



## **Pacem School Plan for Fall 2020 Given COVID-19 considerations**

Pacem School plans to open for in-person classes in September of 2020 according to its regular schedule. We will make modifications to our operations as defined in this plan for the purpose of keeping our students and staff as safe as possible from COVID-19. This document is primarily a working document for faculty, staff, and parents, but will also be made available on our website. In addition, we will create an executive summary for parents and the public. This document is based on the guidance released by the State of Vermont Department of Education that can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/guidance-strong-healthy-start-health-guidance>.

Please note that this is a quickly evolving health situation, and we will certainly need to alter this plan throughout the year. We ask for everyone's patience and flexibility as we navigate these challenging times.

### **Health Guidelines:**

#### Daily Health Check:

Before entering the school building or school outdoor space, all community members will need to go through a daily health screening. **We are asking all parents to check in with their children prior to leaving their house to be sure that they do not have any COVID-19 symptoms and to ensure that sick students do not arrive at school.**

Questions in the health screening are as follows: (note that these are taken directly from the State guidance.)

- Do you have any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, muscle pain or body aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose not associated with diagnosed allergy, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea?
- Have you been exposed to anyone with COVID-19? (defined as close contact with a person who has COVID-19 within the last 14 days. A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated.) Has a healthcare provider advised you to be tested for COVID-19?
- Has the student or any member of their family traveled outside Vermont to any area requiring quarantine in the last 14 days? (For a current travel restriction map, please see <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>)
- What is the student's current temperature?

If staff/students answer yes to any of these questions, or have a temperature of over 100.4, they must stay at home. If there is any question about whether or not someone should be in school, please err on the side of caution. If you have questions about a specific symptom, please consult with your healthcare provider before coming to school. If students/staff have a fever, they must be fever free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

If students/staff develop these symptoms while at school, they will be isolated, until they can be picked up. In the case of illness, we ask that parents be able to have someone pick up their children within 30 minutes.

If any students or staff test positive for COVID-19 or have primary contacts that test positive, we will consult immediately with the health department and follow their recommendations for school closure, cleaning, and contact tracing.

**We expect that Pacem students and their families will follow the current Governor's orders around health and safety precautions.** Given the nature of this disease, and the closeness of our community we depend on everyone's cooperation to keep each other safe. The current orders can be found at <https://governor.vermont.gov/document-types/executive-orders>. As of this writing, the orders recommend that Vermonters practice social distancing, engage in effective hygiene practices. People are required to wear masks in public and quarantine for 14 days if they have visited a region designated by the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. (see <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>)

In addition, because of the contagious nature of this disease, we are asking everyone to be conscious about how their actions both in and out of the community could impact us all. In particular, we ask that Pacem community members not attend large group gatherings where social distancing and mask wearing is not possible, and we ask that any students who are regularly engaging in classes and activities with groups of students outside of Pacem let us know. Families and students will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to abide by community health and safety requirements.

## **School Day Procedures**

### **September-October**

For the first two months of school, we intend to hold our classes entirely outside. (Exceptions may be made for extreme weather events, or other considerations. Students and parents will be notified in advance, if possible.)

#### General layout:

There will be three outdoor classroom areas all located on the upper field where our meeting circle is located. There will be two rented heavy duty tents (20 x 20 ft) with removable sides, one on each end of the field. Our third classroom space will be the meeting circle which will be covered by a tarp. Our classes will be as published in our schedule (<https://pacemschool.org/academics/weekly-schedule/>). We will have up to three classes running concurrently: a 10 to 12-year-old class, a 12 to 15-year-old class, and a 14 to 16-year-old class. In addition, we will have classes for 8-10 year-olds on Thursdays, but they will not interact with the rest of the community. The assignment of classroom space will depend on enrollment. In the case of heavy rain, the class under the tarp may need to move into another tent, which will be physically divided) Each classroom space will be equipped with a portable whiteboard, a portable hand-washing station, and hand sanitizer. Students will each be issued

a clipboard to write on (if they wish) and pads to sit on. Students are encouraged to bring their own folding camp chairs (crazy-creek type or metal frame type.) We will have limited secure storage space, so students will need to bring their own items from home every day.

We will rent one or two porta-potties which will be located in the parking lot next to the path that goes down to the field. In addition, we will run power and internet from the VCFA buildings that are closest to the field for the use of our students.

Dropoff Procedures and Health screening: Dropoff time in the morning will be between 8:15 and 8:30. (This time has been lengthened to allow for screening time.) We are asking parents to follow these drop-off procedures while we are outside: (note that this is a different location from our indoor space.)

1. Enter the VCFA Campus through the parking lot next to Alumni Hall on College Street. (See attached map, and follow the signs). Drive through the parking lot and turn right behind the buildings. Drive straight behind the buildings so the signed drop-off location.
2. When you have reached the drop-off location, please wait with your child in the car until it is your student's turn to be screened.
3. The student will walk to the health screening station at the top of the path to our outdoor space; driver should stay in the car.
4. Once the student has passed the screening, the health screener will make eye-contact with the driver allowing them to leave.
5. If a student does not pass the health screening, they will need to return to their car.
6. If a student is traveling by themselves to school, parent/guardian is asked to be certain their child is not symptomatic prior to leaving the house. The student will be screened in their turn prior to entering school.
7. **Students may not enter school if they have not been screened!**

Students who do not have a first block class may also arrive at school and be screened between 10 and 10:05 and between 1:25 and 1:30. Except under extenuating circumstances, students will not be able to arrive at school at other times of day. Students may not leave school during the day and expect to return unless they are doing so for a class or a pre-arranged appointment (for example, a doctor's appointment.)

Following the health screening, students and staff are required to wash their hands prior to entering the classroom space.

Classrooms: In the classroom tent area, students and teachers will sit at least 6 feet apart, and wear cloth masks. If students are working individually and can sit at least 10 feet away from each other, they may temporarily take off their masks. In the case of heavy rain, if the sides of the tents are rolled down and all students are under the tent, masks must be worn, and 6 ft distance must be maintained if at all possible. Students will need to sanitize their hands before

and after touching their masks. Teachers will continue to take daily attendance in their classes to facilitate contact tracing, if necessary.

Breaks: Morning breaks and lunches will all be outside. Activities will be organized so that students are 6 feet apart. Morning meeting will take place in the meeting circle with all participants 6 feet apart. All morning meeting participants will be required to wear cloth face masks. If the weather is poor, classes may have separate morning break activities in their designated areas.

We will have limited storage capacity in our outdoor classroom area. Students will need to bring the following items with them each day:

Required items: Please put your name on everything!

- Food for morning snack and lunch (that does not require refrigeration or reheating)
- All necessary eating utensils
- Full water bottle (we do not have ready access to potable water)
- Clean cloth mask (we recommend having a back-up as well and also having an elastic loop on it so it can hang around the neck when not in use. Masks should be comfortable enough that they can be worn for long periods of time. Masks should be made of multiple layers of fabric that light is not visible through and should fit securely around the bridge of the nose and the chin.) Disposable masks are also acceptable but should not be re-used.
- Personal container of hand-sanitizer. (Each student will be given one bottle with a clip. We recommend attaching it to your school bag so you always have it.)
- All school supplies for the day (paper, pens, binders, notebooks, personal scissors, ruler, color pencils and markers, rulers, and books as required for classes. We will not have access to our "supply closet" and cannot share pens and pencils as easily as we have in the past.)
- Clipboard (Every student will be given one on the first day, and they should come back as we will not have tables to write on. If you prefer to provide your own, that's fine as well. Ours are not new.)
- For grades 7 to 12: Fully charged laptop computers (We will have some access to power, but all devices should start the day charged. We have a limited number of laptops that students can borrow during the school day. If you need one of these, please let us know, and we will apportion them as fairly as possible... see the survey!) Younger children are welcome to bring devices if it makes it easier for them to write, but they are not required.
- Clothing that will be comfortable for the day according to the weather forecast! Please dress warmly and be prepared for changing weather. In particular, the grass is often wet in the morning, so you may want to have waterproof boots.
- Other items as needed for individual classes.

Strongly recommended items:

- camp chairs. These need to be lightweight as we don't have the capacity to store them, and they must go back and forth with the students each day. (either "crazy

creek" style or "butterfly" style. I have ordered a few crazy creek chairs that can be purchased from me at cost.)

- Thermos (both for hot drinks and hot food.... they come in many shapes and sizes.) As it gets cooler, it will be nice to have hot food and drinks

Extreme weather: In the case of extreme weather, classes will move inside. If this occurs, we will follow our indoor protocols as described below, and notify parents as soon as possible. Students may not yet have an assigned work space. If that is the case, students will sit at least 6 feet apart using their outdoor chairs. Note that our classrooms are more than big enough to accommodate this spacing. It is also possible if extreme weather is predicted, that we will choose to hold school virtually on a given day.

Contacting the school: We will mostly not have staff in the office, we will however, be checking the voicemail throughout the day. If you need to reach your child, please feel free to leave a message on the school voicemail, and we will make every effort to get it to them. In case of emergency, if you need to reach someone immediately, you may send a text message to the staff member on duty. (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, text Lexi at 802-279-3336; Thursday morning, text Bonnie at 802-865-4259, Thursday afternoon, text Paul at 802-272-5062)

## **November - April**

Indoor Procedures: (Note that these are draft procedures and may change depending on the situation on the ground in November and the experience of our students, faculty, and families at the beginning of the year)

After November 1 (or later if we have a warm November) we will move our classes indoors. We will have different protocols for indoor classes. Our expectation is that students and staff will maintain a 6 foot distance from each other and wear masks at all times when indoors.

Entry and health screening: Students will enter the building through the glass doors off the parking lot. The health screening station will be at the entryway to the main Pacem hallway. Health screening will follow the same protocols as listed above. Socially distant spots for waiting will be marked on the floor. After clearing the health screening, students will individually leave their coats and boots in the hallway and proceed directly to their classroom. No student possessions other than outdoor clothing should be stored in the hallway. The number of students in the hallway at any time will be kept to a maximum of 10. Students will wash their hands before entering the classroom. Depending on their classroom location, they will either use one of the sinks in the kitchen or bathrooms, or a portable handwashing station outside the classroom door.

Classrooms: Each age group (8-10 year olds; 10-12 year olds; 12-15 year olds; 14-18 year olds) will be permanently assigned to a single classroom. Every student will have a permanently assigned desk or table in their designated room. All desks/tables will be arranged so that all students who in the room at the same time can sit at least 6 feet apart. If a student has classes

with two different age groups, they will have an assigned desk/table in both classrooms. Students are expected to be at their desks during class time. Each student will have a spray bottle of disinfectant that they can use to sanitize their own space. If a student wishes to be at Pacem at a time when they do not have a class, they may, with the permission of the teacher in charge, sit at their assigned desk in a classroom as long as they do not disrupt whatever class is in session, and they are able to stay 6 feet from any other student. Each student will be issued a box at their desk to hold their personal items. They may leave anything they like in their boxes, but desk surfaces will need to be clear at the end of the day for cleaning. Each classroom will have a teacher desk in it. Teachers will not be able to leave their personal items on the desk, and will need to sanitize it at the beginning and end of each class.

Breaks and lunch: If at all possible breaks and lunches will be outside following our outdoor protocols. If lunch needs to be inside, students will eat at their own desks.

Dismissal: Classes will be dismissed in a staggered fashion to minimize the number of students in the hallway at any one time. This will be coordinated by the teachers at the end of the day. All students will exit the building in the same direction (towards the parking lot).

### **Cohort and class size**

All classes will be kept to no more than 8 students. There will be some mixing between classes, however the maximum number of students enrolled in our regular program will be 25.

Our new program for 8 to 10-year olds will be kept entirely separate from our older students, and will have a maximum program size of 15.

### **Distance learning options**

Students may choose to continue with distance learning instead of attending in person classes. While we are outside, it may not be possible for students to engage in class activities synchronously (during class time), however, teachers will make class materials available to students through Google Classroom so that they can continue to complete class activities while at home. (We are hoping that classes will make use of the outdoor environment and will not necessarily be in the classroom area and accessible to wifi at all times.)

When classes are held inside, the goal is for students to access classroom activities in real time through Google Meet if they are not in the classroom. If a teacher determines that this does not work for their class, alternate arrangements will be made.

Students, with parental consent, are asked to inform their teachers a week ahead of time if they are planning to use the distance learning option and are asked to continue distance learning for at least two weeks. Exceptions to this will be made if a student suddenly needs to switch to distance learning because of symptoms of illness or quarantine requirements. We will work with each student on an individual basis to accommodate their needs around in person vs distance learning options.

**Facilities considerations:****Cleaning:**

When we are outside, the porta-potties will be sanitized periodically throughout the day. They will be locked when we are not in session to limit outside people using them. Other items will belong personally to students and teachers and will be the responsibility of the owners.

When we are inside, teachers will be responsible for sanitizing high touch areas in their rooms (door handles for example) and their own workspace at the beginning and end of each class. Bathrooms will be sanitized periodically throughout the day, and bathroom fans will remain on for the entire school day. The entire school will be cleaned as required.

Bathrooms and porta potties will be stocked with sanitizing spray. All members of the community will be asked to sanitize high touch bathroom surfaces (door knobs, etc.) when they are done.

Ventilation: ventilation that will bring outside air into the classrooms will be installed.

**Faculty Illness**

Faculty will be required to meet the same health guidelines as their students. In light of this, we expect that there will be many more days when faculty are not able to be at school. In addition, because we need to limit the number of outside individuals who are interacting with our students, we will have a limited capacity to get substitutes. We will do the best we can to have faculty provide class material that students can complete and will combine classes as necessary to provide supervision. Please understand, however, that some disruption to our schedule is inevitable. In the event of faculty illness, it may be necessary to move some classes to distance learning temporarily.

**Shift to Virtual Learning**

If it becomes recommended by the state Department of Health or Department of Education to close for in person instruction, we will teach all of our classes remotely through Google Classroom. Because all of our classes will continue to be taught in this eventuality, we will not be able to offer any tuition refunds beyond what is already in our tuition refund policy.

In addition, during our outdoor learning period, if there is very bad weather in the forecast (a hurricane for example) we may choose to preemptively hold classes online for the day. We also might need to do this in the case of widespread faculty illness. This will be announced through our automated call service in a manner akin to a snow-day.

*We recognize that these are extraordinary circumstances for all of us. This will be a different school year from any that we have ever experienced! We ask for patience and flexibility from everyone!*



**Pacem School**

*Celebrating Curiosity - Igniting Passions*

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## **Pacem School Student and Family Mission and Community Guidelines and COVID-19 contract**

In keeping with our mission, the personal and emotional safety of every member of our community is always of utmost importance. On account of this, we ask every year that students read and understand our mission and community guidelines as follows:

### **Our mission is**

- to provide a vibrant and supportive educational community where all students are known and valued and learn the tools to solve problems peacefully and collaboratively.
- to guide and support students to be the primary architects of their own educations and to pursue their individual intellectual and creative passions.
- to offer small academically challenging classes, a flexible stimulating curriculum, and inspired teachers who celebrate curiosity and creativity and challenge all students to reach their fullest potential.
- to help children and teens grow into caring, responsible, and confident young adults who can make a difference in their communities and have the skills and awareness needed to create a more cooperative, just, and sustainable world.

### **Community Guidelines:**

It is an essential part of our community that all members are welcomed and accepted for who they are. Sometimes students have come to Pacem from challenging situations where they have not felt welcomed, and it is very important to us that everyone feel safe and included. In addition, woven into the Pacem mission is the expectation that students are responsible and respectful individuals. In order for our community to support the learning and development of every individual I agree to

**Be responsible for myself,**

**Be respectful of all members of the community, and**

**Be respectful of our space and our environment.**



# COVID-19 Contract

Because of the current pandemic, it is even more important that we take care of each other. The health of every member of the community is dependent on the behavior of all of us, both in and out of school. Therefore, we are asking students and families to agree to follow the guidelines below for the school year 2020-2021.

## All students and faculty will agree at school to:

Abide by school social distancing and mask guidelines as laid out in the Pacem COVID-19 plan;

Wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer before every class, before and after eating, after using the bathroom, before and after touching a face-mask, and other times as appropriate;

Keep clothing and belongings clean and sanitized and not sharing items, particularly food, water bottles, and eating utensils;

Follow all virus-related directions given by school officials or displayed on school signage.

## Furthermore, all students and faculty must agree to:

Stay at home when any symptoms of COVID-19 are present unless you have a previously diagnosed condition (see below). These include: cough, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose not associated with diagnosed allergy, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, fever of over 100.4 degrees F;

Check with a health care provider before coming to school if you have allergies or another diagnosed chronic condition with any of the above symptoms;

NOT take fever-reducing medication to mask fever symptoms prior to coming to school;

Stay at home if exposed to anyone who has tested positive for or presumed positive for COVID-19;

Stay at home if a medical professional advises you to get tested for COVID-19, until the test results have come back negative and a health professional advises you that you no longer need to self-isolate or quarantine.

Not attend large group gatherings if social distancing measures are not being followed (6-foot distancing and mask wearing);

Disclose any other group activities (classes, sports teams, homeschool groups, etc) that you are regularly attending (see the end of this contract) and notify the school immediately if a case of COVID-19 is reported in any of those settings and stay home until contact tracing is complete.

Promptly report any known or potential exposures to COVID-19 to the school and participate fully and honestly in contact tracing to determine whom I may have potentially exposed.

Parents and guardians of students agree to:

Pay attention to any symptoms described above, and not knowingly send their child to school sick.

Support their children in making good decisions about staying away from non-socially distanced environments.

All Pacem community members (faculty, students, parents, guardians) agree to:

Self-quarantine according to current state guidelines if traveling out of state.

I have read the above guidelines and agree to abide by them in order to protect the health of everyone in this community. In addition, I have read and understood the Pacem COVID-19 plan. I understand that failure to do so may result in my having to leave the Pacem community.

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Student or faculty signature

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parent signature for students

Group activities (classes, teams, homeschool groups, etc) that I plan to regularly participate in: