




FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

2021 Updates: 2/8, 5/3,

2020 Updates: 4/28 & 6/11; 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18

Tips for Navigating this FAQ document

- Click the magnifying glass  in the top menu > type your keyword/question into the search box that appears
- Or click the topics below to go directly to the related FAQs

Spring 2021 & Fall 2020

Westwood families can choose to send their students to school in person or online. For lower school families, Westwood will offer continuous childcare along with online school when online learning is mandated by authorities or necessary for the well-being of our community. This approach will help parents who need childcare as well as those who aren't yet comfortable sending their child to the physical school. It also enables us to move more fluidly with changes in guidance and mandates.

We appreciate your understanding - Information included here may change based on the course of the virus and guidance from state and local officials.

> [Classes & Activities \(In-Person & Online\)](#)

[Lower School](#)

[Upper School](#)

[General](#)

> [COVID-19 Safety & More](#)

> [Tuition & Insurance for 2020-2021 School Year](#)

Classes & Activities

Lower School

Updated 5/3/2021

What age do kids start wearing uniforms?

In first grade. Some of our preschool students like to wear the uniform and they are welcome to wear them.

Why do elementary students use bags instead of backpacks?

Backpacks tend to be bulky, so we use slender totes with their names on them. The totes are big enough to put their books into yet less bulky than the backpack.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Plus, picking out a special backpack when they go to upper elementary is a special time for our students and serves as a rite of passage for them.

Updated 2/08/2021

What are your thoughts on uniforms for preschool/toddler?

If you want to send your preschooler in a uniform, you are welcome to do this. Sometimes a younger sibling wants to look like their older sibling.

Updated 9/28/2020

Will the early release on Fridays continue in October?

Yes. And we will most likely continue with early release Fridays through December for Lower School. Then, we'll see what happens for next Semester.

When will UE Mandarin classes begin?

Everything is ready for these classes which will be online. However, the teacher hasn't been able to get her permanent work visa yet because of delays due to COVID-19. She will be videotaping her lessons soon and will share with the kids.

Updated 8/18/2020

Can the student evaluation be done online?

It's important student evaluation be done in person. We will get the best result if you have your child come in person for their evaluation because we can better assess what the child understands and to develop the most appropriate work plan for them.

We can arrange for your child to come in by themselves without anyone else in the classroom except the teacher. We are making online arrangements through Khan Academy for testing online. It is not the same but will enable the teacher to give a workplan starting point.

Will grade evaluation occur for New Students?

Yes. For students who will be learning online, we need to do the evaluation before school starts on August 31. Once school starts, we will do the evaluations in person.

Will online learning be the same as spring?

There will be more live interaction than in Spring. It will be mostly live interaction. There may be videos. How much time students will be online depends on the age of the child. We will share the online schedule with you soon.

If kids – lower elementary in particular -- are learning in person at school, will they be on computers?

Lower school kids who are in person will only be online every other week during Design studio class. However, if the government mandates schools must go online rather than in person, then our students can be online during in person childcare if families choose this option. This is because we can still be open under childcare licensing for parents who need to go to work.

What are the class sizes?

We've capped our class sizes as follows

Toddler: 12 students

PreK: 20 students

Elementary: 16 students

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31,8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Will uniforms be required for students learning online?

Yes, uniforms will be required. Our uniform helps kids feel part of the group especially if they are online. I believe it's the right thing to wear a uniform whether we're in person or online.

If you're online and wearing your Westwood polo top, we know we won't see your PJ bottoms. 😊

How will the teachers manage the children in the classroom while also teaching the children who are learning from home?

For Toddler/PreK, one of the teachers will be the online teacher. We're able to manage this because we have one less Toddler classroom.

For elementary students, one teacher will be online and answering questions for those students, while the other teacher will be working with students who are in person in the classroom.

Upper elementary students are more independent which makes it easier for the teacher to manage both in person and online students.

In addition, Mr. Terrell, is our new online director. He will ensure online students get what they need to learn effectively online.

What changed since July 16 that allows us to open school on Aug. 31 instead of September 8?

On July 28, 2020, the Texas Attorney General issued a "[legal guidance](#)" letter leaving **the decision about whether to open and close** schools in the hands of **school officials**. It also gives the health authority the right to act if outbreaks of an illness do occur in a school.

After speaking with administrators and others, I decided to take a middle of the road approach and let parents decide whether they want their child to learn in person or at home -- because everyone feels so differently about it

After care details?

We will offer childcare after school. However, we've cancelled after school studios because we didn't want adults who aren't part of our regular staff to come in and out - to minimize exposure for our children. In spring will try to have more after school classes depending on the situation with the virus.

Will the children wear masks outside?

No, we don't want children to wear masks outside especially in the heat – students who are sitting in the shade or walking with a buddy may wear masks. As the weather cools, we will adjust, as necessary.

Can a student wear mask outside if they want to?

Yes, if they don't seem like they will pass out. I do worry about the Texas heat....Let us think on this and get back to you. See also [Will the children wear masks outside?](#)

This summer, the children wore mask if just sitting under a tree. But, if started running around, they took them off and gave to teacher to hold

Why are we only requiring kids 10 and up to wear masks ?

Initially our decision was to let each family make the choice. We are following the state mandate. It's hard to wear a mask all day - I know from experience. There are children and people it will be hard on. We will leave this choice up to each family when it comes to kids who are under 10 years old.

Do we know specifically how many kids will be online Vs on campus?

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



We do have this information. We need to think about whether it's appropriate to release this information. Maintaining family privacy as well as our close-knit community is important to us. We want everyone to feel included and connected to our community whether they attend school in person or online.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Upper School

Updated 5/03/2021

Will there be Westwood upper school summer camps in 2021?

Yes, Summer by Westwood is our camp program for upper school students. The weekly camps run from June 7 – August 11. For details and to register see <https://westwoodschool.org/summerbyww/>

Can families who started this spring attend the new family orientation?

Yes, we encourage our new spring families to attend the summer new family orientation on Tuesday, August 10th at 5pm. We've learned a valuable lesson this year because we had quite a few new families who entered in the spring. We will start doing a spring orientation next year.

Who do we speak to about donating used uniform?

The easiest thing to do to Put them in a bag and drop them off at the school. We have an amazing parent, Melissa Hohman, who picks them up and keeps an inventory. If you have questions, feel free to email her.

Updated 2/08/2021

Will there be more after school opportunities for middle school?

There's an activity almost every day for middle school students. For example, art club, cheer club, model united nations, math

Any student can propose a club they are interested in to their fellow classmates. If they can get friends to join & a teacher sponsor, then they can have the club. If your student is interested in something specific, encourage them to bring it to their fellow students and an adult at the school

When upper school is virtual, will Thursday be formal dress?

The regular uniform works when upper school is virtual.

Updated 8/18/2020

Will the upper school start Aug. 26-28?

Yes, upper School starts Aug. 26. Click <https://conta.cc/2FqZIAH> for details noted in an email that was sent to upper school parents and students from Heather Lourcey and Shaun Dalrymple on Friday, August 14. The exact schedules will be sent early the week of August 24.

How will the curriculum for kids who are online work?

Each group of upper school students will be engaged in learning at the same time whether they are on campus or at home. Westwood has purchased cameras with microphones for all classrooms to streamline this process. When class begins, the teacher will turn on the cameras for those learning from home.

Everyone will get same lesson, same homework and same exams on the same days. We hope it will be in as many ways as possible the exact same experience We learned this spring that some students did better online.

Other students didn't do as well - they struggled for one reason or another. We will address any issues with these students individually.

Can the kids move in and out of in-person and online daily?

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Students may attend class online or in-person this school year. If a student will be staying at home, parents should send Ms. Natalie Avery (navery@westwoodschool.org) an email detailing the expected duration of distance learning. You can change your student's distance learning plans at any time with 24 hours' notice to Ms. Avery.

We are developing a change request form that we will share with you as soon as possible.

How does Westwood plan to provide projects for both online and in person students?

We will work to ensure projects can be done online and in person. We have been extremely successful with this approach in lower school. If there are things your student might need for their project, you will need to come to school and pick them up. For example, we provided a tri-fold board for a special project for students in the spring.

ALPs?

We will wait until December or January - if possible - to determine whether it's possible to take these trips. If we can do the Spring ALPs trips, we would like every student to have this opportunity.

We will refund all the ALPs money if we cannot take the trips

How will P.E. be handled?

Our students in Grade 7 will take PE. If the students are inside, they will work on core exercises and maintain recommended social distancing (6 feet). In person students will meet twice a week and online students will meet in the google classroom twice a week.

If a student chooses to come to school but wants to opt out of PE, can they do this?

The state of Texas requires a PE credit for students to graduate high school. Since students cannot currently play on a sport team due to COVID-19, it is important for the school to find a way to provide PE. We currently have PE in Middle School because the High School schedule is so full.

How are labs going to work for Biology and Physics?

If an online student wants to come to school for the labs, they can. If a student can't come in person for a lab, we will provide them with whatever we can to have the experience online. They can pick up the materials needed.

What's happening with theater?

As you know, there were some positive COVID-19 cases reported among our summer theater camp participants. It made us realize theatre would not be a good idea for Fall. Therefore, we will not have any fall performances of any kind (i.e. choral music, theater).

We will make decisions about Spring theater once we get there.

Online Vs in person for art?

Art is one of the nice things you can do online or at school. If your student picks up or obtains the items they need, it should work well.

Will we have IBeanery?

We will still be conducting IBeanery class for 7th grade students. However, we will not be opening the IBeanery until perhaps January. We will attempt to have a couple open days in late fall under controlled circumstances.

Can students pick up their yearbook in person at school?

Absolutely

Will parents be able to access their kid's online portal to see grades & assignments?

You will be able to access their Google page & access their assignments for now. We will have to let you know the answer about grades. These must be kept private.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Our philosophy emphasizes student independence including their assignments and grade performance. Parents were particularly good in the spring about supporting student independence.

Will students who are attending online need to wear uniforms?

Yes, uniforms will be required. The uniform helps kids feel part of the group especially if they are online.

Can students receive the links to this Let's Move Forward Together update and invitations to future updates?

Yes, absolutely. Great idea!

In event of positive test in 9th grade, the student who tested positive would quarantine and rest of class would meet?

Yes, unless a student's parents want them to quarantine. During our summer theater camp, we had several staff and students test positive for COVID-19. However, not every student and staff member got COVID. Should this type of situation occur, we'll leave decisions about whether to continue in person or online up to the parents unless a big group gets COVID

At what point would we all move to online?

If we have a "stay at home order," we would likely close upper school and go entirely online

Will online students have access to teacher office hours?

There's always the option of meeting with the teacher. Students can always schedule an appointment with their teacher.

Will student's phones be put together in a basket like last year?

Yes, this policy will continue this year. We will assist students to set up official Westwood Google Meets to provide communication and interaction between students.

Will High Schoolers be able to leave campus during the day/lunch?

Yes, and we ask they wash hands when they return and are careful when out of the building.

Are there differences between lower and upper school in the pie chart showing responses from families about in person and online learning?

This is a daily moving target with families deciding to go online or to attend school.

Will there be after school care for upper school?

Yes, we will have after school care for upper school students. We're concerned about crossing between the 2 buildings and want to minimize contact. Upper school students will stay there until 4:45, then they will be released to lower school and will stay in the very front classroom only until 6pm.

General

Updated 5/03/2021

Can families who started this spring attend the new family orientation?

Yes, we encourage our new spring families to attend the summer new family orientation on Tuesday, August 10th at 5pm. We've learned a valuable lesson this year because we had quite a few new families who entered in the spring. We will start doing a spring orientation next year.

Who do we speak to about donating used uniform?

The easiest thing to do to put them in a bag and drop them off at the school. We have an amazing parent, Melissa Hohman, who picks them up and keeps an inventory. If you have questions, you can her.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Updated 02/08/2021

Will there be standardized test for upper elementary and middle students this year?

We are planning on administering Iowa Standardized Tests for upper elementary & middle school students.

Is topic of uniforms up for debate?

Yes, we always listen. If we want to have a specific community meeting about it, we can do this. The way we decided on school uniforms came about because of a community meeting.

If enough people want to change this either for the current coronavirus situation or in general, we can talk about it. We just signed the contract for next year with Flynn O'Hara.

Will there be spring sports in 2021?

Unfortunately, we will not do spring sports this school year. We've just made this decision. We did have a wonderful fall volleyball season, but for other sports we didn't have enough students to field a team.

Another important consideration is spring means track and field. You're talking about heavy breathing from runners and jumpers. And this puts participants, coaches and spectators at greater risk of catching COVID-19.

Will there be a Sky Ranch trip?

Yes, we are planning it. Stay tuned for dates. It's ultimately a family decision whether the child attends

Have we decided where graduation will be held?

Stay tuned. If we are able, we will want to do graduation at the Dallas Arboretum -- which has been our tradition. If not, we had a lovely graduation in our own courtyard last year. And we can do this again if needed.

Updated 11/17/2020

Will we get our school photos before the holidays?

Yes, that is the plan!

Updated 9/28/2020

Can non-volleyball families attend the games?

Absolutely. 60 people can attend in the stands. Volunteer spots are also available! There are 3 home games left this season.

Are we going to have classes Nov. 23-24?

Yes, Monday, November 23 will be a full day and Tuesday, November 24 will be early release. If you have already made plans, don't worry. Enjoy your family.

Will you require a negative COVID test to return to school under any circumstances?

Yes, if a child has tested positive or has a presumptive case. For details, Click [Here](#) and see: Personal Health and Communication to Parents

What is your layer cake secret, Mrs. Lourcey?

"[The Perfect Cake](#)" cookbook is my secret. It's the best cookbook for cakes I've ever had in my entire life! I highly recommend if you want to start baking cakes

Updated 8/18/2020

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31,8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Teachers are a huge part of what makes Westwood's small community work. The kids spend up to three years with the same teachers (ideally), which supports close relationships between students, teachers and families.

In this time of exceptional demands on the lives of teachers, what is being done to support and monitor teachers' physical and emotional health?

We are following all guidelines and more for whatever physical safety we can offer. We are having the early release Fridays so the teachers can have extra time to clean and work in their classrooms.

I have spoken with all the teachers (some in level meetings and others privately) and let them know that Westwood will support them in whatever way is needed. They do not need to be worried about their jobs if they need time off for themselves or their families. I will assist them in any way that I can.

We always try to keep the spirits of the teachers up – we have little gifts on their desks when they return, we have a cookie afternoon, make a Sonic drink run one day, etc.

Have teachers been asked to share their perspectives on returning to school?

Yes, as with the parents there were varied opinions

Teacher masks?

We will have face shields available for teachers. They can also wear masks if kids can understand them. Face shields reverberate microphones we use to teach online. Many people are getting smile masks so you can see their mouths

Will we still have our hot lunch program?

Yes, we will be able to order Low Country Cuisine through our school hot lunch program. And students can still bring their own lunch

Do we have sufficient insurance for the kiddos & the school?

We have particularly good coverage under normal circumstances -- but there's not coverage for pandemics as of right now.

Do teachers plan any dedicated steps to check in with distance (online) learners to gauge their engagement and internalization of material?

We will continue to expect our students to fully participate in classroom discussions. The teachers will use these discussions to evaluate whether students are understanding the classroom material (or not). They will also assign and evaluate Homework, quizzes, exams and school projects to determine whether each student is engaged and learning. All faculty will continue to have individual conversations with students as needed.

As it relates to distance (online) learners, we will identify and address any unique challenges during Inservice and throughout the school year.

Do you anticipate any dedicated and facilitated social engagement for the distance (online) learners?

At this time, we are still working through what sort of social engagement will occur. As you may remember from last spring, clubs continued meeting and students engaged in an online world called Minecraft.

The entire administration will be brainstorming ways to keep the entire community socially engaged, but of course this could be difficult given the circumstances. For example, a real issue we encountered in the spring was that students were tired of being online all day - and often reluctant to participate in online social activities after class

How do you recommend parents best support distance learners?

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



We stress the importance of providing a dedicated workspace for your student and keeping to the school schedule. I also recommend all students consistently participate in outdoor physical activities before school, at lunchtime or after school.

What other steps is the school planning to take to support distance (online) learners to ensure they can progress until parents deem it safe for them to return to school in-person?

We will also conduct a parent workshop to help the Google Classroom online platform we will use throughout the year.

Students will be able to use their study hall periods to set up meetings with their teachers or set up times before or after school for asking questions, receiving additional assistance or just to touch base.

How will you address online fatigue?

Teachers know kids can only sit for so long even if they are in school. Most teachers give kids a chance to start their work and ask questions. For online students, it's important to build time into their day to walk outside

Will this Let's Move Forward Together community briefing be sent as a recording or just notes?

Yes. Here are the links to the recorded videos and an updated FAQ

Video: Lower School August 6, 2020

<https://vimeo.com/449015663>

Video: Upper School August 6, 2020

<https://vimeo.com/449012055>

FAQ: Back to School Fall 2020

<https://westwoodschool.org/wp-content/docs/COVID-19-Response/FAQ-ReopeningFall2020.pdf>

Updated 7/31/2020

Rest assured; we will be ready for Fall 2020 with the same commitment to helping our students grow into caring young adults inspired to succeed in our ever-changing world.

Westwood's small school size enables us to be more responsive than larger schools to keep students, teachers, and staff safe and move quickly to act in the best interest of our community.

Westwood will be On Campus & Online

We are following the rules set by state and local authorities. Amidst the swirl of guidance from various state and local authorities....

We've figured out Westwood's state licensing and Montessori state licensing allows us to provide for childcare for children 18 months to 6th grade. If a government agency mandates online schooling, we can still provide care for children in this age group.

This means, Westwood will offer continuous childcare along with online school as we start school – and when online learning is mandated or necessary for the well-being of our community.

This approach will help parents who need childcare as well as those who aren't yet comfortable sending their child to the physical school. It also enables us to move more fluidly with changes in guidance and mandates.

State and local orders & guidance

In case you're interested, here's a recap of the most recent orders and guidance we've received about school start dates.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



July 16, 2020: The [order](#) issued by Dallas County officials changed our plans to begin on-campus face-to-face learning on August 19.

July 17, 2020: The Texas Attorney General issued a [letter of guidance](#) late Friday afternoon **exempting religious private schools from the Dallas County order.**

July 28, 2020: The Texas Attorney General issued another [letter of guidance](#) specific to private schools. **It leaves the decision about whether to open and close in the hands of private school leaders. It also gives the health authority the right to act if outbreaks of an illness do occur in a school.**

July 28, 2020: The Texas Education Agency (TEA) updated [public health planning guidance](#)

Updated 7/16/2020

• Can you provide a quick recap of the July 16, 2020 Dallas County order?

We understand this order addresses 3 key areas. Please keep in mind mandates from state and local authorities may change.

1. Before September 8, 2020, public and private K-12 schools can only hold classes online. We must delay in-person start dates (August 19 & 20) until September 8.
2. Teachers and school administrators can lead online classes from the school's campus. They are required to wear face coverings and practice social distancing when in the school buildings.
3. Clubs, sports, academic competitions and other school sponsored events are on hold until schools are given the green light for on-campus classes.

Updated 6/24/2020

• Why are we returning if numbers are higher now than in March?

The reality is that kids need to be in school. People need each other. Kids need each other. If it's not possible to be in person, then we plan to be online. We can do our best with online, but it's just not the same.

There is nothing that can compare with face-to-face learning. In person, we can judge whether a child understands a lesson or what's being said. Kids need interaction to learn.

It's my feeling that kids need to be in school. It doesn't have to be your feeling. Parents need to make the decision that is best for their family. I will be sending my kid back to college, encouraging him to do his best and follow guidelines.

• How safe is it to send kids back to school?

Every family must make the decision about whether to return to school based on their own circumstances. Here is a link to a list of articles that you may find helpful <https://westwoodschool.org/wp-content/docs/COVID-19-Response/Resources-for-Parents.pdf>

• When we resume classes in person, what has shifted since March?

I'm assuming this question is about everyone feeling comfortable about what we're doing in school and more comfortable with what is happening. March 13 hit and none of knew what was happening. At first, we thought we'd be back in a week...that didn't happen.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



When teachers came back after Memorial Day, everyone was cautious because we had been isolated in our homes. We've noticed we have gotten used to washing our hands more often, not touching our face, using a car line, etc.

This is 100% about whether you as a parent feel comfortable with your child coming to school. If you don't feel comfortable for any reason, that is your call. We will make accommodations in whatever way we can – sending home packets, going live online for a child, etc. Obviously, every situation is different – we will try everything we can to make this a good situation for our entire community.

From a classroom standpoint, here are examples of shifts in 5 areas:

- Virtual/Online Learning
- Teacher/Student Ratios
- Classroom Sizes & Layouts
- Masks & Enhanced Cleanliness

When it comes to **virtual learning**, everyone is used to what we're doing. We'll continue with live interaction for our middle and high school students. To help parents of our younger children, we'll make music, art and other types of videos available in the morning hours so parents can work.

Face Covering Update 7/8/2020

Our COVID-19 safety practices changed to meet a [new order](#) from the Dallas County Commissioners Court issued on June 19

The new mandate took effect June 20 and is in effect until Aug. 4, 2020. It requires "Anyone 10 years or older has to wear a face covering when they are in a public place where it is difficult to keep six feet away from other people or working in areas that involve close proximity with other coworkers."

For children younger than 10 years of age, Westwood parents can have their child wear a mask or other face covering and we will do everything we can to have them keep it on during the day.

Our plan for **teacher to student ratio is 1 teacher / 10 or fewer students**. We've prepared all the extra classrooms in the school. For example, in Upper Elementary there's an extra classroom the children can flow into if needed.

If we decide we need to make the ratios smaller, we have classrooms already set up to make this happen.

We will try to keep the students grouped in their own class. We won't blend the classrooms for now to the best of our ability. We're also thinking through all the details and what needs to happen to stay safe. For example, the children in Upper Elementary all use the same bathroom - we'll do some extra things to help keep it clean.

We're thinking through things that we can do realistically. While we can't promise no one will get sick, rest assured we'll do the best we can to keep our kids and community safe.

We have **capped our classroom sizes** at all levels. For example, normally we take 24-26 children in a PreK classroom. We are keeping numbers at 20 per classroom. We are also limiting the number of students at one table and placing the tables at safe distances.

Some studios will be held in the child's classroom. We'll try to keep kids grouped in their own classes. We aren't going to blend the classrooms this time. Our plan is to keep small groups together as much as possible.

• Can you elaborate on the Fall session? For example, will we have live sessions between teachers & students more than twice per week?

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



We hope to have the live interaction every day for some period of time. To help parents of our younger children, we'll make music, art and other types of videos available in the morning hours so parents can work.

- **Will there be an option for virtual learning if we're not comfortable with our kids going back to school?**

Yes, this is 100% about whether you as a parent feel comfortable with your child coming to school. If you don't feel comfortable for any reason, that is your call. We will make accommodations in whatever way we can – sending home packets, going live online for a child, etc. Obviously, every situation is different – we will try everything we can to make this a good situation for our entire community.

- **How will we onboard new students in virtual classroom?**

For logging into Google Classroom, we will assign new students a Google email address. Then, the student will receive an email (at their Google email address) from the school inviting them to their assigned Google Classroom. We are thinking through other new student onboarding practices beyond logging into Google Classroom.

- **What is the best way for new students to get to know classmates before school starts? Especially if it starts online.**

We're going to introduce the idea of family pods: 2-3 families are in a group (pod) who would socialize together. Families could choose if they want to do this. Our goal would be to put you with families who have a child the same age as yours and who live near you.

We've heard from parents who are having trouble trying to work while we shelter in place. Family pods will give working parents a way to share childcare if we must go online.

Arranging for outside meetups at parks could also be a great way to meet other parents and your child to meet other children.

- **For working parents who are having difficulty sharing their work computer with kindergarten and elementary students, what suggestions do you have?**

We hear you on this and have requested Chromebooks for all Kindergarten through Grade 6 students. Our plan is to have these go home with the child, so they have their own way to learn at home. We have a generous benefactor helping with this.

From live online session 4/28/2020

- **What criteria will you use to determine when it is safe to re-open?**

We will follow the rulings of the Texas governor, the Dallas County judge and other officials. There will be restrictions when we open-up like how many students in a class, how many at a table, etc.

- **What are Westwood's plans to open in the fall in case the situation persists?**

We are ready to continue with our virtual learning until we return to the classroom. We believe 2020-2021 will be a fluid year. It will be uncertain. My feeling is we will be able to be in the physical classroom at least part of the time. We will be outside the physical classroom at least part of the time. We are ready to move back & forth as needed.

- **What is the in-person vs online decision based on?**

The safety and well-being of our students, teachers, staff and other community members is primary concern. We are following the rules set by the Texas governor and local authorities. Once we are given the OK to open, we will begin in-person classes based on the guidelines provided by government, educators and medical experts.

Our small school size enables us to be more responsive than larger schools to keep students, teachers and staff safe and move quickly to act in the best interest of our community.

There are other factors we will consider and plan for as we make decisions on behalf of individual students and the community. For example,

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



- We want students to experience as many in-person classes and activities as possible
- What we will do when community members become ill. This will probably look different than it has for Westwood in the past.

If you don't feel comfortable with your student coming to school, please keep them home and we'll work with your family to make arrangements. For example, we'll ensure they get the lessons, materials and one-on-one time they may need with the teacher.

COVID-19 Safety & More

Updated 12/18/2020

As more students move into the classroom are you planning to reallocate teachers?

It's not likely we will reallocate teachers if more students move from online to in person classes.

We expect our staff support and student/teacher ratios to remain the same for the rest of the year.

Here are 5 fast facts about our approach to staffing

1. We've designed our staffing model to provide individual attention to our students as well as to support our Westwood families and community.
2. We currently have 41 full-time teachers, 2 part-time teachers and 7 admin staff.
3. We hire based on expertise and need.
4. We assign teachers to maintain a low teacher/student ratio.
5. This school year, we've offered families a choice of in-person or online learning to help address coronavirus concerns. Our flexible approach enables online and in person students learn from the same teacher at the same time. For example, the upper elementary math teacher is teaching both online and in-person students at the same time. This approach gives each student opportunities to engage with all their classmates.

Are you planning to make mandatory for kids to wear mask for all kids?

Not right now, we will see how things are going. As an administration, we have begun talking about and planning for the future. All sorts of things are in that discussion. We continue to stay abreast of what's happening in our local community, region, state and the world. We are ready to respond as things evolve.

Updated 9/28/2020

Will you require a negative COVID test to return to school under any circumstances?

Yes, if a child has tested positive or has a presumptive case. For details, Click [Here](#) and see: Personal Health and Communication to Parents. For the latest 2020 COVID-19 Safety Updates:

[Click here](#) for Lower School Campus

[Click here](#) for Upper School Campus

[Click here](#) for COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines (2020-2021)

We will continue to enhance the way we do safety to align with guidance from authorities and experts in COVID-19, childcare and education.

Updated 8/18/2020

Do we need to sign a legal waiver?

Most schools ask for a COVID waiver these days. We will probably have some type of waiver. We will speak with our lawyer and find out what is best to do.

Will personal info of person who tested positive be shared?

No because we must protect the privacy of our students, teachers, staff and other community members. If your child mixed at lunch time with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, we may share more information.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31,8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



We may also call parents in the grade they mixed with. We are working hard to develop ways to identify who needs a direct notice. Everyone else will get a general email notice.

Will the school close if someone tests positive for COVID-19?

Generally, we will not close when we receive a report that a student, teacher or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. You can choose for your child to stay home and work online.

If the numbers rise for some reasons – for example, several children or teachers at one level become ill – we could make the choice to close for a few weeks to quarantine.

You mentioned early release Fridays for cleaning. How will daily cleaning be handled?

All the normal surfaces will be cleaned daily. Early release Fridays will let us go further – for example, open the boxes and wipe things down such as the Montessori materials.

Have we had positive cases of COVID-19 during the summer?

Yes, at the lower school campus we had 1 teacher who reported a positive test and no students. At the upper school 6 students and 2 teachers reported positive COVID-19 tests. Everyone reported mild cases w/headache, loss of tastes and smell, and feeling tired for a few days.

Will we do temp checks?

We've done temp checks all summer. We have it down to a science. Kids are used to it and it doesn't seem to bother anyone. We will probably start school by doing it, so everyone is used to it. We will let you know if we change our minds. It's possible, we might stop temperature checks at some point.

If someone at school has a fever, what is the protocol?

If child has a fever, they will be isolated in the office and they can lay on a cot in the office. We will call their parent to pick them up. Same rules apply as usual – if a child no longer has a fever after 24 hours, they can come back to school. We will be stringent about the 24-hour rule because of COVID.

What is sub plan for teachers who are ill?

Two of the toddler teachers will help cover for teachers who are ill. We do have 2 teachers in each lower elementary classroom. We can use any of our administrators and we've spoken with our studio teachers about subbing when teachers are ill.

Have any physicians or other medical personnel been involved in your COVID planning?

Yes, we have an official Westwood physician through Baylor, Scott and White through our high school training program. We also have had many doctors offer their assistance. We're happy to hear whatever any of them have to say - with the caution that there's so much information out there that it's hard to discern what's right or not.

We're always open to ideas about how to better do things. We will make decisions on what's best for everyone to the best of our ability.

Updated 7/16/2020

• How will you handle if a teacher or student gets sick with confirmed case of COVID-19?

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 for any person who “participates on any on-campus activities”, we will follow the [TEA guidelines](#)...

1. “Notify our local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). “
2. “Close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have already passed since that person was on campus. “

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31,8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



3. "Notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities."

In addition, the person testing positive as well as their family, would be expected to quarantine and not attend or visit school until they are cleared to do so according to TEA guidelines.

We encourage everyone in our community to keep talking to each other and inform us if someone they know becomes sick.

- **How soon would we be notified if a child, student or community member tests positive for COVID-19?**

Currently our plan is to follow the [TEA guidelines](#). As soon as we know, we will send you an e-mail that day. We will attempt to provide basic information without naming anyone. Please respect that we must follow confidentiality requirements by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. When possible, we also plan to call the person or guardian of any students directly exposed in class to the person testing positive.

Everything changes daily and it's coming from multiple organizations. As the information and guidance changes, we will adjust.

- **Fresh air & air filters are super important. Are we considering high tech ways to sanitize (UV light sanitizing tools, electrostatic sprays)?**

We have ordered [specialized medical grade air purifier](#) for every classroom and common areas.

Updated 6/24/2020

- **If there's a vaccine for COVID-19, will you make this mandatory?**

Our belief is the parent must make this decision for their family. Therefore, Westwood will not mandate whether someone must have a vaccine.

- **Now that testing is more readily available, will teachers & staff be tested regularly?**

Our current plan follows [TEA guidelines](#) and does not include asking teachers & staff to be tested regularly.

We are requiring teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day -- including taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must report to us if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted in the TEA guidelines. Additionally, they must report to us if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined by TEA guidelines, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

If Dallas County sets up a special teacher drive through for testing COVID-19, we'll consider it along with any privacy requirements we must follow as an employer.

- **Will the students spend more time outdoors?**

When it's nice/not too hot, yes – gardening, patio, courtyard at Midway, PE class.

We will try to keep classes separated as much as possible. For example, one class in gym, one in field & one in the "bark box." I literally sat in my car and watched kids play together. It's going to be rough to keep them apart.

For PE, Coach Blankenship will try to do as many individual things as possible - she does a great unit with jump rope - they move through stations individually.

Tuition & Insurance for 2020-2021 School Year

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

From live online sessions 4/28 & 6/11, 2020

Updated 6/24, 7/8, 7/16 & 7/31, 8/18, 9/28, 11/17, 12/18, 2020



Please contact us today, if for any reason you will not be returning to Westwood in Fall 2020. Heather Lourcey (hlourcey@westwoodschool.org), Debra Giorgini (dgiorgini@westwoodschool.org) or Janet Cardona (jcardona@westwoodschool.org).

Updated 8/18/2020

Is tuition insurance included when a family uses a payment plan?

Yes, it's already included.

To get the refund from the tuition insurance was there a clause in there that the students still must attend the school for 2 weeks?

Yes, online school counts

Can we add tuition insurance at the start of school year?

The deadline for purchasing tuition insurance for 2020-2021 school year was August 7, 2020. [Click here](#) for details on tuition insurance for the 2020-2021 school year.

Updated 7/16/2020

• Should we be concerned about our ability to return to Westwood due to job loss, furlough or another situation related to COVID-19?

Some parents purchase tuition insurance to help ease concerns about future job loss or other situations that could impact their ability to meet 2020-2021 tuition. [Click here](#) for details.

Updated 6/24/2020

• If a household is high risk and a parent decides to keep a child out for the Fall, will the child be able to return in the Spring?

It depends. For example

- If a family chooses for their child to take online classes from Westwood in the Fall, your child can come back in the Spring.
- However, if a family with tuition insurance chooses to get their money back (unenroll in the Fall), their child would not be able to return for Spring.

Our hope is we can return for the school year and we only need to take an extra week in the Fall due to COVID-19. If we do have to take time away from the physical classroom, we will go online.

This is 100% about whether you as a parent feel comfortable with your child coming to school. If you don't feel comfortable for any reason, that is your call. We will make accommodations in whatever way we can – sending home packets, going live online for a child, etc. Obviously, every situation is different – we will try everything we can to make this a good situation for our entire community.

From live online session 4/28/2020; Updated 8/21/2020

• Can I still purchase tuition insurance – even if we paid in full and declined it?

Yes, you can purchase tuition insurance through the first day of school, August 18, 2020. The deadline to purchase tuition insurance for the 2020-2021 school year was August 7, 2020. [Click here](#) for details on tuition insurance for the 2020-2021 school year.