

# Together Again

Reopening Gordon's campus  
August 2020



**GORDON SCHOOL**



## Dear Gordon Community,

To say this has been an intense summer would be quite the understatement. It would make sense to attribute this to the task of planning for reopening, but this summer, this year, in fact, has been about so much more. In my quarter century working in and leading schools, I don't know that I can recall a time where the stakes felt as high as they do today. How can families make wise decisions in the midst of a frightening pandemic? How will our children experience the 2020 election? How will this country confront its past and answer the calls for racial justice?

The questions are relentless. They pop up in Zoom calls with the Department of Health, in meetings with Gordon parents, in text exchanges with colleagues and mentors, in check-ins with Gordon's leadership.

The key to answering all of these questions seems to circle back to one theme: the tension between individual and collective needs in a community.

This country places a high value on individual freedoms, expression, opinions, identities and more, and independent schools take this to an entirely different level. This is not a bad thing at all. Schools should be places where all students learn to find their voices, and where they can expect that they are respected and celebrated in the fullness of who they are. However, I worry that we are in a moment where many folks are seeing themselves as the whole, rather than a piece of the whole.

In the context of the pandemic and the fight for racial justice, our lives literally depend on us understanding the powerful relationship between the individual and the collective, between "me and we." This is why we say "all lives can't matter until Black lives matter." Transcending our present circumstances will require us to embody the spirit of the South African concept of ubuntu: "I am because you are."

My goal this year is to continue to foster a culture where we recognize, as former President Barack Obama said in 2018, "that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us."

I name this goal as a reminder of how important it is, in times of crisis, to lean into our strengths and trust that the values and behaviors that have brought us this far will carry us through this unprecedented moment as well.

Former First Lady Michelle Obama has famously shared, "the Presidency doesn't change who you are, it reveals who you are." (I am writing this letter during the Democratic National Convention, so forgive me if I have Obamas on the brain right now.) I think her words hold an important lesson for the Gordon community. While we will have to learn new practices, new protocols, and new ways of being together, this upcoming school year will not change who we are at our core; it will only amplify it. In those moments when I allow myself to give into despair, this knowledge—the knowledge of who Gordon is at its core—brings me deep comfort and abundant hope.

While we will have to learn new practices, new protocols, and new ways of being together, this upcoming school year will not change who we are at our core; it will only amplify it.



The last weeks of summer will be full of lists and details, reunions and reorientations. Before you dive in, I urge you to take a deep breath and remind yourself why you chose Gordon for your family. Seriously. Close your eyes, take a deep breath and remember why you said yes to Gordon School.

We all have different stories for how we found our way here. I'm willing to bet there are some similar themes: care, community, challenge, connection, belonging, joy, and trust are a few that come to mind for me. When things get tough this year, as they inevitably will, our ability to bring ourselves back to our center, our core, will make all the difference in Gordon coming out of the other end of this crisis stronger than ever.

As you are well aware, we are waiting to hear from our Governor next week about whether we will be able to open our doors for in-person learning. I sincerely hope that we will receive good news. I am so proud of our Leadership and Building and Grounds teams as well as Nurse Sandy, Jenny Alario, and Geoff Griffin for essentially giving up their summer vacations to ensure a safe and joyful reopening. I'm thankful for our incredible faculty and staff who have also been hard at work throughout these summer months preparing for your arrival. And I am deeply grateful for the support and encouragement we have received from our Board of Trustees and from all of our families.

I cannot wait for us to be together again.

Take good care,

*Nomi*

We all have different stories for how we found our way here. I'm willing to bet there are some similar themes: care, community, challenge, connection, belonging, joy, and trust are a few that come to mind for me.



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This pdf draws on information posted during the summer of 2020 on Gordon's website. That information continues to be updated and expanded, at [www.gordonschool.org/reopening](http://www.gordonschool.org/reopening)

# Guiding principles

## A safe and healthy community

Gordon's school day is demanding. For any student to engage fully and completely, they need to know their school is taking good care of them: their minds, their bodies and their hearts.

## Joyful, meaningful, engaging academics

Joyful learning is at the center of Gordon's mission and an indispensable strategy for creating lifelong learners and compassionate leaders. Gordon's faculty are ready to reconnect with students in an all-day, full-week schedule designed to facilitate mastery of new content and skills.

## On-campus learning

A Gordon education is a progressive, hands-on education, where students learn from one another as they forge a classroom community. The best place for this work is Gordon's twelve-acre campus.

## Responsiveness and adaptability

In the classroom, on the playground, and in the boardroom, Gordon has prided itself on its ability to recognize shifting circumstances and to respond to new challenges. By approaching this pandemic with a growth mindset, the Gordon community has discovered a new level of resilience and resourcefulness.

## Social and emotional wellness

Gordon asks that students bring their full, authentic selves into the classroom. In return, the school provides students with the tools they need to care for themselves and one another. Self-care is a skill, and Gordon prioritizes wellness by embedding it in the classroom curriculum.

## Equity, access and transparency

A successful, healthy reopening of campus will require trust, collaboration and open communication, between everyone in the community. For this work, Gordon will be drawing on skills and relationships forged over the course of the school's history as a racially diverse community that seeks to hear, and be courageously responsive to, every voice.



# Gordon plans to reopen campus for full-day, in-person classes, Monday to Friday for every grade in the fall of 2020.

Gordon has satisfied all of the State of Rhode Island's requirements for reopening, and Gordon's plans are only contingent on factors that are beyond the school's control.

While the routines will have changed since students left campus this past March, the priorities should feel quite familiar: the health and social-emotional wellness of the community, a substantive and high-quality educational program, and the long-term financial viability of the school.

Students will enjoy after school care, outdoor learning, in-person connection with teachers and peers, arts and physical education as well as core academics, a rich multicultural curriculum, access to Gordon's world-class library, and all the other essentials of the Gordon experience. Parents will continue to connect with one another and with Gordon's professionals in a partnership that will keep students learning while keeping families healthy and safe. Some of these experiences will be on campus, some will happen virtually. All of them will be thoughtfully executed and authentically Gordon.

The modifications needed to return to campus safely reflect public health and government guidelines, scientific data and research, and guidance from Gordon's consulting physician and other experts in the field.

Since this crisis began in March, Gordon's leadership has been drawing on guidance from countless research articles and webinars, from the school's consulting physician, from public and independent schools as well as colleges and universities across the country, and from local and national institutions like the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Rhode Island Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

As this pandemic has evolved, and as science has learned more about how this virus is spread, guidelines and recommendations have changed quickly. Sometimes, different sources contradict each other. In these situations, Gordon will look first to the Rhode Island Department of Education and the Rhode Island Department of Health for guidance. Those agencies have been consistently delivering coordinated, science-based leadership that is grounded in a deep understanding of the particular conditions in Rhode Island.



# Deciding when to reopen

The decision to reopen campus is based in facts and science, and done in consultation with the State of Rhode Island and the Department of Health.

Right now, there are five metrics the state is using to determine whether a school is ready to welcome children safely back on campus. **Gordon must achieve all five of these metrics and standards to safely open campus.**

Some of the metrics measure factors Gordon can control. Some measure factors that are beyond our control.

## What is in Gordon's control:

### Supply readiness

Does the school have adequate cleaning supplies, PPE and classroom materials?



### Operational readiness

Does the school have a plan that allows students and faculty to safely learn in our building? Has the school made changes to its routines to prioritize safety during this pandemic?



## What isn't in Gordon's control:

### Statewide readiness

Does the data allow Rhode Island to be in Phase 3 or higher?



### Municipal readiness

Do the level of cases at the city level allow Gordon to safely reopen? Gordon has a diverse community with people coming from many cities and towns, so the answer is more complex, but the state has determined that Gordon meets this standard.



### Testing readiness

Can all symptomatic Gordon staff and students get test results within forty-eight to seventy-two hours?



As of late August, the Governor had determined that there was not enough fast, accurate testing available at that time for schools to safely re-open.

Based on the Governor's statements regarding the importance of building the state's testing capacity and Gordon's conversations with the Rhode Island Departments of Health and Education, the school has been working under the assumption that if the state does not meet the testing benchmark, the Governor will not allow schools—neither public nor independent—to open.

The state is making progress on this open question, and the Governor has promised to reevaluate Rhode Island's testing readiness and share an updated assessment the week of August 31st. Gordon expects an answer no later than September 4th.



# Taking care of our community

In order for students to learn and feel successful, for faculty to teach and connect effectively, and for caregivers to best support their children, Gordon knows that a school must focus on the social and emotional needs of their community. Gordon's plan includes leaning into and amplifying the structures and systems already in place to address those needs, as well as creating innovative new ones.

## Being together is good for children

Gordon's approach to the new school year aims to keep students as safe as possible while allowing them to resume the in-person, on-campus experience that is essential to a Gordon education.

The American Academy of Pediatrics addresses this balance when it writes: *Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.*

At the beginning of the summer of 2020, the American Academy of Pediatrics was already strongly advocating that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school.

This advice continued to be echoed by a variety of authorities over the course of the summer, and when Dr. Anthony Fauci and Governor Raimondo addressed Rhode Islanders in August, he outlined the negative health effects of school closings, and assured the public that the government's goal should be, "to the best of our ability, to get the children back to school."



## Social emotional wellness

Social and emotional work happens at all grade levels on a daily basis, during morning meeting, closing circle, Open Circle, advisory, and small-group virtual gatherings.

This work is thoughtful and intentional; every teacher will actively create spaces for students to process, share, question, and build their resilience and their self-advocacy skills. Gordon teachers have the additional resource of the school psychologist, who will continue to be available to offer support and consultation as needed.

All faculty and staff will complete an August training with Gordon's school psychologist on how to talk with and support children during and after the pandemic. Gordon's Director of Health and Wellness will also provide ongoing resources and support throughout the year to guide faculty in helping students build self-awareness, self-management, and decision-making skills that are vital to navigating these times.

## Home and school partnership

Gordon families have always relied on each other to be careful, informed and considerate. This pandemic takes this to a new level, but it is not asking anyone to do anything fundamentally new. In the end, families and faculty will need to take care of one another, just as they always have.

Families must stay up-to-date on Rhode Island health guidelines, and follow them outside of school as well as on campus. It will be impractical for Gordon to provide each family with a running list of guidelines and expectations for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Every adult in the school community needs to take responsibility for their family's health in the interest of keeping everyone at Gordon safe.

This document is the current plan for beginning the school year.

Families all need to allow for changes to the specifics between now and the start of school, and circumstances will inevitably shift as the school year progresses. But families can remain confident that the school's mission and priorities will remain the same, approached with the care and transparency that Gordon brings to every new challenge.

### Supporting caregivers

Beginning this fall, the popular Ages and Stages program will meet monthly in every grade level. Ages and Stages brings parents in each grade together with Judith Gnys, our school psychologist, and the division directors to focus on the developmental needs of children. The agenda will also include the unique challenges students and families may be facing with these uncertain times, as it did this spring. Judith Gnys is also available via Zoom for individual consultation. Please reach out at [jgnys@gordonschool.org](mailto:jgnys@gordonschool.org) to arrange a time to connect.

### Connecting families

Families can look forward to a variety of activities starting this fall, including GCA events, parent affinity groups, coffees, and grade level Zoom calls. Some will be more structured, others more social; all will offer connection and support for families and caregivers.

Gordon's series of parent dialogues continues this fall, more interactive and participatory than ever. As Gordon continues to cultivate an antiracist community, we look forward to providing opportunities to evolve our understanding, as well as our language, to best represent our core values and mission. For this year, we will focus our parent dialogues around the topic of what it means to be antiracist.



### What can parents and faculty do now to support the reopening of campus, and help the campus remain open this fall?

1. Download the State of Rhode Island's Crush COVID app, and learn how the app can be used to support contact tracing
2. Model cheerful compliance with state guidelines for travel, social distancing, large gatherings, and behavior in public places
3. Parents should help their child find a mask they like, and have them practice wearing it at home as well as in public
4. Practice and follow proper hand hygiene practices and coughing and sneezing etiquette
5. Commit to staying at home and keeping children home when someone in the household is sick
6. Parents should go to [www.gordonschool.org/parentlogin](http://www.gordonschool.org/parentlogin) and make sure that the school has a complete and current list of their contact information



# A campus of houses and neighborhoods

Research from the Centers for Disease Control, the Rhode Island Department of Education, and the American Academy of Pediatrics have made it clear that physical distancing is an effective way to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in a school.

This is especially true in a facility like Gordon's where careful planning can limit the number of students and adults a child is exposed to over the course of the school week.

To that end, Gordon has developed a houses and neighborhoods model to organize how students and adults will use the campus and connect with each other while limiting the risk of spreading the virus.



This model will:

- cover the full school day and before and after school care
- allow students to learn alongside each other while maintaining basic physical distancing
- provide students ample access to outdoor spaces
- limit the number of students and adults each child will come into contact with each day
- limit the rooms, doorways, bathrooms, hallways and other physical spaces individual students will come into contact with over the course of the day and the school year
- allow small groups of students to quarantine in the event of infection without requiring the entire campus to shift to the Online Learning Community



## Houses

Each grade has been separated into houses of no more than eighteen students. Each house's roster of students will remain stable through the year, limiting their exposure to other students in the school.

Each house will have their own dedicated:

- classroom where instruction will take place for most of the day
- door to the outdoors, which will serve as students' main entrance and exit
- bathrooms
- outdoor spaces for academic classes, recess, and breaks

Within each house, individuals will wear masks and maintain distance from one another to minimize transmission risk. Closer collaboration between students within a house, or between teachers and students may happen if plexiglass or acrylic partitions are used in addition to masks. Teachers may also use Zoom for collaboration with individual students.

Houses within a grade will not mix for classes, but they will be able to do activities together. Each house will need to remain fourteen feet apart. These activities can be organized in many spaces outdoors; the indoor spaces that can accommodate an entire grade are the field house, the dining hall and the theater. Opportunities for students to connect across grades and in affinity and interest groups are also essential. Gordon is exploring ways to bring students in different grades together through the use of Zoom and other technologies.

Each house will have an interdisciplinary teaching team of between three and six adults. Dedicated staff will also be assigned to each house for after school care. This strategy limits the number of adults a child is exposed to during the school day.

There will be two houses per grade level in Nursery to fifth grade, with the exception of one house for Young Kindergarten. Sixth, seventh and eighth grade will have three houses each. Gordon has the capacity to increase the number of houses per grade if the state asks schools to further decrease classroom density.

House lists, with the full list of each grade's interdisciplinary team, were published on August 22nd and shared via email and postal mail. If you did not receive a house list for your child, please email [ggriffin@gordonschool.org](mailto:ggriffin@gordonschool.org). Parents should make sure their contact information is up to date by logging in at [www.gordonschool.org/parentlogin](http://www.gordonschool.org/parentlogin)



# Neighborhoods

Each grade's daily activities will be organized around a specific set of spaces called a neighborhood. This map shows indoor spaces that belong to each grade's neighborhood. Most spaces in a neighborhood will be specific to a house and will be identified by the house color. The colors on the map below are for presentation only and do not correspond to the designated house colors, which were sent as part of the house assignments in the August 22nd mailing.

A neighborhood includes some shared spaces:

- Community spaces are large indoor spaces where it is possible to have full grades together for meetings or activities. Houses would remain fourteen feet apart.
- Flexible classrooms provide the opportunity for houses to have an indoor class outside of their dedicated classroom (e.g., having visual arts in one of the art studios).

All shared spaces will be cleaned and sanitized between use by different houses.

Students will go outdoors to travel across the campus. When their house needs to leave their classroom, they will go outside and travel on the one-way "Gator Path" to the room they need to enter.

Each house will have an assigned bathroom. Students will only use these bathrooms. This means if they travel away from their bathrooms, they'll use their bathrooms before or after they return. Adults may use the bathrooms designated for their house or the designated adult bathrooms on campus. Any multi-stall bathrooms will have a maximum occupancy of two people at a time.

A number of spaces are set aside for faculty and staff use. Every grade will have a space set aside for faculty planning and collaboration, and teachers will have their own work stations that are appropriately distanced.



# Academic program

## Academics on campus

Across all grades, students' daily experience will be, as always, lively, thoughtful, joyful and challenging in age-appropriate ways, and outdoors spaces will be utilized every day.

Each grade will have an interdisciplinary teaching team of between three and six adults. The core academic program will be taught by homeroom teachers in Early Childhood and Lower School and subject-specific teachers in Middle School.

Each grade's science, Spanish, physical education, library, health and wellness, and visual and performing arts curriculum will be taught by specialists, in-person whenever possible or, when necessary, over live video. To allow students to work in-person with a number of specialists over the course of the year, one member of each interdisciplinary teaching team will switch teams each trimester. These trimesters will be separated by two-week breaks, in December and in March, to allow each house to take adequate health and safety precautions as they prepare for the new member of the interdisciplinary teaching team.

Students will receive most, if not all, of their instruction in their homeroom and outdoor spaces, and they will have scheduled access to community spaces and flexible classrooms in the building. The majority of instruction will be able to happen in-person when the campus is open. The sample schedules included on the following pages provide a sense of the proportion of in-person to Zoom instruction.

The academic schedules for each grade have been modified to reduce the number of interactions between different groups of children and adults.

All fall field trips have been suspended, including the Middle School overnights. Some of these may be rescheduled for the spring.



Many Gordon students meet with support providers, like speech therapists, occupational therapists, and reading tutors, as part of the school day. Whenever possible, space in the school day will continue to be provided for this work to take place virtually. Work that requires in-person meetings will happen off campus, outside of school hours. Similarly, the school psychologist, Judith Gnys, will continue to be available for virtual consultation with faculty, administrators, parents, and students.

## Classrooms and materials

Classroom layouts will be simplified to allow for easy cleaning and to allow teachers and students a variety of ways to connect safely over the course of the school day. With these goals in mind, major renovation work has been done in Lower School classrooms, and all furniture in Middle School classrooms has been replaced. To help teachers maintain distancing, every classroom will include a “teacher zone,” a space reserved for adults.

Division directors, faculty, and Nurse Horton have collaborated to create simple guidelines for how materials and furniture should be laid out in the classroom to maintain the bright, cozy atmosphere Gordon cultivates in every learning space.

All students will have their own supplies just for their use. Students who need laptops or other electronics will have a device of their own to use all year. The goal is to have as few shared materials and high-touch surfaces as possible.

## Outdoor learning

Gordon’s campus was designed to help students experience all the well-documented benefits of learning, playing and connecting outdoors, and now that design is helping to keep our community safe during this pandemic. Being outdoors dramatically reduces the risk of spreading airborne contagion, and this fall, students will be outside as much as possible.

Students at every grade level can expect new outdoor learning spaces and more classes held outside (especially science). Every house - all twenty-six of them - will have a dedicated outdoor learning space for its use, and wifi is being strengthened and expanded to include the outdoors.

Time that would have been spent traveling between classrooms will be directed towards more outdoor recess.

In addition, two large all-weather tents will be installed on either end of the campus so that students can have classes outdoors with physical distancing even on rainy days.



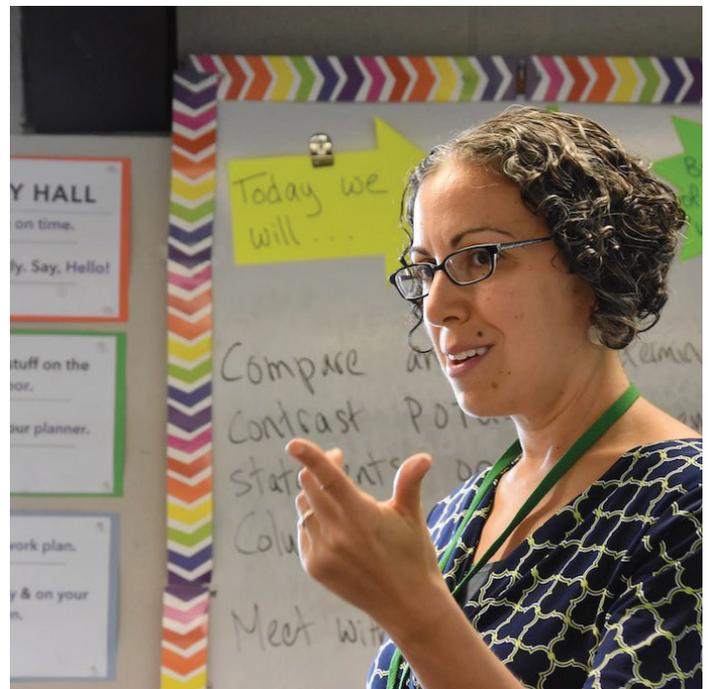
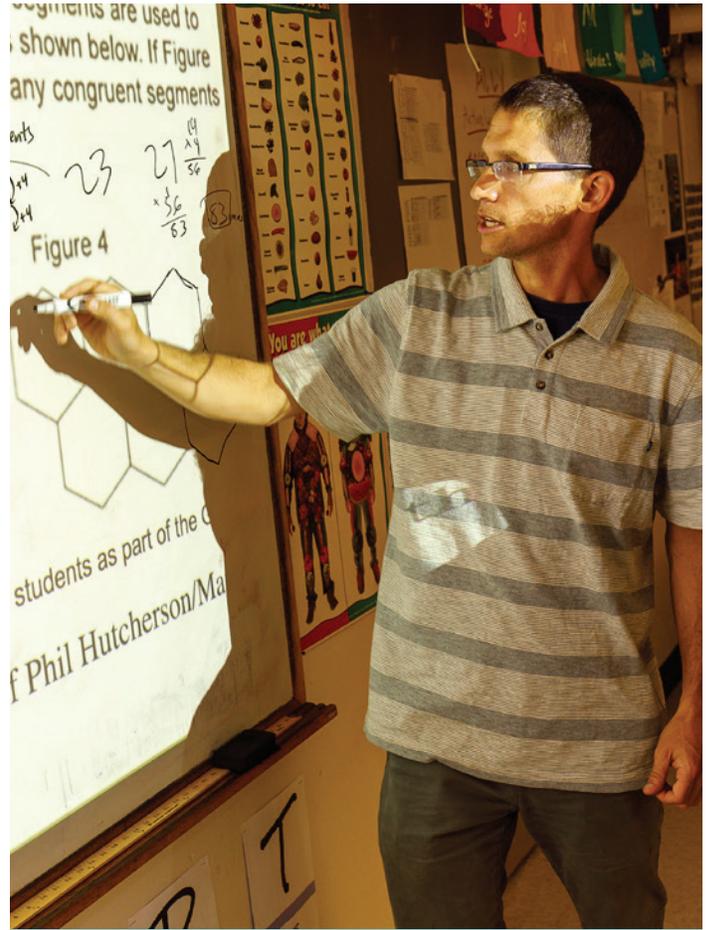
## Professional development

Faculty have been engaged in professional development throughout the summer to strengthen their on-campus and online teaching and curriculum design, deepen their understanding of social, emotional, and identity development, and further their antiracist practices. Several faculty also honed their online teaching skills while facilitating sessions during the online Summer Series.

The programs faculty have been engaged in this summer include:

- Designing for Online Learning
- Jumpstart: A Technology Course for Thoughtful Educators
- Remote Learning and the Early Years
- Teaching Young Children Virtually
- Anti Oppression Teaching and Leading in Schools
- Reimagining Education: Teaching, Learning, and Leading for a Racially Just Society
- Helping Students Manage Worry and Anxiety: Strategies for Self-Regulation and Success in the Classroom
- Executive Function in Secondary School: The SMARTS Approach
- Greg Tang Math Academy for K-8 teachers
- Designing and Implementing Problem-Based Learning
- Recent Advances in Understanding Word-Level Reading Problems: Implications for Instruction and Intervention

..and a variety of other content specific workshops focused on teaching subjects like music, art, science, Spanish, and math online.



# Early Childhood

Nursery, Preschool and Kindergarten will be divided into two houses each. Nursery will have no more than ten in a house, Preschool no more than eleven, and Kindergarten no more than sixteen.

Each grade will have an interdisciplinary teaching team: consisting of two homeroom teachers, a specialist drawn from Gordon’s science, Spanish, physical education, library, health and wellness, and visual and performing arts teams, and a teaching assistant.

These teams of four will be the only adults working in-person with these students over the course of the school day. They will cycle between the two houses to deliver instruction, care, and support for the students.

Young Kindergarten will be one house, with no more than eleven students, with one homeroom teacher, one specialist from Gordon’s faculty, and a teaching assistant. This team of three will be the only adults working in-person with these students over the course of the school day.

This team structure will remain the same when school is meeting on campus or if the Online Learning Community resumes.

The homeroom teachers will stay with the grade all year. The specialist will change three times a year, allowing each grade to have in-person instruction from three different specialists when school is meeting on campus. Other specialists will work with the class exclusively over Zoom, ensuring that students will get instruction in science, Spanish, physical education, library, and visual and performing arts over the course of the year.



## Sample on-campus schedule for Early Childhood

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00-8:30	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival
8:30-9:00	Morning Meeting Circle Together Time	Morning Meeting Circle Together Time	Morning Meeting Circle Together Time	Morning Meeting Circle Together Time	Morning Meeting Circle Together Time
9:00-9:30	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE
9:30-10:00	Free Choice	Spanish Zoom	Free Choice	Free Choice	Free Choice
10:00-10:30	Snack Break	Snack Break	Snack Break	Snack Break	Snack Break
10:30-11:00	Language Arts	Math	Language Arts	Math	Writing
11:00-11:30	Indoor Play	Social Studies	Art Zoom	Indoor Play	Social Studies
11:30-12:30	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess
12:30-1:30	Group Activity 12:30-1:05 Science Zoom 1:05-1:30	Group Activity	Group Activity	Music Zoom	Library Zoom
1:30-2:00	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play
2:00-2:15	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack 1:45-2:00
2:15-2:45	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	2PM DISMISSAL
2:45-3:20	Afternoon Story Clean up/Pack up Dismissal	Afternoon Story Clean up/Pack up Dismissal	Afternoon Story Clean up/Pack up Dismissal	Afternoon Story Clean up/Pack up Dismissal	

# Lower School

In first to fourth grade, students will be divided into two houses consisting of no more than sixteen students each. Each grade will have an interdisciplinary teaching team, consisting of two homeroom teachers and a specialist drawn from Gordon’s literacy, science, Spanish, physical education, library, health and wellness, and visual and performing arts teams.

These three-person teams will be the only adults working in-person with these students over the course of the school day. They will cycle between each grade’s two houses to deliver instruction, care, and support for the students. In addition, first grade will have a teaching assistant, allowing the interdisciplinary team added opportunities for small group instruction, supervision, and support of our youngest lower school students.

This structure will remain the same when school is meeting on campus or if the Online Learning Community resumes.

The homeroom teachers will stay with the grade all year. The specialist will change three times a year, allowing each grade to have in-person instruction from three different specialists when school is meeting on campus. Other specialists will work with the class exclusively over Zoom, ensuring that students will get instruction in literacy, science, Spanish, physical education, library, and visual and performing arts over the course of the year.



## Sample on-campus schedule for Lower School

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00-8:10	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival
8:10-8:30	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting
8:30-9:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
9:15-10:00	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
10:00-10:20	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess
10:20-11:00	Spanish	SEL	Spanish	SEL	Spanish/DEAR
11:00-11:45	Social Studies/ Open Circle	Spelling/ Grammar	Spelling/ DEAR	Spelling/ Cursive	Spanish/ DEAR
11:45-12:10 12:10-12:35	Lunch Recess	Lunch Recess	Lunch Recess	Lunch Recess	Lunch Recess
12:35-1:35	Guided Reading/Flex 12:35-1:35 Pathways Zoom 1:00-1:30	Guided Reading/Flex 12:35-1:35 Pathways Zoom 1:00-1:30	Guided Reading/Flex	Guided Reading/Flex 12:35-1:15 PE Zoom	Guided Reading/Flex 12:35-1:15 Pathways Zoom 12:45-1:15
1:35-2:20	Computer	DEAR/SEL	Art Zoom	WIN	Grammar/Open Circle/Flex 1:15-1:55 2PM DISMISSAL
2:20-3:00	DEAR	Spanish	DEAR	Spanish/SEL	
3:00-3:20	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	
3:00-3:20	Homeroom Dismissal	Homeroom Dismissal	Homeroom Dismissal	Homeroom Dismissal	

## Middle School

In fifth to eighth grade, students will be divided into two or three houses consisting of no more than eighteen students each.

Each grade will have an interdisciplinary teaching team, consisting of teachers for humanities and math as well as two or three teachers drawn from Gordon's science, Spanish, physical education, library, health and wellness, academic support and visual and performing arts teams.

The majority of instruction will be in-person when the campus is open, with some faculty Zooming into classrooms, allowing teachers to provide instruction to multiple grade levels. The sample schedules included on the following pages provide a sense of the proportion of in-person to Zoomed instruction in each grade.

Similar to Early Childhood and Lower School, each house will have dedicated after school program staff members. Students participating in athletics and theater may have additional adults on their in-person team.

This year's Middle School schedule uses block scheduling, a strategy that includes longer class periods that meet less frequently throughout the week. Research shows that block scheduling:

- Reduces student stress by decreasing the number of transitions during the day, creating a less hectic and less fragmented school day
- Allows for deeper engagement with content: longer class periods provide greater opportunity for students to think and engage in active learning
- Provides more opportunities for project- and problem-based learning
- Improves academic outcomes

*From Deeper Learning, Reduced Stress, Independent School Magazine, Summer 2012*

The Middle School schedule will allow students to complete most of their academic work during the longer periods of the school day with their teachers available to give guidance and support, and to answer their questions. The schedule also includes longer recess and lunch periods.



Sample on-campus schedule for fifth grade (week one)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-9:10	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory	8:10-8:35	Advisory
9:10-10:20	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	8:35-9:30	BLOCK A Math
10:20-10:40	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	9:30-10:25	BLOCK B Humanities
10:40-11:40	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	10:25-10:45	Recess
11:40-12:40	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	10:45-11:40	BLOCK C Music
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	11:40-12:30	Lunch & Recess
1:35-2:35	BLOCK D Spanish	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	12:30-1:25	BLOCK D Spanish
2:35-3:05	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	1:25-1:55	PE (outdoor)
3:05-3:20	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	1:55-2:00	Pack Up

Sample on-campus schedule for fifth grade (week two)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-9:10	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory	8:10-8:35	Advisory
9:10-10:20	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	8:35-9:30	BLOCK E Humanities
10:20-10:40	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	9:30-10:25	BLOCK B Humanities
10:40-11:40	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	10:25-10:45	Recess
11:40-12:40	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	10:45-11:40	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	11:40-12:30	Lunch & Recess
1:35-2:35	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish	12:30-1:25	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time
2:35-3:05	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	1:25-1:55	Visual Art (online)
3:05-3:20	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	1:55-2:00	Pack Up



Sample on-campus schedule for sixth grade (week one)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-9:10	Advisory/ Health	Advisory/ Health	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory/ Health	8:10-8:35	Advisory/ Health
9:10-10:20	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	8:35-9:30	BLOCK A Math
10:20-10:40	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	9:30-10:25	BLOCK B Humanities
10:40-11:40	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	10:25-10:45	Recess
11:40-12:40	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	10:45-11:40	BLOCK C Music
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	11:40-12:30	Lunch & Recess
1:35-2:35	BLOCK D Spanish/ Support	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish/ Support	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	12:30-1:25	BLOCK D Spanish/ Support
2:35-3:05	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	1:25-1:55	PE (outdoor)
3:05-3:20	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	1:55-2:00	Pack Up

Sample on-campus schedule for sixth grade (week two)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-9:10	Advisory/ Health	Advisory/ Health	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory/ Health	8:10-8:35	Advisory/ Health
9:10-10:20	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	8:35-9:30	BLOCK E Humanities
10:20-10:40	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	9:30-10:25	BLOCK B Humanities
10:40-11:40	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	10:25-10:45	Recess
11:40-12:40	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)	BLOCK C Music	10:45-11:40	BLOCK G Science (Zoom)
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	11:40-12:30	Lunch & Recess
1:35-2:35	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish/ Support	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time	BLOCK D Spanish/ Support	12:30-1:25	BLOCK H Project Based Learning/Work Time
2:35-3:05	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	Visual Art (online)	PE (outdoor)	1:25-1:55	Visual Art (online)
3:05-3:20	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	1:55-2:00	Pack Up



Sample on-campus schedule for seventh and eighth grade (week one)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-8:25	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory	8:10-9:10	BLOCK A Math
8:25-9:40	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	9:10-10:10	BLOCK B Humanities
9:40-9:50	Short Break	Short Break	Short Break	Short Break	10:10-10:30	Recess
9:50-11:05	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	10:30-11:15	Long Advisory
11:05-11:25	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	11:15-12:15	BLOCK C Science
11:25-12:40	BLOCK C Science	BLOCK G Spanish/Support	BLOCK C Science	BLOCK G Spanish/Support	12:15-1:00	Lunch & Recess
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	1:00-2:00pm	BLOCK D Arts (Theater)
1:35-2:55	BLOCK D Arts (Theater)	BLOCK H Science	BLOCK D Arts (Theater)	BLOCK H Science	2:00	Dismissal
2:55-3:10	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory		

Sample on-campus schedule for seventh and eighth grade (week two)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
8:10-8:25	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory/ MS Meeting	Advisory	8:10-9:10	BLOCK E Humanities
8:25-9:40	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	9:10-10:10	BLOCK F Math
9:40-9:50	Short Break	Short Break	Short Break	Short Break	10:10-10:30	Recess
9:50-11:05	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	10:30-11:15	Long Advisory
11:05-11:25	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	11:15-12:15	BLOCK G Spanish/Support
11:25-12:40	BLOCK G Spanish/Support	BLOCK C Science	BLOCK G Spanish/Support	BLOCK C Science	12:15-1:00	Lunch & Recess
12:40-1:35	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess	1:00-2:00pm	BLOCK H Science
1:35-2:55	BLOCK H Science	BLOCK D Arts	BLOCK H Science	BLOCK D Arts	2:00	Dismissal
2:55-3:10	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory	Closing Advisory		



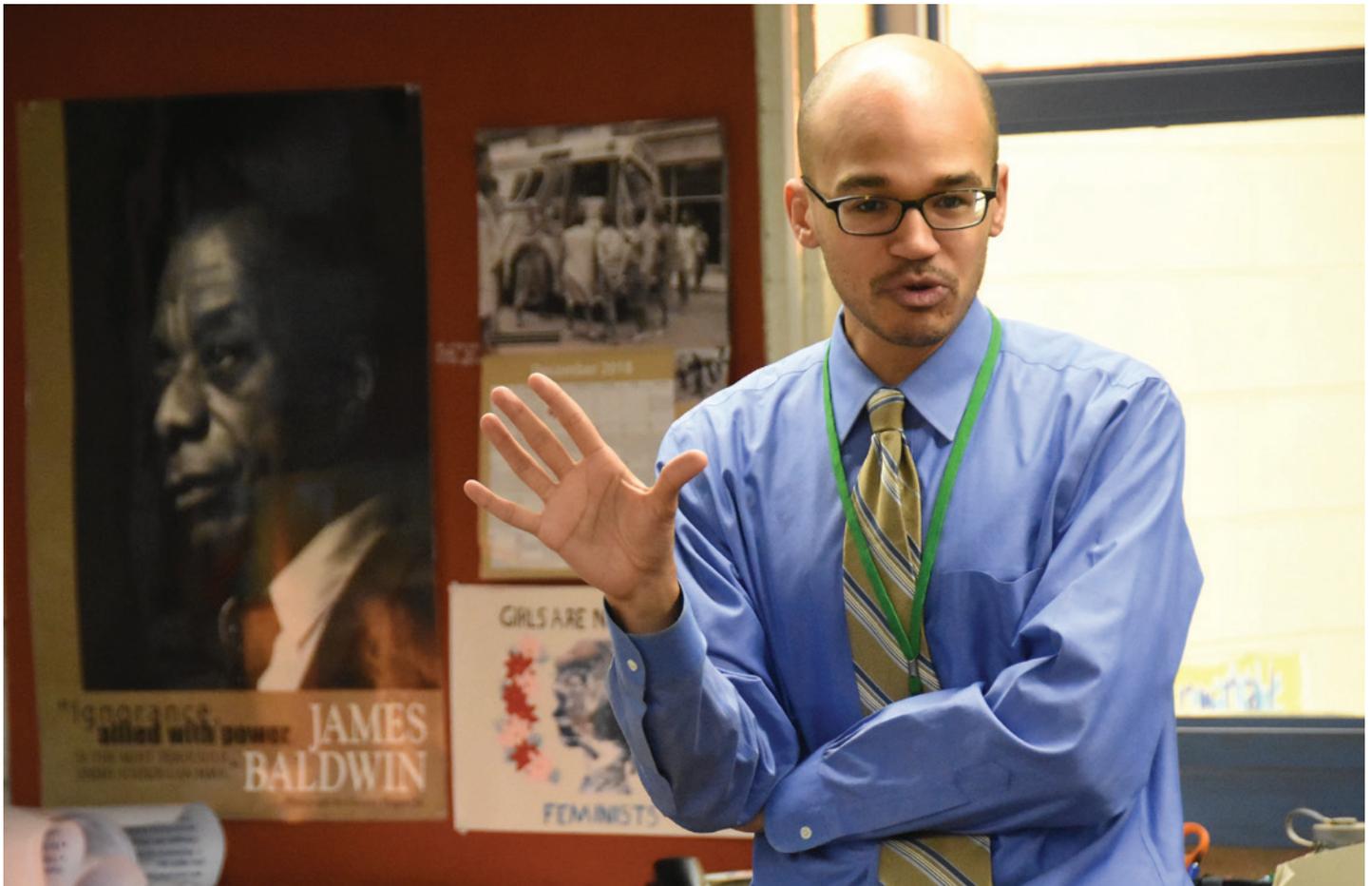
## Gordon@Home Learning Team

There will be a small number of families whose health vulnerabilities will prevent them from sending their children back to campus in September. For those students, Gordon will be offering an online learning option that will facilitate dynamic learning and meaningful engagement, with a team of Gordon faculty focused exclusively on their needs.

Gordon@Home will include a blend of live class time and independent work with the daily support of a teacher on the Gordon@Home Learning Team. The exact structure of the Gordon@Home day will vary by grade level.

Participating in Gordon@Home will require a committed partnership between home and school. In order to provide the necessary time for planning and staffing, families will need to commit to Gordon@Home for at least a trimester. Parents will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to work closely with the Gordon@Home Learning Team to provide additional guidance and supervision of the student's learning experience. Families will also agree to support their child in abiding by the schedule, completing assignments, attending Zoom meetings, and participating fully.

Decisions on eligibility for Gordon@Home are made in consultation with the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and the Division Director. Enrollments for the first trimester were confirmed on August 10th. If you believe your family may need to pursue this option at any point during the school year, please contact Lynn Bowman, Assistant Head of School, at [lbowman@gordonschool.org](mailto:lbowman@gordonschool.org)





If schools are ordered by the state of Rhode Island to close their campuses, Gordon is prepared to return seamlessly to the Online Learning Community.

Feedback from students, parents, and faculty guided revisions to the Online Learning Community plan.

Essential elements of the new Online Learning Community include:

- Consistent, scheduled collaboration and planning time for faculty
- Combinations of whole group, small group, and one-on-one Zoom meetings for instruction and connection
- A strong blend of live instruction and independent work throughout the week
- More robust integration of the arts: music, visual arts, and theater
- Learning tasks that are meaningful, engaging, and joyful
- A natural transition from the on-campus schedule

Faculty and administrators are actively working on plans to enrich and enliven the Online Learning Community, and they're finding exciting new opportunities opening up in this model. Fridays, for instance, will become DREAM days, with "DREAM" standing for "Dream, Reflect, Experience, Act, and Make". Throughout the school, DREAM days will combine simultaneous online instruction with independent project work, with the goal of inspiring problem solving at every grade level through hands-on creative work. DREAM days will also allow for cross-grade collaboration and connection throughout the day.

Gordon recognizes that a move to the Online Learning Community poses serious child-care challenges for parents of the school's youngest students. To help with the financial impact of that challenge, Gordon announced July 1st that, if the state mandates that Gordon close for more than ten consecutive school days, Gordon will provide an 80% per diem credit to Early Childhood families.

The tools of the Online Learning Community will also be useful if a group of students needs to stay home for an extended period, allowing their house, including their teachers, to transition temporarily to an online learning environment.

Sample Online Learning Community schedule for Early Childhood

	MONDAY-THURSDAY	FRIDAY (DREAM DAY)
8:00-9:00	Prepare for learning	Prepare for learning
9:00-9:30	Morning Circle via Zoom	Morning Circle via Zoom
9:30-10:00	Choice time (Posted on Seesaw) - Choose 1 or 2 activities to complete / Small group Zoom meetings	Choice Board / Small group or one-on-one check-ins with interdisciplinary team
10:00-10:30	Morning snack, outdoor movement, play	PE
10:30-11:00	Weekly Special Subjects	Arts Specialists set up DREAM time via Zoom
11:00-12:00	Choice time (Posted on Seesaw) - Choose 1 or 2 activities to complete / One-on-one time with teacher via Zoom	DREAM time: activities, short projects, themed problem-solving led by rotating Arts
12:00-1:00	Lunch, movement, family time	Lunch, movement, family time
1:00-1:30	Story Time 1 Pre-recorded reading by teacher	Asynchronous learning experiences
1:30-2:00	Rest Time	Closing Circle Small group 2PM DISMISSAL
2:00-2:30	Story Time 2 Pre-recorded reading by teacher	
2:30-3:00	Choice time (Posted on Seesaw) Complete final activities	
3:00	End of Day / Dismissal	
Weekly individual family Zoom calls to be scheduled by teacher		

Sample Online Learning Community schedule for Lower School

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY (DREAM DAY)	
8:00-8:10	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	Arrival	8:00-8:10	Arrival
8:10-8:30	Morning Meeting Interdisciplinary Team	Morning Meeting Interdisciplinary	Morning Meeting Interdisciplinary Team	Morning Meeting Interdisciplinary Team	8:10-8:30	Morning Meeting Interdisciplinary
8:30-9:15	Math/ optional breakout groups	Math/ optional breakout groups	Math/ optional breakout groups	Math/ optional breakout groups	8:30-9:15	Check ins, cross grade connections, choice board, interdisciplinary projects
9:15-10:00	Writers Workshop	Writers Workshop	Writers Workshop	Writers Workshop	9:15-10:00	
10:00-10:20	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	10:00-10:20	Snack/Recess
10:20-11:00	Science	Flex	Science	Flex	10:20-11:00	STEAM/Innovation Project-Based Learning
11:00-12:00	Guided Reading/ small group work	Guided Reading	Guided Reading/ small group work	Guided Reading	11:00-11:45	
12:00-1:00	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	11:45-12:25	Lunch/Recess
1:00-2:00	Small group work with Interdisciplinary Team	Art 1:00-1:25	Small group work with Interdisciplinary Team	Spanish 1:00-1:25	12:25-1:55	DREAM Time with Arts Faculty
		Music 1:35-2:00		Pathways 1:35-2:00	1:15-1:55	
2:00-2:20	Language Arts	Social Studies/ Office Hours	Language Arts	Social Studies/ Office Hours	1:55-2:00	Closing Circle Interdisciplinary Team
2:20-3:00	Flex	Science	Flex	Science		
3:00-3:10	Closing Circle Interdisciplinary Team	Closing Circle Interdisciplinary Team	Closing Circle Interdisciplinary Team	Closing Circle Interdisciplinary Team		

Sample Online Learning Community schedule for fifth and sixth grade

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY (DREAM DAY)	
8:30-9:00	Advisory	Advisory	MS Meeting	Advisory	8:30-9:00	Small Group Meetings
9:00-9:30	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	9:00-9:30	
9:30-10:00					10:00-10:30	DREAM Time led by embedded Arts Teacher/ Core Teacher Planning
10:00-10:30	Break	Break	Break	Break	10:00-10:30	
10:30-11:00	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	10:30-11:00	
11:00-11:30					11:00-11:30	
11:30-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11:30-12:00	
12:00-12:30					12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00					BLOCK C Spanish/Support	
1:00-1:30	1:00-1:30	Grade Level Meeting				
1:30 - 1:40	Break		Break	Break	Break	1:30-2:00
1:40 - 3:00	Independent Work/ Teacher Office Hours	Visual Art 1:40-2:10 Independent Work/ Teacher Office Hours 2:10-3:00	Independent Work/ Teacher Office Hours	Music 1:40-2:10 Independent Work/ Teacher Office Hours 2:10-3:00		
3:00 - 3:20	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up		

Sample Online Learning Community schedule for seventh and eighth grade

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY (DREAM DAY)	
8:30-9:00	Advisory	Advisory	MS Meeting	Advisory	8:30-9:00	Small Group Meetings
9:00-9:30	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	BLOCK A Math	BLOCK E Humanities	9:00-9:30	
9:30-10:00					9:30-10:00	DREAM Time led by embedded Arts Teacher/ Core Teacher Planning
10:00-10:30	Break	Break	Break	Break	10:00-10:30	
10:30-11:00	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	BLOCK B Humanities	BLOCK F Math	10:30-11:00	
11:00-11:30					11:00-11:30	
11:30-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11:30-12:00	
12:00-12:30					12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00					BLOCK C Spanish/Support	
1:00-1:30	Independent Work	Independent Work	Independent Work	Independent Work	1:00-1:30	Grade Level Meeting, Councils
1:30-2:00		MINI BLOCK Visual Art		MINI BLOCK Music	1:30-2:00	
2:00-3:00	BLOCK D Science/ Health	BLOCK H Science/ Independent Work	BLOCK D Science/ Health	BLOCK H Science/ Independent Work		
3:00 - 3:20	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up	Advisory Wrap-up		

# An all-day experience

Gordon continues to be committed to providing families with safe, well-supervised, engaging options for all ages that begin at 7:15am and continue to 5:30pm.

Before school and after school care are available next year through the Gators and YAP (Young Adult Place) programs. Before school care will take place in shared spaces with children from different houses remaining fourteen feet apart. After school care will be organized by houses and neighborhoods. Advance sign-up will be necessary; drop-ins cannot be accommodated.

Other programs that have historically happened after school like athletics, theater, Common Ground, music lessons, and more will continue.

As announced last winter, the cost of after school care has been significantly reduced. Morning care will be free of charge. Afternoon care will be priced according to the number of days each week that are needed.



This fall, providing a safe and fun after school program within the house and neighborhood structure will put new demands on staffing, facilities, and planning.

All families should head to [www.gordonschool.org/afterschool](http://www.gordonschool.org/afterschool) immediately to learn about the creative approaches to after school programs and child care this fall.

# Daily routines

A safe return to campus requires some changes to families' daily routines. Students and adults alike will need to adopt new habits, follow new procedures, and complete new tasks.

## Morning Five

Before leaving for Gordon each day, each family will need to go through the Morning Five checklist, to build new habits for preparing for the day.



### Before you leave for Gordon, remember your morning five!

Check them off on this list as you go.

-  **1** Did you complete the app?
-  **2** Do you have your mask?
-  **3** Do you have your water bottle?
-  **4** Do you have your lunch and snack?
-  **5** Do you know your plan for after school?



Hang this checklist in your kitchen or by your door as a daily reminder. Your child can check off the items each day using a dry-erase marker.

A dry-erase version of the morning five checklist went out in the August 22nd mailing. If you do not receive one, please email [ggriffin@gordonschool.org](mailto:ggriffin@gordonschool.org).

## Health screening and the Safety App

Families will be required to screen everyone in the household for COVID-19 symptoms and use an app to attest that everyone is symptom-free by 7:30am each day. All Gordon employees will follow the same protocols. The app can be downloaded at [www.gordonschool.org/app](http://www.gordonschool.org/app)

The app has a series of prompts that review the symptoms of COVID-19, and if anyone in the household is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 before the school day begins, the app will tell the Gordon student or employee to stay home. Failure to fill out the app will be treated the same as a report of a positive symptom: anyone in the relevant household will need to stay away from campus that day. It goes without saying: it's essential for everyone to complete the screening in the morning by the deadline.

The app will ask:

- Have you had a cough within the past three days?
- Have you had a shortness of breath or difficulty breathing within the past three days?
- Have you had a fever or chills within the past three days?
- What is your temperature today?
- Have you had muscle or body aches within the past three days?
- Have you had a sore throat within the past three days?
- Have you had a headache within the past three days?
- Have you had nausea or vomiting within the past three days?
- Have you had diarrhea within the past three days?
- Have you had a runny nose or stuffy nose within the past three days?
- Have you had fatigue within the past three days?
- Have you had loss of taste or smell within the past three days?
- Have you been in close contact (less than six feet) with anyone with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Have you traveled anywhere outside the 50 United States within the past 14 days?
- Have you traveled to a state with a community spread greater than 5%?
- Have you been directed to quarantine or isolate by the Rhode Island Department of Health or a healthcare provider in the past 14 days?

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a COVID-19 screening form. At the top, there is a 'Back' button and the word 'Form'. The main title is 'COVID-19 Screening'. The questions and options are as follows:

- Do you have a fever?  
 Yes  No
- What is your temperature?
- Headache?  
 Yes  No
- New loss of taste or smell?  
 Yes  No
- Chills or sweating?  
 Yes  No

A blue 'Submit Form' button is located below the questions. At the bottom of the screen, there is a navigation bar with four icons: a house for 'Home', an information icon for 'Protocols', a share icon for 'Connect', and a three-dot menu for 'Settings'.

# FAQ: Health Screenings

## If my child's younger sibling has a cough and a runny nose, my child needs to stay home?

Yes. The school will be available to help you assess both of your child's symptoms and access testing if the Department of Health recommends it.

## What if people aren't honest?

We will need to rely on people's honesty and integrity. We can be confident in their honesty and integrity for two reasons:

- 1) Gordon is a school that demands trust and transparency from every member of the community. Families learn that quickly when they discover Gordon; everything from our tuition system to our parent-teacher conferences supports and affirms this.
- 2) Families have indicated to us that they really want Gordon's campus to stay open. We are ready to close campus immediately (or will be subject to closure) if families cannot follow our guidelines. Every communication from the school this year will re-emphasize that fact.

## Is the school going to perform temperature checks for students and employees each day?

No. Families and employees are expected to perform temperature checks every morning before leaving for school.

Body temperature is not the sole metric to indicate presence of the virus. The medical research indicates that a combination of symptoms is what should raise a red flag. Given this, Gordon has decided that while taking temperatures of over four hundred students and employees each morning may bring peace of mind to some, this could, unfortunately, be a false peace. People with normal temperatures could be infectious. People with high temperatures may not have COVID-19.

The at-home temperature checks will be part of a comprehensive health screening that families will perform each morning, and will document through our web-based app, and the school has protocols in place for isolating sick students and employees. This approach is in line with recommendations from RIDE, RIDOH, our consulting physician, and the American Association of Pediatrics.



## Drop-off and pickup

Quick, safe, convenient drop-off and pickup plans are in place.

The routines will be different, but it will be much easier to understand once students are back on campus. Faculty, staff, parents and students will be introduced to details of drop-off and pickup through videos, maps and other media in the days before school.

### Here are the basics of the morning drop-off process:

Students who have registered for Early Gators and YAP can come to school through the Nelson Center entrance any time between 7:15 and 7:55.

From 7:55 to 8:00am, no students can be dropped off, in order to allow Early Gators and YAP students space to travel across campus to their classrooms.

Students who arrive at 8:00am will walk to their classrooms using one-way outdoor paths, and enter their classrooms directly from the outside. To reduce the path of travel for first grade, those students will use an interior hallway, but the students in first grade will be the only ones using that particular hallway.

Faculty, staff and administration will be placed around the school through the process to guide and supervise students.

One adult family member or caregiver will be allowed to accompany the student to the classroom door. This adult must be included in the household's morning health screening, as reported through the app, and will be required to use hand sanitizer, wear a mask and physically distance on campus. In the Early Childhood division only, that one adult will be allowed to accompany a child into their classroom if so desired. Otherwise, families will not be allowed in the classroom.

### Here are some basics of the 3:20pm pickup process:

Students in Gators and YAP will remain in their classrooms, where they will be joined by their house's dedicated after school staff.

To reduce density and maintain physical distance, students being picked up at 3:20pm will wait for their caregivers in one of three locations in front of the school.

The pickup line for all cars will start at the same location. Caregivers will follow a lane of travel depending on the number of children they are picking up and their student's neighborhood.

For the safety of all students, caregivers will not be able to park and walk to the dismissal location.



### Bus transportation

Gordon is prepared to support families who rely on bus transportation provided through the Rhode Island Department of Education. The RIDE bus plans are expected later this summer. If a city or town is not providing suitable transportation and busing is a family's only option, Gordon will work with that family to determine a viable and consistent transportation solution to and from school. If this is the case for your family, please contact your Division Director as soon as possible.

# A healthy campus

Gordon's first line of defense against COVID is keeping sick people away from campus.

Families and employees are all expected to follow the state and federal guidelines in place to avoid infection including guidelines for social gatherings, face coverings, physical distancing, travel advisories and quarantine orders.

No students, faculty or staff will be allowed onto campus if anyone in their household, or anyone with whom they have been in close contact, exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.

## **Gordon is taking the following steps on campus to reduce the risk of transmission and spread of the virus:**

1. limiting the number of people with whom students and faculty interact
2. limiting the use of shared bathrooms, hallways, and entrances to the classroom
3. traveling across campus using the outdoors, not hallways, whenever possible
4. using outdoor spaces as often as possible and keeping classrooms ventilated
5. using masks, physical distancing, handwashing, and surface sanitization
6. eliminating as many high-touch surfaces as possible and disinfecting the remaining surfaces throughout the day



## **How can Gordon plan on reopening when so many schools across the US aren't?**

1. Rhode Island, as a state, is doing exceptionally well in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Yes, we have seen an increase in cases, but detailed contact tracing has revealed that this increase was generated by large social gatherings with little mask wearing. Governor Raimondo has responded by tightening the limits on social gatherings and extending the Phase 3 restrictions.
2. Gordon has a huge facility with extra capacity and the ability to give each grade a unique entrance to the school, dedicated bathrooms, and outdoor space. With our neighborhood structure, we're also able to significantly reduce the amount of shared spaces, including walking routes, in the building.
3. Gordon's campus is 75% outdoor green space, designed for outdoor learning.
4. Gordon's parent and teacher community has a basis for trust and transparency that is rooted in the school's mission and is re-affirmed throughout the school's curriculum, policies and traditions.



## Face coverings

Mask wearing is required for all students, employees, and visitors—including parents and caregivers—while on campus. Faculty and staff will also be provided face shields to wear, if they choose, in addition to their masks.

Wearing masks at Gordon will be an adjustment for everyone, and will be part of the classroom management conversation at every grade. Families can help by introducing children to regular mask wearing and by modeling it around the house and in public.

[This article from the Washington Post](#) contains some other great tips on helping children adjust to wearing a mask.

Everyone will need to take mask breaks, as the American Association of Pediatrics recommends, and there may be moments when mask wearing may not be possible (e.g., when teachers need students to see their mouths for instruction). For mask breaks, other health and safety measures will be employed like face shields, plexiglass or acrylic barriers, and/or physical distancing.

Gordon has received a generous donation of sturdy, “Gordon-themed” masks. We will provide two masks to every student and employee and keep plenty of extras on hand at school as backups. Students and faculty are also welcome to use other masks if they wish, provided they cover the wearer’s nose and mouth, fit well and meet the following guidelines.

Acceptable masks include:

- Cotton multilayer masks
- Disposable surgical masks (multilayer are best)

Non-acceptable masks:

- Bandanas
- Neck gaiters (cloth tubes that wrap around the face)
- Masks with valves (these only protect the wearer)
- Knitted or fleece masks



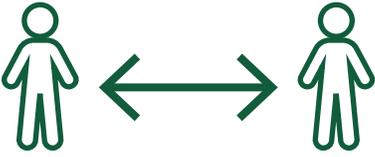
[This article from Johns Hopkins Medicine](#) has great pointers on how to choose a mask:

*Your mask should cover your face from the bridge of your nose to under your chin. It should be loose fitting but still secure enough to stay in place. Make sure you can talk with your mask on and that it doesn’t irritate you, so you are not tempted to touch it or pull it out of place, which could put you at risk from touching your face or limit its effectiveness.*

*For people who wear glasses, look for a mask with a bendable border at the top so you can mold the mask to fit the bridge of your nose and prevent your glasses from fogging.*

*Look for masks made with at least two layers of fabric. The mask should cover your nose and mouth without large gaps. The mask should have ear loops or ties so you can adjust it.*





## Physical distancing

Teachers, staff and any other adults on campus will maintain a distance of six feet from other people as much as possible.

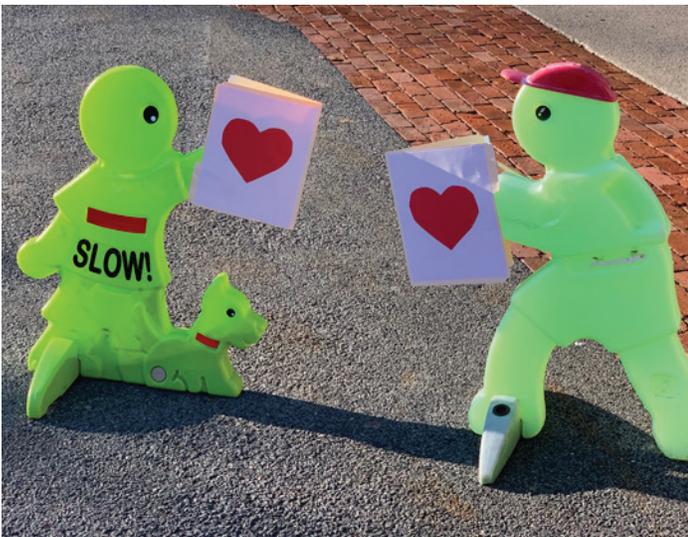
Physical distancing is especially important among adults. The house structure is intended to include students and their dedicated teachers; parents are not part of a house cohort and should maintain distance from teachers and from one another.



## Hand hygiene

All Gordon students, employees, and visitors will follow a strict hand washing or sanitizing protocol: when arriving at school, before and after recess, after using the restroom, before and after eating, and at many other transition points throughout the day.

There will be hands-free hand sanitizer stations at all entrances except in Early Childhood. In Early Childhood, each classroom will have a small bottle stored out of reach of the students.



## Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing

Gordon has been working with Imperial Building Maintenance, the school's contracted service, to prepare for the reopening of its campus. The scope of Imperial's work has been increased by 47%. Most of this increase is attributable to the nightly cleaning and sanitizing of all door hardware, push bars, and knobs; all flat, non-porous surfaces like desks, tables, chairs, and counters; and stair rails. In addition, Gordon's full-time Buildings and Grounds staff will follow a formal and documented schedule of cleaning and sanitizing throughout the school day. Bathrooms will be disinfected on a rotating schedule during the day and at night.



## Health Services

The health office has been relocated to the field house and is now in the spaces built as locker rooms. This space provides an abundance of new resources including a larger area for students, direct access to the outside, and separate areas for regular health office visits and a "Home Zone" where people with COVID symptoms can be isolated. Plans also include adding staff to assist Nurse Horton.

Teachers should call the nurse or the front desk for any health issues that come up. Most day-to-day health issues can and will be addressed in the classroom. Other cases will be escorted to the health office. A healthy student who visits the health office will be walked back to their house. Travel to and from the health office, like any travel on the campus, will involve using the outdoor path around the school.



## Indoor air quality

Gordon was intentionally built with many doors and windows. Faculty and staff have always understood the health benefits of excellent ventilation.

Early on in this crisis, Gordon partnered with the Stone House Group to help identify the best use of our resources to maintain indoor air quality.

Carbon dioxide sensors are being installed in each classroom this summer. These sensors will allow Buildings and Grounds staff to monitor ventilation across the campus through a centralized dashboard.

All of Gordon's ventilation systems have been running throughout the spring and summer, so we don't have the issues faced by facilities re-starting a system after a period of disuse.

All filtration is being upgraded to MERV 13 filters and we are replacing them more often.

The groups in all of Gordon's larger spaces - the field house, the theater, etc - will be significantly less than usual, and far below the designed capacity of those spaces' ventilation systems.



## Large group gatherings

For large group gatherings like Middle School Meeting, Lower School Town Hall, community-wide assemblies, faculty meetings and Board meetings, Gordon will follow the current Rhode Island Department of Health guidance, recognizing that it may be necessary to hold these virtually.



## Travel policy

Gordon will begin back-to-school activities on September 8th, but as we have seen this summer, travel restrictions can change quickly. Therefore, we still recommend that Gordon families and employees do not travel within fourteen days of August 31st. Families are also expected to follow any state and federal travel restrictions as they are announced.





## Lunch and snacks

Everyone will bring a snack and lunch from home. The prepared lunch program will not be available this year.

Snacks and lunch will take place in houses, either outside or in the classroom. Hands will be washed and surfaces will be cleaned before and after eating. Masks will be off to eat, so children will sit in assigned areas and use other safety strategies, like distancing, plexi-glass barriers, and avoiding face-to-face contact. Each house will have a small supply of allergy-free snacks in case someone forgets their lunch or snack.



## Water

Water fountains will be turned off for sanitary reasons, so students will be asked to bring a filled, reusable water bottle every day along with their snack and lunch. Water bottles can be replenished in the classroom.



## Recess

Hands will be washed before and after recess. Students in the same house will be able to be together at recess, fourteen feet away from other houses.

Suggested activities include soccer drills (feet only), yoga, dance parties, shadow tag, running games etc. Football and basketball can not be played at this time.

Each playground structure will be used by one house at a time, and sanitized before another house is allowed to use it. Structures will rotate among houses on a schedule that minimizes the amount of downtime necessary for sanitizing.

Outdoor recess will be an ideal time for mask breaks. During mask breaks, students, even those within a house, should maintain physical distance.



# Some scenarios

## **What happens if someone becomes ill at school? What if there is a positive case?**

Anyone who feels or looks unwell at school will go home. Teachers must leave campus as soon as possible. Students will be sent to the Health Office's Home Zone where they can be isolated from other students.

Then, we will follow the Department of Health's current guidance on how to contain any spread of illness. This is a complex and emerging topic, and the DoH is continually refreshing its guidance on this. The current protocols are in [the RI Playbook](#), beginning on page sixteen.

Gordon's ability to respond is greatly simplified by the house and neighborhood structure that is in place. This structure limits contact between students and teachers as much as possible and facilitates efficient contact tracing. If necessary, individual houses or neighborhoods can be excluded from the campus without needing to close the entire school.

## **What if a family finds out during the school day that they have had close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?**

In order to keep school open, we are depending on everyone to be transparent and proactive.

In this scenario, a family should call the Rhode Island Department of Health and follow their guidance. Gordon's Health Office will be ready to help execute whatever protocol RIDOH recommends, including isolating the children in the affected household in the Health Office's Home Zone and following the RIDOH protocols for monitoring and communicating with Gordon students, faculty, and staff who may have had contact with the student or family in question.

## **How will the school support students who are home for extended absences?**

There will be extended absences, or "Gordon-tines", and they will need to be handled child by child, according to their circumstance

If a student has to stay home because a sibling is sick and is awaiting a COVID test result, we would most likely follow-up in a manner similar to when we faced instances like this before COVID. The child's homeroom teacher will work with the child's parents to design a plan based on how long the student is expected to be out.

On the other end of the spectrum, if an entire house needs to be home for fourteen days or more, the house teachers can take up teaching the house remotely. We learned a lot about online community building - and flexibility - this spring.

Both examples, of course, assume anyone who needs to stay home is not sick. Students who are sick are not expected to do school work, and the school would work with the student's family to support a recovered child in getting back on track with their studies.

## **What about a scenario you haven't mentioned?**

There are a breathtaking variety of scenarios, and the Department of Health is doing a very good job of thinking them all through.

Once again, their [RI Playbook](#) is an extremely detailed resource that we are relying on, and you should explore it, too, if you want a sense of all of the contingencies that go into managing this pandemic. And, be assured, it's a complicated document, and you do not need to read and understand every scenario.

The team at the Department of Health, and at Gordon, will be following the playbook closely, and will be able to help guide you through whatever scenarios your family faces this fall.



# Financial considerations

This plan would not be complete without some consideration of finances, and the school's fiscal health goes hand in hand with that of the community.



## Compassionate Community Fund

Many members of the Gordon community are experiencing financial hardship as a result of this pandemic. The Compassionate Community Fund was created to help families who have suffered economically as a result of COVID-19 to remain at Gordon School. It will also be used to help pay for facilities expenses related to reopening safely in the fall, and to address other pandemic-related financial needs that may arise for students, faculty and staff.

As of August 21st, Gordon has raised nearly \$260,000 for the Compassionate Community Fund!

If you are able to support Gordon through a gift to the Compassionate Community Fund, please visit [www.gordonschool.org/compassionatecommunity](http://www.gordonschool.org/compassionatecommunity).



## Tuition

Many families were due for a reevaluation of their Family Individualized Tuition this spring. Because the tax filing deadline was extended to July 15th, Gordon will now complete these FIT reevaluations during the fall of 2020.

If the state mandates that Gordon close for more than ten consecutive school days, Gordon will provide an 80% per diem credit to Early Childhood families.

This decision reflects the school's careful consideration of feedback from families as well as the school's responsibility to ensure Gordon's long-term financial sustainability.

The school is working with the Rhode Island Department of Health to determine if, in the event of a mandated school closure, Gordon would be able to keep Early Childhood open under the day care regulations.



# Optimism with deep roots

Starting with a major announcement on July 1st, Gordon has been able to deliver a detailed plan that brings students and faculty back together, on campus, for an experience that includes all the essential elements of a Gordon education.

This plan came together against a backdrop of national uncertainty, as state and federal authorities continually revise their guidelines for safe and healthy conduct.

In this work, Gordon has built on a number of long-standing traditions and core values that set this school apart:

## Healthy origins

Gordon was founded by a pediatrician as the “Open Air School,” with a focus on health and wellness that has never wavered. The school has always taken a fact-based, science-driven approach to learning and living on campus.

## Facilities that serve students

Gordon is at a comfortable size with two sections per grade, in a building that could accommodate a 25% increase in enrollment and three sections per grade. Gordon has the space it needs to welcome every student back, on the first day of school, and there’s no need to move children off campus in order to keep them in small, safe groups.

## Natural resources

Gordon’s beautiful twelve-acre campus allows tremendous flexibility when thinking about classroom spaces and room for children to learn and play in safe ways. From the playing fields to the woods, gardens and ponds, Gordon’s campus is a living laboratory ready for year-round outdoor education.

## Trust and transparency

This plan relies on a strong partnership between parents and the school. Families have fueled this work with their questions, their observations and their expertise. The result demonstrates the school’s earnest commitment to deep listening and transparent communication. This relationship will be central to a successful fall, when the community’s health and wellbeing will depend on every family’s care and cooperation.



# What's next

Here are some key dates and milestones from now until the beginning of school. The Gordon News email will continue on Thursdays and will include Zoom links for meetings and events. Due to security issues, Zoom links cannot be embedded in Gordon's Google calendar, but the list of links at [www.gordonschool.org/commons](http://www.gordonschool.org/commons) will be refreshed and maintained regularly.

## **week of August 24th**

### **Teacher outreach begins**

Before school begins, teachers in every grade will reach out to families to connect individually. Families can look for a email from their teacher.

## **Tuesday, August 25th**

### **Gators and YAP deadline**

Families must register for fall Gators and YAP by today at [www.gordonschool.org/gators](http://www.gordonschool.org/gators). No drop-ins will be allowed this fall.

## **week of August 31st**

### **House Zooms**

Students, families and teachers will come together over Zoom, in sessions arranged by their teachers.

## **Wednesday, September 2nd, 6:30pm**

### **Town Hall with Dr. Thomas López**

All families are invited to a preview of the coming year by Zooming with the Head of School. Zoom link at [gordonschool.org/commons](http://gordonschool.org/commons)

## **week of September 7th**

### **House week**

Houses will come together for community-building activities led by their GCA parent representatives.

### **The new school year begins!**

#### *If in-person school can begin:*

Drop-off and pickup walkthrough and app practices will be held. Families only need to come to one but are welcome to attend for all children if they choose. If the time for your child's division doesn't work, please come to another session or email [cphipps@gordonschool.org](mailto:cphipps@gordonschool.org) to arrange another time.

#### **Tuesday the 8th, 8am**

walkthrough for Early Childhood

#### **Wednesday the 9th, 8am**

walkthrough for Lower School

#### **Wednesday the 9th, 9:30am**

walkthrough for Middle School

#### **Thursday, September 10th**

First day of school

#### *If in-person school is mandated to delay:*

#### **September 8th to 11th**

Students should be available for in-person and virtual community building activities.

#### **Monday, September 14th**

Launch of Online Learning Community



# Resources

[Rhode Island Department of Health](#)

[RIDE Reopening Guidelines for Elementary and Middle Schools](#)

[Illustrations](#)

[RI Reopening Plan](#)

[Phase III](#)

[CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

[Harvard School of Public Health Guidelines for Reopening](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines for Reopening](#)

[NPR: What Schools Can Learn From Child Care Centers That Stayed Open During Lockdowns](#)

[Johns Hopkins: Coronavirus Face Masks & Protection FAQs](#)

[Washington Post: How to help children adjust to masks, according to experts and parents](#)



## Ask Gordon

Parent questions and feedback continue to be important in this process. Please use [www.gordonschool.org/askgordon](http://www.gordonschool.org/askgordon) to share ideas and concerns!