Kent Place’s commitment to providing an engaging, challenging curriculum for its students while keeping a strong sense of community and connection has been at the heart of every decision we have made since March, when the COVID-19 pandemic began to have an impact on our school.

Following the guidelines set forth by Gov. Phil Murphy, our campus will OPEN for the start of the new academic year on WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 (with New Student Orientation held on Tuesday, September 8). We are assessing information and developing guidelines and procedures to enable us to provide an on-campus experience as normal and as safe as possible.

**OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Protect the physical and mental health and safety of students, faculty, and staff
- Provide the Kent Place academic experience in an environment in which each student thrives — whether on campus or within a virtual setting
- Be compliant and closely adhere to guidelines from the State of New Jersey and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- Maintain our strong sense of community
- Ensure access and equity for all students
- Deepen school–parent partnerships
- Establish innovative and effective use of campus spaces and places

This publication is a preview of how we are currently envisioning our reopening plans. These guidelines are subject to change, and many of our procedures are still being finalized. We will present more details to you during our WEBINAR on JULY 22 at 4:00 p.m. (REGISTER HERE) and then again in August, so that you can prepare appropriately for the school year.

Kent Place is committed to maintaining a strong partnership with you and to remaining true to our mission and values with an emphasis on flexibility, mindfulness, and understanding as we navigate each new scenario.
The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is of paramount importance. The Reopening School Task Force, with guidance from Dr. Allyson Agathis, our school physician; the New Jersey Department of Health; the EPA; the CDC; the American Academy of Pediatrics; and Governor Murphy, is working on specific strategies, among them in the following areas.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

We are implementing protocols for health screening of students, faculty, and staff before and at their arrival at school. Protocols will consist of a personal health questionnaire, reporting requirements to the Health Office, slightly modified drop-off and pick-up times, and a daily temperature check on arrival. Students and faculty/staff who have a fever, report coronavirus-like symptoms, or have been potentially exposed must stay home, and will be required to contact the Health Office for further assessment.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

The Operations Team has implemented heightened cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting procedures for our classrooms, public spaces, and high-touch surfaces. In addition to these steps:

• A new cleaning contractor will strictly follow CDC/EPA guidelines and policies.
• All three main divisional buildings have central HVAC systems capable of providing 100 percent fresh air on demand.
• All other buildings have fresh air–fed air-conditioning units or fans.
• We are replacing a number of our high-traffic faucets with touchless capabilities.
• Every classroom has hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies.
• We will place plexiglass shields and disinfecting tape in appropriate areas.
• Electrostatic sprayers will be used on buses to sanitize them after each use.
• All high-touch surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day and all spaces every night.
• An additional day porter will support disinfection practices throughout the day.
HEALTH AND SAFETY

DINING SERVICES
Students will eat lunch in their classrooms or in small groups in less traditional locations. We are working closely with AVI Foodsystems, our dining services partner, to offer a variety of healthy menu choices, from hot options, to wrapped sandwiches, to daily specials. All self-service areas, such as drink machines and the salad bar, will be discontinued. Plexiglass shields are being installed to protect students and dining hall staff when food is being picked up.

STUDENT PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT
Students will be required to wear a mask on the first day of school and every day thereafter. Use of a mask will be required when indoors. Use of a mask outdoors will be determined by the ability to be physically distant and the activity. We will provide five masks (both with and without a filter) to each student.

We understand that prolonged use of masks could be difficult for some students (especially our younger girls and boys), and hope to provide flexibility based on meeting physical-distancing criteria. We also know that there will be students who will wear face coverings for longer periods of time, such as those who are directed to do so by their healthcare provider. If you have any concerns with regard to face coverings, please contact the Health Office.

All adults in common spaces and classrooms will be required to wear a face covering.

HEALTH OFFICE SUPPORT
The nursing staff, in conjunction with Dr. Agathis, is developing protocols for the school’s response to any employee, student, or family member with symptoms of coronavirus or an actual COVID-19 diagnosis. Separate well and sick student spaces in the Primary School and the Middle/Upper School complex are being constructed so proper isolation will take place. Appropriate protective equipment, such as medical-grade masks, face shields, gloves, and gowns, will be stocked. Members of the nursing staff and campus security will be professionally trained in contact-tracing procedures.

COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY
Keeping our community safe and healthy will be achieved through a strong partnership between our school and our families. We strongly urge all families to maintain a firm commitment to physical distancing and to limit travel to areas of concern for the two-week period leading up to their child’s return to campus. Further health and safety reporting protocols to support the ongoing safety of our school community will be outlined in August.

TRANSPORTATION
The recent guidelines for opening school require students and drivers to wear face coverings. We are currently communicating with our transportation-service providers and our district partners and using state directives. We will have more information for you in our next communication.
A robust academic program balanced with a strong sense of community in which students live, learn, and lead will continue to be our hallmark. Our Leadership Team and the faculty are prepared to create an optimal learning environment for all students. **When we return to school on campus, we will provide a full curriculum.** We will also offer social/emotional support to both students and their families.

In order for students to grow and excel academically, they must feel safe. Thus, our reopening plan, about which **we will provide more details during the JULY 22 WEBINAR,** demonstrates attention to the whole student, and intentionally embeds time and space for girls to connect, recharge, and engage in an inspiring learning journey. We plan to make every effort to provide students with the full Kent Place experience, with a variety of curricular and cocurricular opportunities. And although we fervently hope that we will remain on campus for the entirety of the year, we have been preparing our faculty and staff to create structures that will continue programs should the need arise for remote learning.
CLASSROOMS AND CLASS GROUPS

We have been planning for every contingency. For example, we have measured each classroom and community space to evaluate capacity to accommodate distancing of six feet. Based on the June 26 guidelines set forth by Governor Murphy, in any scenario in which six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained, either students will be expected to wear masks and/or we will have physical barriers in place.

• We will physically distance students to the maximum extent practicable.
• Desks will be arranged to stay within the physical-distancing guidelines; at times, plexiglass will be installed as an added precaution.
• Whenever possible, we will maximize outdoor spaces for classes and cocurricular activities.
• Sharing electronic devices, toys, books, games, and other learning aids will be avoided or severely limited.
• For the Primary School, whenever possible, specialist classes will be taught in the students’ main classrooms.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

All faculty members are participating in professional-development classes that will prepare them for hybrid learning — that is, to achieve a shared set of skills in order to build courses so students’ learning continues seamlessly. Many faculty are also participating in subject-area or age-specific training that will increase student engagement should we need to return to the online environment at any time. In addition, the Technology Department is offering training and refreshers on many of the educational technology tools that teachers will be utilizing with increased consistency. This training incorporates maximizing MyKPS, our learning management system, and the curated list of EdTech tools that meet COPPA regulations.
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The Technology Team is committed to providing the infrastructure needed to support our robust academic program. For example, Kent Place has expanded its 1:1 program to include JPK–K students also with their own iPads. We will continue to provide 1:1 devices for grades 1 and 2 with iPads; students in grades 3–8 will use their Chromebooks; those in the Upper School will use their BYOD laptops. Infrastructure work this summer will increase Internet bandwidth, upgrade fiber optic connections between buildings, and replace Wi-Fi access points to improve access speeds around campus.

In addition, classrooms are being equipped with video conferencing technology to support the needs of students. Faculty and staff will have hardware devices that will enable them to make a quick shift to remote learning should that become necessary at any point.

OPENING DAYS AND LOOKING AHEAD

We plan to welcome to campus new students and returning students entering a new division on September 8 and all returning students on September 9. Opening days will include orientation and the community-building activities that will set the tone for the year. At this time, our intent is to welcome all students back to campus on a fairly typical school schedule; you will RECEIVE DETAILS during the JULY 22 WEBINAR. Other changes to the schedule may occur after we consider an increasingly staggered lunch schedule, room capacity with physical distancing, and a hallway flow that minimizes the number of students passing through at the same time.

If a student needs to be absent from school, we have prepared our teachers and our classrooms to provide live streaming.

LEARNING OVERVIEW
ATHLETICS

Our goal is to hold athletics in the fall as well as during the preseason. The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) has established a COVID-19 Medical Advisory Task Force (MATF), which is responsible for providing guidance to allow New Jersey high school student-athletes a return to athletics as soon and as safely as possible. The NJSIAA is also convening a Sports Advisory Task Force, comprising eight athletic directors from across the state, to review NFHS (National Federation of High Schools), New Jersey state, and CDC health guidelines, as well as NJDOE guidance, regarding the 2020–21 academic year to determine, among other things, the extent to which changes may be needed for each interscholastic sports season. Athletic Director Bobbi Moran is keeping abreast of all applicable decisions by state and local organizations, and will update our fall athletes through the Summer Athletics Page on MyKPS.

PERFORMING ARTS

With guidance from our national and regional arts associations, we are planning to create modified but meaningful experiences in music, dance, and theater performance. The goal is for our students to continue to develop their artistry and skills, even while adhering to state and local health guidelines. To this end, we are reorganizing our large performing spaces for smaller musical ensembles (trios and quartets) and rotating room assignments for musicians, especially singers and wind instrumentalists. Our in-person instruction will equip these young musicians for self-directed learning and at the same time continue to foster the ensemble community. Our performances will most likely be experienced virtually. Theater and Dance ensembles will also be physically distanced, and creative new choreographies and stagings will be standard.
COMMUNITY

We are committed to continuing the programs and cocurricular activities that help define community at Kent Place. You will receive details on recess, field trips, and more in our next communication.

Mental Health and Social/Emotional Support

Our school counselors will be available, as always. In addition, each division will prioritize opportunities for students to build connections among themselves and with their teachers; we understand that this connection will be particularly important in the event of a return to remote learning. Advisory programs in the Middle and Upper Schools and Homeroom time in Primary School will focus on fostering connection with peers. Orientation programs — suitable for each age group and according to the physical-distancing requirements at the time — will take place in each division.

The Health and Wellness Team is developing an enhanced curriculum. In addition, the Community-Building Task Force, led by Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Walidah Justice and composed of members of the faculty, the Board of Trustees, and the parent community, has as its goal to enhance our school community by actively supporting all constituencies — students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumnae — whether on campus or remotely.

Visitors and Volunteers

Although we understand that some members of our community will be disappointed, campus access for visitors will be extremely limited. We will not resume on-campus or in-classroom volunteer opportunities right away. All essential guests will be by appointment only and must follow our protocols through security and Mabie House check-ins. The new Customer Service Kiosk, located at the main entrance, will be staffed by campus security. All visitors (over the age of 2) will be required to wear a face covering.

Calendar

Large-group events this fall, and perhaps for the entire school year, will be modified based on the applicable guidelines. Our school calendar is being adjusted to indicate which events may have to be changed, but it is our hope that we will be able to hold in-person family events. Information about specific events will be available as we approach September.

Global Trips

We are placing a pause on planning school-sponsored international travel for the upcoming academic year. We strongly value the Global Learning program’s contribution to the development of our girls’ global competence, but we must prioritize their health and safety, as well as that of the chaperones. Global experiential skills such as empathy, cross-cultural communication, and learning amid uncertainty are more important now than ever. We always seek new ways to infuse global learning into the Kent Place curriculum, and will continue to do so during this period of change.

Aftercare

For your planning purposes, we intend to offer the Kent Place Kids aftercare program in the Primary School and 3:30 Club in the Middle School.
WHAT’S NEXT?
In addition to the July webinar, our next reopening communications will be in August, to give families time to prepare for the new academic year. In the meantime, please be sure to monitor the Summer Pages on MyKPS for divisional information.

YOUR FEEDBACK
We want to hear from you. CLICK HERE to complete a survey by July 20 to provide information about your current comfort level regarding your child(ren) returning to campus. Note: The survey needs to be completed only once per family.

QUESTIONS
If you have any questions or concerns, please send an email to Director of Operations Chris Bonner, at bonnerc@kentplace.org. We will forward your questions to the people who can best address them.

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