



Frequently Asked Questions

Is Academe of the Oaks opening for Fall 2020?

Academe of the Oaks started off the school year with online instruction. There will be limited opportunities for small group engagement, following physical distancing and other recommendations. More information about these small group engagements is forthcoming.

When will Academe of the Oaks return to on campus instruction and what criteria will it use to determine when the time is right for the students to return?

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is our top priority. While Academe monitors other school closings including the Metro Atlanta Public School District and other independent schools, Academe makes decisions independently based on the school's unique needs and situation, as well as guidance from external agencies. Academe of the Oaks is monitoring the current outbreak and will develop guidelines for return to on campus instruction based on input from all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, parents and students. More information about the school community engagement process is forthcoming.

When students are on campus, what are the basic prevention measures that Academe is requiring?

Academe is implementing a variety of prevention measures for on-campus activities, including small group sessions and on campus learning. For example, Academe will require the use of masks and physical distancing measures of 6 feet or more. Academe has installed additional hand washing stations and has hand sanitizer available throughout the school. When students return to on campus learning, classes will be held in cohorts, meaning that Academe will identify small groups and keep them together throughout the school day. The cohorts will rotate their time between on campus learning and online learning. Academe is also scheduling staggered arrival and drop-off times and locations by cohort to limit contact between cohorts. Academe will use close off the student lounge and will utilize outdoor classrooms in addition. Finally, Academe will increase cleaning of "high touch" areas including classrooms, bathrooms and other areas. More guidelines are forthcoming.

How will families be notified of any changes?

Academe will continue to use a variety of methods to notify families of any changes to current policy, including returning to on campus instruction, small group meetings and other changes. Academe uses Renweb, email, text notifications and telephone calls to notify families of changes.

Will we hear if someone is sick? How will we know? What will be the procedures after someone is sick?

It is important to understand that Academe cannot share the name(s) of any individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in order to protect their privacy. However, if a faculty, staff member or student, or family member of faculty, staff or a student tests positive for COVID-19, we will notify the Academe community that a case has been identified and will reach out individually to families who may have been exposed to let them know that there is a case and that the child or family may have been exposed. Academe will work closely with the Health Department to ensure proper contact tracing and follow up occurs. If a case is identified Academe will share follow up steps, such as testing and self-isolation with those who were potentially in contact with the identified case.

What about school events, gatherings, and trips?

We will make decisions about holding or canceling events based on the updated information from health officials. Please watch for messages from Academe with important updates. Any changes will also be noted on our school calendar.

What happens if a teacher gets sick? How will that affect instruction?

A substitute teacher will have all the lesson plans in case a teacher is sick. There will be no interruption in instruction for the students.

Will Academe still participate in the exchange program this year?

No. Due to ongoing, worldwide spread of COVID-19 Academe and its partner Waldorf/Steiner schools are pausing the foreign exchange program this year. Academe hopes to resume the exchange program in 2021-2022 if possible.

How will after school clubs and sports happen this year?

Our clubs are happening online.

Will there still be a pass/fail option? How will grades/workload change from a regular school year, if at all?

The quality of Academe's education will not change. There is no universal pass/fail option. Students who experience hardship or illness may meet with their advisor and the Leadership Group to form a plan of support.

Will school hours change in any way?

Academe has adjusted the schedule for online learning. School begins at 9:00 am and electives are no longer mandatory. Study Hall is self-directed, instead of online and students are encouraged to study offline during those periods. Academe will change the schedule once students return to on campus instruction.

Will Academe still be able to administer SAT/ACT/PSAT and AP tests? How will that work?

If the current health standards allow hybrid learning, we can administer the tests on campus. If we are still utilizing online learning due to health and safety concerns, we cannot administer the tests on campus.

What additional steps is the school taking at this time?

Academe is taking extra care with the cleaning and disinfection processes, with particular attention to common surfaces. Additional cleaning of common surfaces by staff is happening at regular intervals throughout the school day. The evening cleaning crew has implemented a disinfectant protocol in addition to the regular cleaning. All faculty and staff are required to maintain appropriate handwashing and sanitizing protocols upon entering the building and throughout the day. In addition, we have developed a Screening app which everyone who wants to be on campus must be cleared to come to campus everyday through a series of Covid-19 related questions.

Who should I contact at Academe for COVID-19 questions and concerns?

Please contact Head of School, Eva Handschin for questions and concerns.

What should I do if my child cannot wear a mask/will not wear a mask?

Academe provides the option of online learning regardless of whether or not a child or family member is sick. If your child cannot or will not use a mask, he/she/they can join school online. For some families, especially those with family members in a high risk category for COVID-19, online learning is the preferred method for participating in school during this pandemic, and live streaming of all classes will be offered.

What can a parent do to prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19?

Because the situation is very dynamic, we encourage you to stay up to date with the latest information and recommendations from health officials (see list of Health Organizations in the References). We see this as a community wide effort and if we follow the guidelines we can reduce the risks of an outbreak, keeping everyone safe.

What can families, students, and school personnel do to keep from getting sick and spreading COVID-19?

The CDC recommends the following actions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear a Mask
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water when your hands are visibly dirty.
- Practice Social/Physical distancing
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Stay home when you are sick (and check in with the administration before returning to school).**

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid crowds.

Resources

Health Organizations

- [World Health Organization](#) (WHO): This website has general information on the [novel coronaviruses](#), a [video](#), and an [infographic](#) about preventing the spread of viruses.
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC): This website covers [symptoms and diagnosis](#), [transmission](#), [presentation in children](#), and [prevention and treatment](#). It also has [travel updates](#). They also published a Toolkit for Schools [here](#).
- [Johns Hopkins Interactive and Updating Outbreak Map](#)
- [U.S. State Department](#)
- Georgia Department of Health COVID-19 Information Page is found [here](#).
- American Academy of Pediatrics Resources
 - [How to Talk to Children About Difficult News](#)
 - [Explaining the News to Our Kids](#)
 - [How to Talk to Kids About the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)
 - [How to Talk to Kids About Coronavirus](#)

Additional Resources

- [Southern Association of Independent Schools](#) (SAIS)

We continue to be in close communication with government agencies as well as other independent schools and closely monitor the situation.