



Tiftarea Academy

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Reopening of Campus

Tiftarea Academy is monitoring the information provided by public health officials and government agencies about how to reopen campus in the fall in the midst of a pandemic, but much uncertainty about COVID-19 remains. We recognize and appreciate the value of on-campus, in person instruction. Face to face interaction in a classroom environment has long been shown to have positive effects on students both academically, socially, and emotionally. We will continue to put health and safety first but hope to do so while we continue to offer this invaluable type of instruction.

The School's action steps will continue to evolve with the changing guidance from the federal and state governments. The School will continue to monitor public health information here in southwest Georgia. What is appropriate in the fall may or may not be relevant by winter. The School's response plans and requirements may also change when testing for the virus or for antibodies becomes more readily available.

Although important, Tiftarea's plans cannot eliminate the potential for exposure to COVID -19 or any other illness while on campus. Experts have said that people with COVID-19 may show no signs or symptoms of illness, but can still spread the virus, and people may be contagious before their symptoms occur. The fact is that someone with COVID-19 may be present on campus even with the school's efforts to limit or minimize exposure.

At the present time, Tiftarea Academy's plan is to have a complete opening of school on August 14, 2020. We will have contingency plans in place in the case of a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in our communities or within our school.

We will also have a contingency plan in place in the case of directives from federal, state, or local health officials.

The safety and health of our students and staff will always be at the forefront of our decision making. We are going to be challenged in ways that none of us could previously have imagined. But, if we work together, for the families and children that we serve, and for each other, we can do this. Together!

Arrival to School and Temperature

- All student bus riders will have their temperature checked prior to boarding the bus. Once they arrive on campus, students will report to their home room without requiring additional screening.
- Student Drivers will have a designated area to report to have their temperature checked prior to entering the buildings.
- Students being dropped off by parents will have their temperature checked while still in their car- prior to being dropped off.
- If a student is tardy for school, they must report to the front office for a tardy slip and temperature screening.

A staff member will be responsible for checking each student's temperature:

Per CDC guidelines, temperatures of 100.4 or higher will not be allowed on the bus or on campus.

We are asking ***parents*** to partner with us for the well-being of all students. We will have an increased "home sick/fever" time (48 Hours) and adjusted protocol for students who come to school sick. This rule has been added to our handbook and also applies to school events and all extracurricular activities.

It is not practicable to take temperatures for everyone attending larger events on campus, such as Open House and athletic events. We cannot reiterate how much we will have to depend on our **parents** to help keep our school community safe!

Cleaning and Distancing

All staff will share the responsibility for our updated and aggressive cleaning protocol. We are reducing shared spaces, materials, and surfaces. The School is joining forces with Facilko Cleaning Services to provide the cleanest environment possible. The School has purchased enhanced sprayers and will be using a school friendly bleach solution to disinfect buses and classrooms, daily, as recommended by the CDC. Facilko has also added an additional employee assigned to Tiftarea Academy to help maintain additional cleaning protocols. Students will be asked to wash their hands or use sanitizer upon entering and leaving classrooms/buildings. We will provide education to our students about the importance of proper hand washing. We will ensure that there will be visible public sanitization stations placed all over campus.

We will try to be outside for Physical Education when weather permits. Students will also have opportunities (weather permitting) to eat their lunch outside in order to more safely distance themselves from others.

At the present time, we are reserving the right to make decisions on events such as pep rallies, field trips, etc., until a later date.

Athletic teams who have to travel on a bus will have sanitizing and disinfecting equipment on hand.

Visitors on Campus

We understand the importance of school family and how much parents, grandparents, and friends value the environment that is associated with Tiftarea Academy. We ask for your patience as we adjust to what we feel is necessary to protect our students and staff. We will begin the year with a “**no visitor**” policy in effect. Please, no lunch or birthday visitors. Parents will still be allowed to bring lunch or birthday snacks for their students, but will not be allowed to visit the cafeteria. These items must be brought to the front office and we will have them delivered to the classroom.

Specific decisions and additional plans regarding these policies are subject to change once we begin school.

COVID -19

We recognize that there may be scenarios when after we begin school we have reported cases of COVID-19 among our stakeholders. We are prayerful that this does not happen or is very rare, but we still have to consider the possibility with a practical plan.

We ask for clear communication with all of our families in order to provide the safest environment for all of our students and staff.

Tiftarea Academy is fortunate to offer smaller class sizes, and we will attempt to isolate from common areas as much as possible. In the case of an outbreak, this will hopefully allow us to only close a smaller section of the school for a shorter amount of time instead of the entire school with any incident.

We will ask that if an immediate family member tests positive for COVID-19, all other family members also quarantine for 14 days or until they can provide a negative test result.

If a student or staff member tests positive they will be required to quarantine for 14 days or until they can provide a negative test result.

If several staff or students test positive in a certain class we will make decisions regarding quarantine on a case-by-case basis.

Masks

At this time, Tiftarea Academy is reserving the right to delay the decision on requiring masks for students and staff until a later date.

Food Service

Triple D will no longer be providing food service for Tiftarea Academy. The administration is in discussions now regarding a couple of different alternatives.

These discussions are ongoing and we are ensuring that we meet all the health guidelines suggested for food service operation.

Conclusion

I hope everyone can see the planning and care that we are putting into next year's details. These plans represent our most up-to-date thinking about the upcoming school year; please understand that all of these plans are subject to change in response to the evolving circumstances. All of our staff are participating in professional development this summer that will enhance distance learning, if we are required to resort to that. It is our hope to offer in person instruction throughout the year, we recognize that there are reasons to maintain our ability to teach and learn remotely.

Moving forward, it is with hope and faith (and a good deal of research) that we are preparing as a school community to move into the next school year, a year that will most certainly defy any characterization of normal, comfortable, or predictable.

I am looking forward to us returning to school in August and we will take this journey together.

Sincerely,



Stacey Bell

Headmaster

Tiftarea Academy