

# Thomas Hart Academy Back to School 2020

We are anticipating a great start to a brand new school year and we look forward to welcoming everyone safely back on campus on August 13, 2020. The first two days of school, August 13th-14th, will be shortened to allow time for students to learn new protocol and adjust to their new environment. These days will be 8:00-11:00 am. As an independent school, we are uniquely positioned to offer a strong academic program in the safest manner during this pandemic. We are confident in our preparations for the 2020-2021 school year.

After a mandated closing in March, we began carefully researching and compiling data to determine best practices for our school to reopen as soon as safely possible. We have relied on the Centers for Disease Control, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, SC Department of Social Services specialists, South Carolina Independent Schools Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and other independent schools throughout our state to gather information. A group of medical professionals who are also THA parents, met to provide further recommendations for our reopening plan. We feel confident moving forward.

With the help of a \$15,000 sanitization grant, we have purchased the items and supplies that are necessary for reopening. We have installed touch-free hand sanitizer stations at every classroom door. We have purchased ample supplies of cleaning products, gloves and masks and we are prepared to thoroughly clean and sanitize our school prior to our start date and throughout the school year. We have purchased individual/personal face shields for all students to use when teachers deem necessary. We will label and store these shields for students. We will continue to assess information and develop appropriate procedures that best support the needs of our students and faculty.

This a fluid and ever-evolving document. It is one that will be updated as situations warrant and as information dictates. Parents, we will rely on you to do all that you can to help keep our school a safe environment for everyone. **We ask that families take the Healthy Hornets Pledge and sign a liability waiver prior to the start of school.** These documents will be available on our website with registration paperwork.



## Important Dates

July	THA Medical Advisory Meeting
July	Preliminary Reopening Plan
August 5-11	Faculty Orientation/Training Days
August 6	Registration Paperwork Drop-Off Day 10:00 am-1:00 pm
August 13	First Day of School 8-11 am/Student Orientation/Training

## What to Expect

**We are determined to stay on campus as long as it is safe for us to do so. THA will offer three learning models outlined below. *See Appendix A for details.***

**Model 1** Face-to-Face Instruction, which includes on-campus learning five days per week for all grades. This is our primary model and will begin this model on August 13th with in-person instruction for all students.

**Model 2** Modified Distance Learning Plan- Remote classroom access combining live-streaming classes, Google Classroom, etc. This remote learning plan is available for those students who cannot be on campus for an extended period of time because of a Covid-19 diagnosis, quarantine, pre-existing conditions, direct exposure to COVID-19, or other risk factors or extenuating circumstances. This model will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual student based on grade level, etc. **Teachers will develop age-appropriate guidelines and contact parents with individual student plans.**

**Model 3** Full School Closure Remote Learning Plan for all grades utilizing daily live streaming full class schedules (Zoom/Google Meet) and Google Classroom.

## Health and Safety Policies

*While we realize that a zero-risk environment is not possible, we will focus on reducing the potential for community spread.*

- We are asking each family to ensure that 1) students who feel sick stay home, and 2) students who have COVID-like symptoms, or have potentially been exposed, **do not attend school**. A “Healthy Hornet Pledge” will be included in registration paperwork found on our website. We all must do our best to keep our campus safe.
- Daily Health Screenings: We will monitor students and faculty for symptoms and complete a temperature check and health screening upon arrival every morning and possibly throughout the day. Students/faculty will not be allowed to enter the school if they have a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or above. We will use temporal artery thermometers.
- Physical distancing will be encouraged both inside and outside of buildings. Desks will be spaced apart to allow physical distancing and flex seating/lounge areas have been removed to prevent congregation.
- THA will practice cohorting. The number of students and staff that will be required to quarantine will be limited by cohorting. This means keeping the same children and staff together and limiting interaction outside of that group. When proper cohorting is practiced so that the case has only had contact with those in the same class, the other staff and students will be monitored rather than excluded.
- Faculty/Staff will practice physical distancing and wear PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) when around students and other staff members.
- Policy to keep students and employees at home who are symptomatic or who have possibly been exposed to COVID-19 will be enforced.

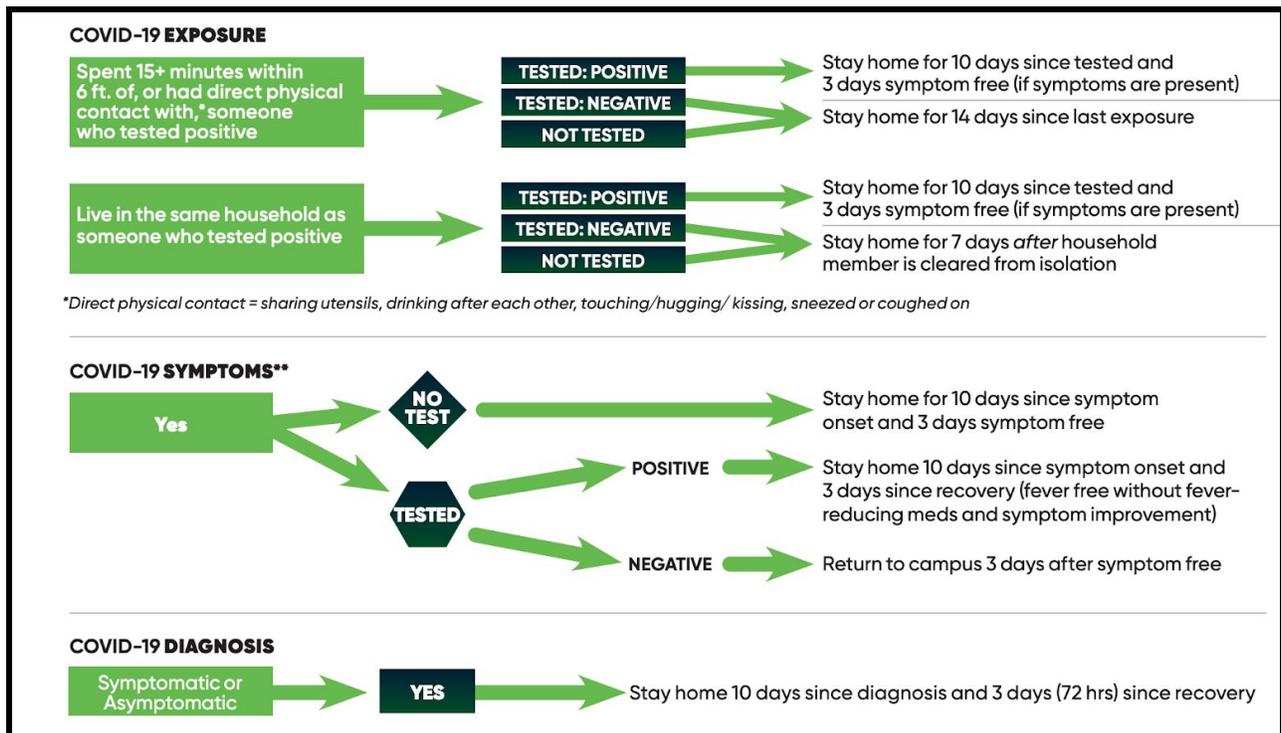
- Face coverings/masks will be required for all students in grades 1-8 while indoors. All students will be required to wear masks in hallways, bathrooms, and during one-on-one or small group instruction and when physical distancing can not be practiced. Parents will provide face coverings/masks for students. Masks are not required when students are outside. We will have specific procedures to remove and store masks when not in use. (Labeled, individual and tightly fitting containers)
- Parents will only have access to the front entrance of the main building. We will not permit anyone other than students/faculty/staff beyond the front entrance foyer or in any other buildings on our campus. Masks are mandated to be worn by all adults and 1st-8th grade students while occupying indoor facilities.
- We will restrict gathering sizes and occupancy in communal spaces.
- In-person meetings with faculty and staff/parents must be scheduled in advance and will follow safe practices and physical distancing. Virtual meetings are encouraged.



# Covid-19

- If a student or faculty member tests positive for COVID-19, the school will notify the parents of the students in that class that a positive test has been reported. If the student has siblings at THA, a notification will be sent to the parents of students in those classes. Names will not be released.
- The classroom and all areas that the student/faculty member was exposed to will be thoroughly disinfected and cleaned prior to opening for student use.
- When a student or staff member tests positive for Covid-19, the following criteria will be met in order for the student or any individual, as well as siblings to return to campus:
  - At least 10 days have passed since the date of the Covid-19 test that resulted in a positive outcome.
  - At least three days have passed since recovery and the individual is no longer running fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
  - Symptoms have been reduced (cough, shortness of breath, headache, etc.)

*The following COVID-19 protocols apply to all employees, students, parents, or visitors to our campus. If you live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test, then you must follow the same protocols as that person, regardless of your own test. This protocol is based on CDC guidelines.*



\*\*Symptoms include: Any one (1) of the following: fever or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing or loss of taste or smell or new or worsening cough. Any two (2) of the following: sore throat, muscle or body aches, chills, fatigue, headache, congestion or runny nose, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting.

# Cleaning and Sanitization Protocol

- Daily cleaning and sanitization will be increased:
  - Each afternoon a thorough cleaning and sanitizing of every classroom, restroom, and gathering space on campus will occur following CDC guidelines and using products for disinfection.
  - During the school day, teachers will clean high-touch areas – sink, door, handrails, light switches, countertops, desks, tables, and other surfaces, etc.
  - Water fountains will not be used. Students will be allowed to bring their own water bottles.
  - Teachers will schedule times to wash hands, sanitize desks/tables and disinfect high touch areas on the playground after recess use.
  - THA will provide disinfecting wipes or solutions in each classroom for teacher and student use throughout the school day.
- We will thoroughly clean and disinfect our school prior to our start date and throughout the school year.
- Fabric seating/bean bags have been removed.
- After use of the playground equipment, teachers will disinfect high use surface areas.
- Mounted, touch-free hand sanitizing stations will be mounted at the entrance of every classroom.

## Reopening Plans and Campus Adjustments

- We will modify routines and class schedules, establish traffic patterns into, out of, and throughout all campus buildings to practice physical distancing.
- Signage and student training on campus will consist of:
  - Proper Hand Washing Procedures
  - Directional flow to enforce physical distancing
  - Entrance/Exit of buildings
  - No use of Water Fountains
  - Visual markers to identify proper physical distancing
  - Proper use of face coverings
- We will reconfigure classrooms to promote physical distancing and assign seating for all students.
- Grades 2K-5th grade will use classrooms or outdoor spaces for lunch. Grades 6-8 will practice physical distancing in the lunchroom and/or gym classrooms and also separate by grades. At this time, hot lunch will not be served Monday-Thursday. Students must bring a packed lunch. Microwaves will not be available. Friday will be take out style pizza lunch served in classrooms and prepackaged with individual drinks. Details of pre-ordering Friday pizza lunch will be emailed.
- Grades 6-8 will have special area classes by grade (music, art, PE, media, tutorial, etc.). (We will not have combined grade level elective classes until it is safe to do so.)
- We understand the necessity of outside and unstructured free time, which is essential to growth and development of all students. We will cohort classes during recess to allow for physical distancing during these scheduled times. Masks are not required during recess. This is a “mask vacation” time. Please know that free time will be more controlled, limited, and regulated. We have scheduled many “mask vacation” opportunities throughout the school day for all grades.
- We will eliminate/limit communal classroom materials and manipulatives and sanitize these items daily. We will provide mechanical pencils (age-appropriate) to alleviate the use of a pencil sharpener. Students will not be allowed to use classroom pencil sharpeners.
- Our library has transitioned to a virtual platform. Students will no longer check out library books, or enter the library building for library class, but will have access to thousands of books online via Literacy

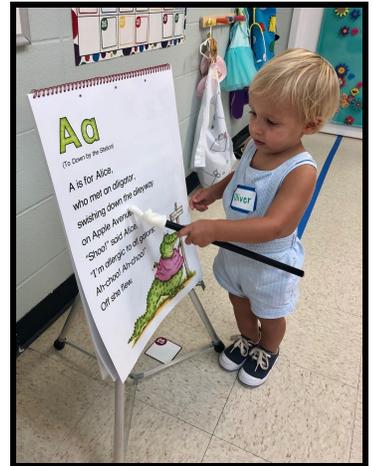
Pro, a new independent reading program. We are excited to unveil this new digital library and independent reading program.

- Non-essential visitors will not be allowed on campus. We will have very limited access and required health screenings for parents. Masks are mandatory.
- Carpool will operate in a controlled flow. Please understand that our new procedure will take a bit longer. Plan accordingly.
  - Morning Drop off:
    - Gym (Grades 6-8) We will check temperature/complete health screen while students are in the vehicle. Once cleared, the student will report to first period class.
    - Elementary Side of Main Building (grades 1-5) We will check temperature/complete health screen while students are in vehicle. Once cleared, the student will report to homeroom.
    - K Side of Main Building (2K-5K) Students will be temperature checked while in vehicle and once cleared, they may report to class. 2K students may be walked by a parent to the exterior (playground) door of their classroom to be dropped off. At the door, students will be temperature checked before being allowed to enter the classroom.
    - After School Pick Up: Please pick up your child at designated pick-up location. (Details forthcoming.)
- Schedules will incorporate frequent hand washing breaks and hand sanitizer will be available throughout the campus. A touch-free hand sanitizer station will be installed outside of each classroom.
- Special area teachers will report to classrooms to eliminate student travel.

# Appendix A: Three Learning Models

## Model 1: Face-to-Face Instruction

- This plan will allow all students to be on campus five days a week with face-to-face instruction. We are working carefully to follow a traditional school day, prioritizing core subject areas and also making considerations to maximize instruction that might be lost through adjustments to the schedule related to COVID safety protocols.



## Model 2: Modified Distance Learning Plan (revised July 30)

- Our Model 2 Plan provides flexibility for allowing students (home-bound) to continue learning while at home for a temporary, yet extended period of time. **Teachers will create/modify plans depending on grade level. This model will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.**
  - Model 2 is for those students who must be off campus but are not ill (for example, someone in their family is diagnosed but student is asymptomatic)
  - OR for students who are in quarantine due to a diagnosed family member or direct exposure,
  - OR for those students whose families have decided to keep them at home due to a compromised immune system/medically fragile/at risk health condition of a member of the household, etc.
  - OR those students who have been diagnosed and are well enough to continue remote learning,
  - OR if a class must be quarantined due to a classmate diagnosis.
- Model 2 Modified Distance Learning will allow students to access instruction, classwork, and homework until they are able to return to campus safely. Students in grades 2-8 will utilize Zoom/Google Meet for core classes daily in real-time with on-campus classmates. (Math, ELA, Science and Social Studies) Students in grades 2K-1st grade will be given at-home learning packets. There will not be a live-streaming component for grades 2K-1st grade. Once these students are identified, teachers of Modified Distance Learners will contact parents to provide specific details and decide upon a schedule.
- Model 2 Modified Distance Learning Plan may be a combination of asynchronous and synchronous interaction:
  - Asynchronous interactions are interactions between individuals that are not real time or “live.”  
Asynchronous interactions are common during a typical flexible learning day.
    - Examples include video posts, assigned texts and answering questions, recorded teacher videos, or read-aloud, responding to a peer’s thoughts via Google Classroom, peer critiques, and email.
  - Synchronous interactions are real time/live interactions.
    - Examples include chat features, Google Docs where participants get to see live edits, large group or small virtual meetings using platforms such as Zoom/Meets/Hangouts, and personal phone calls.
- Please email [thaprincipals@mytha.net](mailto:thaprincipals@mytha.net) to let us know if your child will be a Modified Distance learner.

### **Model 3: Full School Closure Remote Learning Plan**

- In the event of a government-mandated stay-at-home order or a wide-spread outbreak on campus, we are prepared to transition to a revised and expanded Complete Remote Learning Plan. (Our school is also considered a certified DSS child care facility, which is an essential operation.) In the event of a mandated school closure, we will be able to offer on-campus instruction for students in grades 2K-1st grade.
- All teachers will utilize Google Classroom and Zoom/Google Meet during Remote Learning.
- Remote Learning Plan revisions include: Upper elementary and middle school classes meeting regularly, adjusting expectations, following a modified (8am-11:30 am) schedule that will mirror a regular day's schedule, including all special area class offerings. In lower grades, we will increase face-time and daily live instruction with teachers.
- Grades 6-8 will have a live-streamed class schedule with each subject. (Classes will be condensed to allow for homework time/lunch/breaks, etc.)
- The Full Remote Learning schedule will mirror the regular schedule and we will set weekly office hours for each teacher to be available for conferencing and tutoring.
- Teachers will utilize Zoom/Google Meet to hold live classes/meetings with students daily.