

Dear Lower School Families,

I hope that this communication finds you well and that you are enjoying the summer! In preparation for the 2020-2021 school year, we have been working diligently to craft both an on campus daily class schedule and off campus, a remote learning schedule.

The following plan is based on the guidelines put forth by the Guidance on Safety expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools. Our goal is to protect all our community, students, teachers and staff, by minimizing the transmission of COVID -19. Our goals with both scenarios are to ensure the safety for all while providing an education that is aligned with our Walden mission, philosophy and core values.

Walden is fortunate to have the space (inside and outside) to meet and exceed the physical distancing recommendation of 6 feet apart in the classroom. We have done a detailed analysis of each classroom and determined the capacity of each classroom based on 40sqft per child. From our analysis we found that some Lower School classes will need to be divided into two groups (pods) and some Lower School teachers' assignments will need to be changed. These changes were not taken lightly and were made with safety and quality of education at the forefront of my mind.

Devices and Google Classroom

Although nothing can replace face-to-face learning, Walden's 1:1 device program and the consistent platform of Google Classroom will allow all students to grow academically while supporting their emotional-social development. Kindergarten - Second will be given iPads, Third Grade will use iPads with keyboards, and Fourth Grade will use Chromebooks. These devices will be utilized from the start of the school year to make transitioning to remote learning seamless for students and families if need be.

Special Area Teachers

Special Area teachers will continue to provide engaging, hands-on lessons for Lower School students. The Special Area teachers will meet with each class twice a week with one lesson being in-person and the other lesson via Zoom. This will help transition students to remote learning if needed and reduce the possibility of cross contamination.

Fourth Grade

Fourth Grade has 26 students that will be divided into 2 pods of 13. Mrs. Green and Mrs. Tower will teach Fourth Grade. This team is excited to be working together again and looking forward to expanding their PBL units.

Third grade

Third Grade has 19 students that will be divided into 2 pods. Mrs. Bowles and Ms. Brown will be teaming up to teach Third Grade. Since the Library can not be utilized as it has been in the past (classes cannot travel to and from the library), Ms. Christen Brown will teach Third Grade. This will allow us to utilize Ms. Brown's classroom talents and PBL skills. This fabulous team will ensure our Third Graders will grow in their development of reading and writing to be informed while growing in the problem solving skills through PBL.

Second Grade

Second Grade has been divided into two pods with Mrs. Keith and Dr. Sutherland as the Second Grade teachers. We decided to have Dr. Sutherland teach Second Grade to ensure quality education in our additional second grade classroom. This placement as a 2nd grade classroom teacher will also allow her to provide support to all of the lower school teachers Dr. Sutherland will continue to support students during her planning time as needed. We recognize that this will be a mighty ask for Dr. Sutherland therefore I will personally be supporting Dr. Sutherland so that she can continue to support students and has time to plan.

First Grade

Mrs. Camp's plan is to return to Walden in January after her maternity leave. Mrs. Samantha Brown will be the long term substitute in First Grade. Mrs. Brown knows this group of rising First Graders therefore, with the support of Mrs. Camp, this transition will be seamless.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Bledsoe is returning from her maternity leave and will be teaching Kindergarten. Mrs. Bledsoe is excited about teaching Kindergarten again and is looking forward to this journey with you and your kiddos.

Other Links

[Lower School Remote Learning information and samples of schedules](#)

[Class List](#)

[Class schedules](#)

More to Come

- August 3rd -Transition videos will be sent to families. Lower School teachers will be creating videos for you and your student to view. It is our hope to reduce anxiety for all of you by giving you a virtual glance of the classroom and the new procedures.
- Week of August 3rd - Communication from your child's homeroom.

When we get closer to the start of school on August 10th, Walden will send out information that has more detail about drop-off/pick-up procedures, start of school activities, and updates, if necessary, to our plans.

In partnership,
Kelly Von Busch