful in this endeavor means every single member of our GOA community bears a tremendous responsibility. We are by no means done navigating this pandemic and it must be our collective goal to create the safest and healthiest environment possible for our students and faculty.

כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה

"All of Israel is responsible for one another."

[Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shavuot 39a]

Every decision that has been made has been done with both health and safety and educational integrity in mind. These guidelines have been put in place in order to allow our community to come back to campus, learn together and stay healthy. We feel confident in this work and we must all recognize the shared responsibility that exists for this to remain a reality.

It is the job of our faculty and administration to ensure that all of these guidelines are met while students are in school and we ask that all of our parents/caregivers and family members commit to following best practices for health and safety as we work together to keep the virus spread to a minimum.

What are we asking of our families?

- Adhere to our mandatory testing requirement.
- Masks should be worn indoors, and outdoors when physical distancing is not possible.
- Maintaining physical distancing in group situations and/or when in public spaces.
- Practice and reinforce responsible hand-washing/sanitizing procedures.
- Inform one of our school nurses in the event that anyone in your immediate family has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.
- Follow State travel guidelines and restrictions.
- Follow all established health-related guidelines including completion of daily COVID screenings and submission of all health/medical forms through the Magnus portal.

Please be sure to review this commitment and all of the guidelines set forth in #TheRoadBackToGOA Guide with all members of your family.

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15

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Road Back to GOA Reopening Guide has been created thanks to the hard work and dedication of many people in and around our Golda Och Academy community.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our Medical Advisory Team: Dr. Alison Grann, Dr. Jeffrey Saperstein, Nurse Roberta Coopersmith and Nurse Ilena Kasdan for their work in reviewing all of the pertinent information coming from the NJ Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. They have also worked closely with their colleagues at other NJAIS Independent Schools in order to ensure our compliance with all regulations and adherence to best practices in these incredibly uncertain times.

Thank you to our Board Chair, Keith Biebelberg, and our entire Board for their ongoing support of our school and students. We would also like to extend a special thanks to our Board of Trustees Building Committee members, Alan Schall '92 and Jonathan Schwartz, for the support and advice that they provided to our Director of Facilities and Operations, Matthew Chase, as he has worked to safely and responsibly ready our campuses for their physical reopening.

Our entire Golda Och Academy Reopening Task Force — which was filled with caring, talented and dedicated members of our administration and faculty — deserves all of our gratitude and appreciation for the many hours of work they have already put in (and the many that are still yet to come!) in an effort to welcome our students, faculty and staff back to school safely.

We thank our entire faculty for all of the work and professional development that they've engaged in over this past summer. We also thank them in advance for all that we know they will do in the year to come. It is our teachers who challenge and inspire our students every single day and for that we are all eternally grateful.

DISCLAIMER

In consultation with our medical professionals, Golda Och Academy has taken all reasonable precautions to protect our students, staff, vendors and guests from contracting COVID-19. However, guaranteeing that physical distancing will be maintained at all times and ensuring a completely germ-free environment in a school setting is impossible. Therefore, by sending your child back to school for on-campus instruction, you are assuming certain inherent risks associated with your child(ren)'s attendance at school.