



# Re-Opening Plan for THE UNQUOWA SCHOOL

With three models in place - full campus re-opening, a hybrid model that allows students to continue online learning while our campus is open, and a fully remote plan that would be due to a State mandated closure, **The Unquowa School is planning to be back on campus for our first day of school, Tuesday, September 8th**, following State of Connecticut Health Guidelines as applicable.

**Re-Opening Co-coordinators Tracy Capizzuto, our main school nurse, will oversee all aspects of health-related procedures, and Lloyd Mitchell, our Director of Operations, will oversee facility adaptations and improvements and cleaning procedures.** Our Co-coordinators have worked with our senior leadership team and deans throughout the summer, as well as with key sub-committees, to continue to plan for fall with the goal of creating a balance between mitigating disease transmission and protecting the quality of our academic programming and the social/emotional well-being of our students and staff.

## A Safe Environment

### 1. Newly Established Health Protocols

- A larger and remotely-situated health office had been built over the summer, with a connected isolation room to provide both adequate typical care for all students and the anticipated needs for identifying and isolating anyone who may become COVID positive. This office is adjacent to a well-marked, separate campus entrance/exit to allow for isolated patient pick-up.
- Health staff are preparing for participation in daily health monitoring of staff and students and oversight of testing and tracing as guidelines for and availability of testing and tracing are being updated by the CDC and State of CT Health Department. Details will be confirmed and ready for the start of school.
- Clear and unbending messaging will be communicated to all members of the community for the need to partner with us in our safety efforts by monitoring their own health and their children's health daily. Sick children and staff will be urged to stay home. Community members who have traveled to areas restricted by the State of CT will be urged to self-report and quarantine for 14 days.
- Masks, social distancing, frequent handwashing and outdoor breaks will be exercised as paramount to mitigation.

### 2. Cohorting Of Age Groups

- Students will have houses and neighborhoods - that is, each grade level will spend its academic time with their grade alone (houses).
- Designated entrances, building areas and lunch seatings will be used by small cohorts of grades (neighborhoods). Designated entrances will have signage and both entrances/exits and arrival/dismissal times will be communicated clearly to families and monitored by staff. Afternoon pick-up times will be adjusted to allow for students to remain in their cohorts and to be picked up by car or bus, with the exception of early childhood, who will be picked up at their individual outdoor classroom exits.
- After-care (OWLS) will take place by cohorts.
- Each grade will have designated outdoor areas on the school playground and playing field, and students will be outside at regular intervals every day.
- Advisors and homeroom teachers will keep an even closer eye on students' emotional needs and will guide them to our Dean of Students and our Director of Social/Emotional Wellness as needed.

### 3. Reconfiguration Of Physical Spaces

- All non-essential classroom furniture will be put in storage to allow for more room for social distancing, with six feet between student work spaces as the goal. Thorough daily continuous high-touch point cleaning will occur, as well as cleaning and disinfecting by a State licensed cleaning team each evening.
- Ventilation in all classrooms and offices has been improved by the installation of HEPA filters, and windows will be open when weather allows. Our HVAC system has historically had a high-grade filter system which meets current guideline upgrade recommendations. UV sterilizers will be in classrooms such as science labs, art rooms, string ensemble classes and early childhood classrooms where essential materials that cannot be easily wiped down exist.
- All spaces, even purpose-built spaces such as our stage, gym and dining room have been re-purposed for better social distancing opportunities, including the required 12 ft. for performing arts classes.
- Dining will take place in the gym to better table spacing. Three dining seatings will allow for 50 percent table capacity and students will dine in their cohorts, with time for thorough cleaning between seatings.
- The existing dining room will serve as a large-space classroom.
- P.E. will take place outdoors with the exception of inclement days, when alternate activities will take place in the dining room or gym.

### 4. Clear Guidelines And Procedures For Maintaining A Healthy Environment

- All faculty, staff and students, including Early Childhood, will be asked to wear masks, with adequate outdoor mask breaks during the day. Faculty will be provided with windowed masks to support clear and friendly communication for all students.
- Staff will welcome students at their respective entrances each morning with available hand-sanitizer to assure starting the day as germ-free as possible, and frequent handwashing breaks will occur throughout the day. Hands-free towel dispensers will be installed in bathrooms and additional hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed throughout the school to supplement existing dispensers.
- As mentioned above, classrooms will be set up to physically distance students with at least six feet of space between working students whenever possible and twelve feet for choral classes.
- Pre-K, TK and Kindergarten will have lunch in the Early Childhood wing. Lunch for all others will be served in three small-group seatings and tables will be set and cleared by staff. The salad bar will be eliminated, but healthy food options will continue to be served directly by our staff.
- All visitors, including tutors, guest speakers and parents will be strictly limited during the pandemic, and remote options for tutors and guest speakers will be provided.

## Remote Learning Option

### 1. Schedules

- Better synchronization between our on-campus schedule and the remote option for students who choose it has been created.
- Better balance between live class time, recorded lessons and time for individual work breaks between screen time has been developed for those possible times when our entire campus becomes remote.
- Currently in the works is new and improved coursework and schedule communication for both on-campus and remote learning on MyUnquowa dashboard for families. More to come on that.

### 2. Technology Upgrades

- 360 degree cameras in classrooms to provide connection between on-campus students and remote learners when school is open and better teacher- student connection if our school is required to be fully remote at any point in the school year.

## The Traditions Of Our Unique, Welcoming Community

From things like *The Gator, Pen and Paper, UnquowaZine, Be the Change, Voices of Change and IDEA conversations*, to our *Weekly Assemblies*, we miraculously worked together to make them all happen this past spring, and we will do the same for the school year to come.

*Fall assemblies, including 8th Grade Speeches, will be live streamed* to classrooms and to families each week, and we have even already begun to brainstorm the *40th anniversary of Winter Festival*. No, we cannot all congregate in the gym, but that doesn't mean that we can't execute the production and keep both the benchmark Winterfest roles that kids wait to experience each year and the community feel that the final production brings to our current families, past families and alums. Does "*Winterfest, the Movie*" give you a hint?

*Back to School Night* and our *Annual Meeting* will definitely be virtual this fall and *Founders Day* will be moved to spring.

Because of our school's size and resources, we feel confident that as long as our state's COVID numbers remain stable, we will be able to safely open our campus in September. That being said, the safety of students, faculty and staff is paramount to all decisions we make, and we are continuing to work on plans for improved remote-learning schedules and improved techniques and technology so that we can move to full remote learning if the state health climate deems it necessary.

Our faculty and staff will continue to work together to hone our plan, and we will schedule times for all students to visit campus in late August by cohort so that they as students and their families will feel comfortable with the changes we'll need to make for everyone to ensure a safe and relaxed school environment.

The following guidelines were used as resources for our planning: [The CTK-12 Guidelines for Re-Opening School](#), [The CAIS Guidelines for Re-Opening School](#), [The CDC Guidelines](#), [The OEC Guidelines](#) and [The American Pediatrics Recommendations](#).

*This report has been last updated on July 24, 2020 and will be updated as needed until the start of school on September 8, 2020.*

*The Future is in Our Care*

