



All Schools FAQs for Families

Updated March 10, 2021

This FAQ covers *only* health, safety, sanitation, and general information relevant across all divisions. For division-specific FAQ documents, [please click here](#).

Questions from the February 28 Forum. Note: This section covers many but not all of the questions raised during the 2-28 session. We will continue to add to this document.

Fall 2021 Planning

What are the plans for starting the 2021/22 school year in person?

We are committed to bringing all students back for full-time, in-person education in the fall. We have begun preparing for a variety of scenarios to make this happen and have the full support of the University.

What are the circumstances/metrics under which Lab will *not* be in-person full-time in the Fall? How will you ensure all students will attend in-person 5 days a week?

Again, we are committed to bring all students back for full-time, in-person education in the fall. Of course, depending on how the pandemic unfolds, the Chicago Department of Public Health or other public health authorities could issue new rules that impact N-12 education—including at Lab.

When and how will Lab keep me informed about fall planning?

Lab will email families at least once a month to share planning updates. The Schools will also work closely with the Parents' Association to disseminate information and hold more frequent, interactive Zoom meetings (not webinars) with smaller groups of parents. Lab will continue to field pulse surveys and principals will continue with regularly scheduled Parent Connects and parent letters, as well.

Starting with the next academic year (September 2021), will students be given the option of attending school in person vs. remotely?

The state of the pandemic will drive this decision, but if Lab is able to offer a full-time, in-person program, we do not plan to offer a parallel remote program.

Will deferred admission be offered?

At this time, Lab is not planning to offer any deferrals for the 2021-22 school year.

Facilities

What steps are being taken to acquire the additional educational spaces that are necessary to bring back all Lab students full time and in person for Fall 2021, assuming that social distancing must continue?

Lab will be prepared to bring all students back for full-time, in-person education in the fall regardless of whether social distancing remains at 6-feet or at a reduced distance. Should social distancing be reduced to 3-feet, Lab

would essentially be able to run our program on our own campus. At greater distances, additional space would be needed. The University is assigning facilities staff to work with Lab to outline our needs and then secure non-University space for Lab's use if distancing requires it.

Are there other University spaces that are available for Lab (i.e., classrooms, Ida Noyes, Logan Center)?

The University has a limited number of classroom spaces that are large enough to hold Lab's classes, as most University classrooms are designed for small, seminar style classes. Specifically, at 6 feet distance, of the hundreds of spaces on its campus that the University evaluated last year, only about two dozen rooms—outside those at Lab—could hold class sizes above 20 students. Large arts spaces, dining halls, etc., were included in the review, though these are in use for University students. In addition, some spaces did not meet the ventilation or other safety requirements.

As noted above, the University is assigning facilities staff to work with Lab to outline our needs and then research and secure *non-University space* for Lab's use if distancing requires it.

Please describe what you are doing to ensure proper ventilation in Lab buildings. Can we be supplied with HEPA air purifiers and ensure that all windows can open?

Because we have a highly mechanized ventilation system, the use of portable HEPA purifiers, open windows or the like in Lab buildings is not recommended. Indeed, having open windows, fans, or portable HEPA air purifiers in a space that has a mechanical ventilation system like ours can actually keep the contaminants in the "breathing zone" (think desktop to standing height) longer, which may in turn increase the risk of spread. The goal is to pull contaminants out of the breathing zone. That can be achieved with our mechanical ventilation system—which is predictable and capable of being monitored. This happens through air filtration and air exchange.

- Our standard is to have a *minimum* of four exchanges per hour in each building—all of the air is replaced at least once every fifteen minutes.
- We want to bring in fresh *filtered* air. Our standard is at least 40% of the air is replaced with outside air with each exchange. Weather permitting, we open the system up at least two hours in the morning before classes start and two hours in the evening and filter 100% outside air through the building.
- Our standard is a filter that captures particle sizes of 4.7 microns or larger so that they do not recirculate.

Can you share graphics and architectural diagrams with parents?

Yes. [Here is an example of how a Lab classroom has been mapped at different social distancing standards.](#) Lab had renderings like this made for virtually every classroom at both of our campuses.

COVID Conditions and Mitigation Strategies

Will Lab be implementing weekly COVID testing for students and all Lab staff?

The CDC has identified five essential layers of mitigation: masking, distancing, handwashing/respiratory etiquette, cleaning, and contact tracing. Testing of asymptomatic individuals is not considered an essential layer of mitigation. Lab has implemented the five essential layers successfully and we have access to diagnostic testing at the Medical Center for all Lab students and employees for whom testing is recommended. We continue to monitor changes in public health guidance and testing technology and availability, and we will update our practice should testing be deemed an essential and meaningful mitigation strategy.

Regarding COVID and variants: what metrics will be used to make decisions about closing down this Spring? What standard is Lab using to determine when in-person learning must end if cases go up?

Lab remains fully committed to in-person learning. That said, Lab will and must follow all Chicago Department of Public Health and Illinois Department of Public Health mandates.

In making decisions, Lab's focus is the health, safety and well-being of its students, employees, and the broader University community, and the decision to offer in-person education is based upon a spectrum of criteria and considerations, including: rates of transmission within the University and Lab communities, as well as in Chicago; public health guidance and regulations; the recognized benefits of in-person instruction and deep desire in the Lab community for in-person instruction; and the availability of vaccines to members of our community

Will Lab drop or reduce its social distancing requirement?

In planning for the fall, Lab will be prepared to bring all students back for full-time, in-person education regardless of whether social distancing is required at 5- or 6-feet or at a reduced distance.

Will there be any additional safety protocols during lunch such as spreading kids out more while they are unmasked and eating? Should partitions be used for lunch?

Depending upon their age, students will eat in classrooms or open spaces, including Cafe Lab, Sunny Gym, as well as outside spaces and follow the following guidelines for appropriate distancing. The time during which students are actually eating will be short and considered a "quiet" time and seating areas will be wiped down when the period ends. Given these health and safety mitigation practices, University health experts have not indicated that partitions are recommended at Lab.

How will travel during Spring Break be handled?

In keeping with the rest of the University, we will require our Lab community to abide by travel restrictions, including self-quarantining for 10 days upon return from a location that has been flagged by [federal](#), state, or [local health officials](#). [The UChicago Forward website has more information about travel](#). If you/your student will participate in the in-person program, then all travel should be reported to the Nurse's Office using the [Travel Reporting Form](#) found on the Lab Nurse's Page.

Will the COVID vaccine be required for all teachers? Students?

At this time, the University is not mandating the COVID vaccine.

Regarding COVID variants: How do they affect folks who have been vaccinated?

Vaccination is just one layer—albeit a strong one—of mitigation. Vaccinated individuals will still need to continue following the other mitigation strategies to protect themselves from any new variants. These include wearing a mask, practicing physical distancing, washing hands often, etc.

What criteria do you foresee for allowing students to stop wearing masks? Especially for our youngest children who are less efficient spreaders of the virus.

Masking is considered an essential mitigation strategy. We do not see forgoing masks in the near future even for younger children.

Why doesn't Lab mandate the use of high efficiency/double masking in classrooms?

Masking is just one of the five essential mitigation strategies. The University—including Lab—has rules related to masking which require everyone on campus to wear a face covering that fully covers their nose and mouth and has ear loops to securely hold it in place. The face covering should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and allow for breathing without restrictions. We advise that individuals wear medical masks or multiple-layer cloth masks similar to the ones that have been provided to all students and Lab employees who are on campus. [Here is more about the University's COVID-19 health requirements](#).

Decision-making, priorities, metrics

How are decisions being made at Lab related to COVID-19 and the educational program? Who is making decisions about how and when children return to school? Who has ultimate authority? Are teachers involved in the decision-making process? Does Lab receive advising on reopening from pediatricians and child mental health experts?

At the beginning of the pandemic, the University convened nine working groups to drive the planning for COVID management: research, education, housing and dining, workplace, N–12 education, national labs, arts, community, and athletics. The function of these University working groups is to provide guidance and support for the planning efforts of key areas, including Lab. Support comes in a range of *operational* matters involving facilities, information technologies, communications and regulatory issues, and that is why each working group has representatives from University facilities, IT, communications, and the legal office, as well as unit or area-level staff. The working group shares University information with the units to help align unit planning efforts with the guidelines of public health agencies at the federal, state, and local levels.

With this centralized guidance, the units are then responsible for making detailed academic and resumption plans. At Lab, this was managed by Implementation Teams for each division. The Implementation Teams were comprised of teachers, counselors, and administrators (see below).

To do unit-level planning, Lab created Implementation Teams in each division, and these teams were charged with developing academic programs and resumption plans. These teams collaborated with educators from across the division and departments, including working with Faculty Association representatives. For example, numerous drop-in sessions and Q&A sessions gave teachers the opportunity to ask questions and give feedback to help shape each division’s plan.

The resumption plan for each unit goes through the same level of review and, ultimately, goes before the same small group of university leaders, including the provost, for final approval. This is done in consultation with the University’s Epidemiological Consulting Team which includes experts at the UChicago Medical Center who provide advice on conditions that are necessary for the unit to do what they propose to do. The Epidemiological Consulting Team consults with other area experts as needed. In Lab’s case, they worked with pediatric epidemiologists and other child experts.

N-12 Education working group

Daniel Abebe, Office of the Provost
Catherine Braendel, University of Chicago Laboratory Schools
Arthur Del Muro, Facilities Services
Marc Klein, Office of Legal Counsel
David Magill, University of Chicago Laboratory Schools
Matthew Meyer, IT Services
Dillan Siegler, Office of the Provost
Meredith Shiner, Communications
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N–2 Implementation Team

AJ Jennings, N3 homeroom & N3 grade chair
Michael Eldridge, N4 homeroom & N4 grade chair
Melanie Weber, FA rep, asst. teacher in N3
Elspeth Stowe-Grant, K homeroom & K grade chair

Elizabeth Luna, 1st grade homeroom
Eli Johnson, 2nd grade homeroom & 2nd grade chair
Lisa Harrison, SA teacher & SA chair
Lauren Snelling, Counselor & L&C chair

LS Implementation Team

Sylvie Anglin, Principal
Marlease Bushnell, 3rd Homeroom Teacher
Keren Faling, Academic Specialist, Faculty Co-chair
Michelle Holmes, 4th Homeroom Teacher
Sushma Lohitsa, Special Areas (Science), Faculty Co-chair
Stephanie Mitzenmacher, 5th Homeroom Teacher
Uzma Panjwani, assistant principal
Sonia Perez, dean of students
Melissa Steger, Counselor, L&C Dept. Chair

MS Implementation Team

Ryan Allen, Principal
Scott Budesilich, PE Chair
Meghan Gilbert, Learning Coordinator
Jessica Hanzlik, Assistant Principal
Diane Jackson, World Language Teacher
Lisa Miller, 8th grade Humanities Teacher
Caitlin Shannon, Math Teacher
Thomas Toney, Service Learning
Lyneth Torres, Counselor
Michael Wong, Science Teacher
Luke Zavala, Dean of Students

HS Implementation Team

Asra Ahmed, Assistant Principal
Paul Beekmeyer, Principal
Ana Campos, Dean of Students
Jane Canright, Math Teacher
Charles DiSantis, History Teacher/ Lead Advisor
Laura Doto, Learning Coordinator/ Lead Advisor
Zachary Hund, Science Teacher/ Science Department Chair
Ian Taylor, English Teacher/ HS FA Representative
Roz Torto, Music Teacher/ Music Department Chair/ HS Steering Committee

General Questions

Will spring break and other days off remain the same?

At the current time, spring break and no-school days have not changed for the 2020–21 school year. See the [Planning/No School Calendar](#) for a complete list.

How can I best prepare my student for the return to campus?

We recommend the following:

1. Wear face coverings regularly and for long periods of time, especially when you go to stores and other public places.
2. Teach your student to thoroughly wash their hands for at least 20 seconds (see these videos on proper technique for [younger children](#) and [older children](#)) and to use hand sanitizer when a sink isn't available.
3. Practice physical distancing. (One handy rule of thumb is to use "airplane arms" by having two children reach out their arms toward each other. Their fingertips should not touch.)
4. Use the [Learning and Counseling Social and Emotional Resources](#) to talk to your student about COVID-19 and prepare for the return to campus.

The more children practice these routines, the better prepared they will be for successfully transitioning back to school.

How can parents and guardians best prepare themselves for their students to return to campus?

Your role in Lab's health-screening process has three parts.

1. **Education/training:** Every parent and guardian is asked to review this presentation, [Lab Parent COVID-19 Safety Training](#), which helps you understand our process and also offers suggestions on how you can assess your child's health with regards to the symptoms that might indicate COVID-19. Please review this information carefully as it will ensure that you can, with full understanding, complete the next step.
2. **Acknowledge and attest (*even if you have done this before*):** Every child must have a parent or guardian read, agree to, and sign [Lab's Acknowledgement and Attestation for COVID-19 Safety Precautions](#)—found on the left-hand side of each student's [PowerSchool](#) page. ***Even if you have done this before or if your child's instruction will be occurring remotely, you must submit this form.***
3. **Daily screening:** On each day that your child is scheduled to attend Lab in person including visit days, or for athletics or other activities, a parent/guardian must fill out and submit the [Laboratory Schools Daily Symptom Screening Form](#).
 - a. We suggest you bookmark this page which can also be found at the top of the Lab nurse webpage.
 - b. This form must be submitted each morning before your student enters a Lab building. The parent or guardian must submit a separate form for each Lab student.
 - c. If you do not complete the Daily Symptom Screener, Lab's nurse will attempt to contact you. If you cannot be reached, your Student will stay in the Nurse's Office until the form is completed.

What should families do if their WiFi goes down?

Call, or if your phone allows for email, email the division office. Lab will work with you and your student to address and support their work and your family.

If I choose remote for my student, can I switch to in-person learning later in the school year or vice versa?

No. To ensure adequate planning and stability for the educational environment, families will need to remain in the fully-remote option for the remainder of 2020–21 unless Lab is able to return to a fully in-person model.

Do I need to renew or get a new Lab Parent ID for myself or my caregiver?

Yes, we recommend doing so. While building access remains restricted for all parents and visitors, our security team renews expired Lab Parent IDs for pick-up at the security desks as usual. Lab parents unaffiliated with the University who do not yet have an ID should have received an email last fall with instructions on how to upload their photo and obtain their IDs. Parents may also request a new or renewed caregiver ID. For more detailed information on building access and IDs, visit the [Lab Parent ID webpage](#).

Will the student bus service be available?

No, the student bus service has been suspended until further notice. Visit the [Student Bus Service webpage](#) for information on alternative transportation options.

How are conferences run this year?

The majority of conferences are held remotely.

Student Health Records

Must students who are doing remote learning still get the medical check-ups and vaccines and fill out the normal set of medical forms for in-person school?

Yes. The Illinois State Board of Education has not changed its health requirements for the 2020–21 school year. Make sure your child is up-to-date with necessary medical check-ups and vaccines.

Visit the [Nurse webpage](#) for details.

Face Coverings

Are face coverings required at Lab?

Everyone (i.e., faculty, staff, students, vendors, visitors, and parents) is expected to wear a face covering that fully covers their nose and mouth and has ear loops to securely hold it in place at all times while inside Lab buildings.

- It is not sufficient to wear masks that are loose-fitting, such as neck gaiters, bandanas, or scarves, and such coverings do not meet the University's new requirement.
- It is important that face coverings do not have gaps in the nose, sides, or chin, and that you do not drop the face covering below your nose when wearing it.
- The face covering should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and allow for breathing without restrictions.

In addition, face coverings must be worn outside on the campus grounds when others are present. Students, faculty, and staff will receive training on proper mask-wearing.

What face covering will my child use?

Lab will provide two reusable cloth masks to every student. Families also have the option to provide a reusable cloth face covering for their children provided it meets the requirements below:

- Cloth masks should be washed at home with detergent between uses.
- Masks may not feature distracting imagery, or profane, derogatory, sexually suggestive, or other offensive or inappropriate language, illegal activities, or inappropriate products.
- Reusable cloth masks are preferred, but single-use masks are an option as a backup.
- Face coverings that are **permitted** include:
 - Store-purchased cloth masks,
 - Homemade face coverings that follow the [CDC's specifications](#),
 - Surgical masks that tie or loop around the ears.
- Face coverings that are **not permitted** include:
 - Face coverings with an exhalation valve, which can allow particles to exit through the valve,
 - N-95 respirators,
 - Half/full-face respirators, and
 - Face/neck gaiter wraps that are 2 layers (as of 2/10/21).
- Disposable masks should only be used for one day and must then be discarded.

What if someone can't wear a mask due to a medical condition?

Families may seek an accommodation for their student if they are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition. Any family seeking an accommodation for their student must have their physician complete the [Face Covering Accommodation Request Form](#) and submit it to the School Nurse.

Will students have to wear face coverings all day?

Students will be expected to wear their masks for long periods of time. Mask breaks occur during snack, lunch, and hydration breaks.

What happens if my child forgets, loses, or damages their face covering?

Disposable masks, in varying sizes, will be available for students who need a temporary face covering.

Will school security personnel be enforcing the face covering requirement for students and visitors?

School security staff will not allow anyone in the building without a face covering. Disposable face masks will be available for children and adults at entrances. It is the responsibility of all Lab employees to remind students and adults about the importance of wearing face coverings for everyone's safety. As safety is the priority, students who do not maintain the face covering over their nose and mouth as required will be addressed and may be sent home. If necessary, students may be told to revert to the remote program for not adhering to safety protocols.

Will families (e.g., parents, caregivers, and other children) be required to be masked in their car when they arrive for drop-off and pick-up?

Yes. Everyone in the vehicle will be required to wear a face covering during carline drop off and pick up.

Hygiene

How often will students wash their hands?

Everyone is expected to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place or bathroom, touching surfaces often touched by others, and after nose blowing, coughing, sneezing, or before and after eating. In grades N–2, handwashing will be scheduled.

- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout our classrooms and buildings.
- Signs will be posted in visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a face covering).

How often will the school be cleaned?

Lab partners with UChicago Facilities Services and ABM to clean our spaces on a daily basis including high-traffic areas and high-touch surfaces, elevators, bathrooms, and stairwells. The school is professionally cleaned each evening.

- Bathrooms will be cleaned several times per day. Shared classroom materials and high-touch surfaces such as desks, chairs, and tables will be cleaned as needed with disinfectant provided in each classroom.
- Middle and High School students will sanitize their seating area at the end of each class/meeting.

Do I need to sanitize my student's belongings each day after school?

Cloth face coverings must be washed after each use. We recommend that belongings brought home from school be wiped down with disinfectant each day after school.

What is the available ventilation/air filtration in classrooms?

All mechanical ventilation systems in each University of Chicago building have undergone preventive maintenance in accordance with applicable statutory City of Chicago requirements, as well as all recommended

guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers to comply with the guidance provided where possible.

Restroom use

Occupancy limits will be marked on the outside of bathrooms. All stalls and sinks will be open. If all stalls are in use, students may go to a different restroom or wait outside the restroom for a stall to open. Students may not congregate in restrooms.

Physical Distancing

What measures will you take to physically distance students while at school?

The University and Lab have worked with architects to assess and reassign classrooms to de-densify and allow for physical distancing. Under the advisement of UChicago epidemiological experts and informed by a variety of recommendations made by national and state health and education organizations, Lab will reconfigure rooms so that the following distances are used to establish physical distancing at Lab:

- Classrooms will allow for six-foot spacing between older students, five-foot spacing between younger students.
- Rooms will be cleared of excess furniture to maximize space.
- Lockers will only be used by students in grades 1–5 on the Historic Campus.
- Time outdoors will be maximized.

Academic schedules and classroom use will be designed to keep students in smaller, consistent groups during the day and have fewer students on campus at one time.

Additionally, stickers will be placed on floors throughout the areas used by high school students to visually remind students to maintain appropriate distance.

How will students maintain social distance when they are outside or playing together?

During some outside periods, students will be properly distanced and at other times, students will be allowed to play together while wearing face coverings. Part of the school pedagogy will be teaching children about social distancing, and teachers will supervise children while they are outside.

Lab's plan says students will “distance when possible.” What does this mean?

Lab's approach to safety is multi-layered. Smaller classes, masking, and handwashing are all crucial—in conjunction with distancing. When students are in a static position (e.g., morning meeting or lining up), they will be six feet apart. When students are playing outside or working at centers in the classroom, they may have brief periods of less than six-foot distancing.

Self-Monitoring

How will you monitor the health of people on campus?

Anyone coming to campus is required to self-monitor for symptoms and stay home if they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19 or have had any symptoms including: cough, runny or stuffy nose, shortness of breath, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, body aches, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, and nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [has identified the current list of symptoms of COVID-19](#).

- Employees: The University has a formal attestation and training process in place for all University employees, including Lab employees.

- All Lab parents/guardians received must complete the required [COVID-19 training and health attestation](#).
- **Parents/guardians will be required to [complete a daily symptom screening form](#) before 8 a.m. each day their student is on campus.** Students will not be allowed in classrooms or to participate in on-campus activities if their parents/guardians have not completed the daily symptom screening form.

Will Lab be taking students' temperature as they arrive each morning?

No. This is not a required part of the University's multi-layered approach to health and safety. Temperatures will be checked by the School Nurses as needed for individuals who report or develop symptoms of illness while at school.

Does my child have to stay home if they have a runny nose or cough but no fever? Must they remain home until it clears?

Yes. If your child is ill with symptoms associated with COVID-19, they must stay home until they have received a negative COVID test, their symptoms have cleared, and you have consulted with the [School Nurse](#). Now more than ever, our community must abide by our policy that faculty, staff, and students must stay home if they exhibit signs of any illness. Families will be asked to pick up their child promptly if they show symptoms of illness at school and need to go home.

COVID-19 Information, Reporting, Quarantine, and Notification

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [has identified a variety of symptoms of COVID-19](#).

My child and/or another member of my household is in an at-risk group for COVID-19. Should I send my child to school?

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has defined [conditions in which certain people may be more at risk for severe illness through COVID-19](#). If your child or another member of your household is in an at-risk group, we encourage you to speak to your healthcare provider. Ultimately, you will need to decide whether you feel comfortable with your child attending school in person.

Under what circumstances would my child have to be quarantined?

Your child would have to be quarantined if they have had close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive; or upon return from a location that has been identified by [federal](#), state, or [local health officials](#).

What happens if my child is suspected of having COVID-19?

If you suspect your child has COVID-19: keep your child from entering any Lab or other University facility; inform the [School Nurse](#); and consult with your healthcare provider.

Your child must not return to campus until the following criteria are met:

- If symptoms are no longer present, **and** your child has received a negative COVID test result, they may be permitted to return to on-campus activities (Note: A negative test result by itself is not sufficient for an individual to resume on-campus activities if they continue to exhibit COVID-19-related symptoms.)
- If the above criteria are not met, your child will be expected to stay away from campus or in-person Lab-related activities until confirmed as non-infectious by the criteria below:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, **and**
 - 24 hours have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory systems (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

My child has COVID-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for COVID-19. When can they return to school?

If your child has tested negative, they are permitted to return to on-campus activities when:

- symptoms are no longer present, **and**
- you have consulted with the [School Nurse](#) about plans for return.

(Note: A negative test result by itself is not sufficient for an individual to resume on-campus activities if they continue to exhibit COVID-19-related symptoms.)

What happens if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

If your student tests positive for COVID-19, you should promptly report the test to C19HealthReport@uchicago.edu and the [School Nurse](#). They must not return to Lab or other University facilities until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

What should I do if someone in my child's household tests positive for COVID-19?

If someone in your child's household tests positive for COVID-19, you should promptly report the test to C19HealthReport@uchicago.edu and the [School Nurse](#). Your child must not return to Lab or other University facilities until the following criteria are met:

- They have quarantined for a period of 14 days per the recommendations of the [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) and did not develop any symptoms, **or**
- If during the time of quarantine, they develop COVID-related symptoms, the child cannot return to campus until confirmed as non-infectious by the following criteria:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and
 - 24 hours have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

If a student or employee becomes ill at school, do you have a place for them to rest away from other students until they can go home?

Yes. There are supervised quarantine spaces at ESH and the HC for students, staff, and faculty who are experiencing COVID-like symptoms and may be awaiting evaluation and/or pickup. Students will be supervised at all times while maintaining necessary precautions within the quarantine space.

What happens if a teacher or another student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19?

The School Nurse will consult with the University's Contact Tracing Team. The Contact Tracer will determine transmission timelines and pathways and provide recommendations to further limit spread of the virus. Should the Contact Tracer determine that your child had "close contact" with a COVID-positive person, you will be notified by the School Nurse and your child must not return to school until the following criteria are met:

- They have quarantined for a period of 14 days per the recommendations of the [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) and did not develop any symptoms, **or**
- If during the time of quarantine, they developed COVID-related symptoms, they are confirmed as non-infectious by the following criteria:
 - At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared and
 - 24 hours have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

Will they receive remote learning while quarantined?

Lab will support individual students as needed during their time away from school. If an entire cohort is quarantining, their teachers will run a fully remote class for that time period. Quarantined students will receive remote instruction.

How will Lab be supported with COVID-19 contact tracing?

Lab will utilize the University Infection Control Team for the tracing of all positive tests and close contacts.

If a special area teacher contracts COVID-19, who will have to quarantine at home given they rotate into classes?

During instruction, special area teachers will maintain six feet of physical distance between themselves and their students, wear a mask, and practice excellent hand hygiene. Lab will follow the guidance of the University Infection Control Team. Assuming the special area teacher follows all of these precautions, students may be allowed to remain in school.

Social-Emotional Resources

What mental health supports will you be providing to support students?

Counselors will continue to provide social and emotional support to students individually and in small groups. Counselors will also partner with teachers in supporting the social and emotional needs of students in the classroom.

Lab will continue our partnership with the Institute for Social and Emotional Learning (IFSEL) and CASEL to provide drop-in support and programs for faculty, staff, and parents. Wellness Councils will continue to share wellness programs and resources in each division.

Are there resources we can use at home to support me/my student?

- [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#) - Facts for Families Guide
- [Child Mind Institute](#) - How to Talk About Mental Health Issues (also offered in Spanish)
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) - The 5 Steps To Help Someone in Crisis, How and Why the 5 Steps Can Help
- [Erika's Lighthouse: Educate Yourself and Talk to Your Teen](#)

The resources above, as well as several others, can be found in the resource section of the [Learning & Counseling webpage](#).

What to do when concerned about a student's mental health and well-being.

If you are generally concerned for a student, please start by contacting the student's school counselor. In addition to providing support in the moment for a student, they can also provide parents and guardians with referrals to mental health professionals and programs to support any number of mental health conditions.

If worried about a student's safety, risk of harm to self or others, or some other emergency, please call the student's parent/guardian, or call 911 (home addresses can be found in the Family Directory in PowerSchool), and then reach out to the school counselor to share the concern afterward.

Travel

If my family travels out of state, do we need to quarantine before returning to Lab?

In keeping with the rest of the University, we will require our Lab community to abide by travel restrictions, including self-quarantining for 10 days upon return from a location that has been identified by [federal](#), state, or [local health officials](#). [The UChicago Forward website has more information about travel](#).

My family has plans to travel, can I still sign up for the in-person program?

Yes. It is important that you still sign up so we allocate the necessary space. You will, however, need to self-quarantine in adherence to state guidelines before beginning in-person learning.

If our family is traveling, do I need to notify the school?

If you/your student will participate in the in-person program, then all travel should be reported to the Nurse's Office using the [Travel Reporting Form](#) found on the Lab Nurse's Page.

Arrivals and Dismissals

What are the arrival and dismissal times and procedures for my student?

Refer to individual divisional FAQs for specific details since each division has its own arrival and dismissal procedures. Students will be dropped off at designated entrances or via carline.

What are the school's general hours of operation?

School doors open at 7 a.m. for faculty and staff

Early Day begins at 7:30 a.m.

School doors close at 4 p.m.

Late Day will be available to students until 5 p.m.

NOTE: Refer to divisional FAQs for open doors and classrooms for your student. Children *will not be allowed* in any school buildings before doors open, unless they are registered for the Early Day program.

Will carline change?

Carline patterns may change in order to provide proper distancing and efficient arrival and dismissal of students.

Will families (e.g., parents, caregivers, and children) be required to be masked in their car when they arrive for drop-off and pick-up in carline?

Yes. Everyone in the vehicle will be required to wear a face covering during carline drop off and pick up.

Who will help my children out of their car seats and opening and closing car doors in carline?

Parents (not Lab employees) must assist their children with car seats and doors as they exit and enter their vehicle. Staff will be on hand to guide students into the building to wash their hands and arrive at their classrooms.

What if I am running late to pick up my child from their daytime classroom?

We will have a designated space where a child can sit and wait for a late parent in the case of an emergency, which will be staffed by our extended day program when needed. There will be no "drop-in" to extended day for late pick-ups. After the second occurrence, families will be charged a fee for the late pick-up.

Lunches and Snacks

Can my child bring lunch from home? If so, what can they bring?

Yes, students may bring their lunch from home. Items should be disposable or should be cleaned and disinfected at home each evening. Students will not have the use of microwave ovens to warm up lunch items. Lunches for N–2 students must be peanut and tree-nut free.

Can my child purchase lunch or snacks?

Yes. Lunches, snacks, and milk can be pre-ordered using the [My Meal Order](#) app. Lunches will be delivered to classrooms. The cafeteria and coffee shop will remain closed.

Should I send snacks to school for my child?

Yes. To eliminate food sharing, snacks will not be provided in the classroom for students of any age. Families can order snacks through the [My Meal Order](#) app as well.

Where will my student eat lunch?

Students will eat in classrooms or open spaces, including outside areas, following CDC and University guidelines for appropriate distancing. Grades N–5 students must be six feet apart, MS/HS students must be eight feet apart. In addition, MS/HS students may not talk while eating and will need to wipe down their seating area when the period ends.

How will students eat at school?

Students will be distanced during all snack and lunch periods. Many classes will eat outside when weather allows. Students should either bring lunches and snacks from home or order from Café Lab. Snacks and lunch items will not be shared among students.

May students bring snacks or other treats to share with their advisory, a club, or a class?

No, there will be no shared food in the classroom, in advisory, or club meetings. In the lower grades, classroom teachers will work to make birthdays at school special in new ways other than sharing a treat.

Extended Day

Will before and after school care be available for N–5 students?

Yes. Early Day for Grades N–5 will begin at 7:30 a.m. at both campuses. Late Day for Grades N–5 will be available until 5 p.m. each evening. All students using Extended Day must be registered in advance for the quarter.

Can I drop my student off before the start of the school day?

No. The COVID-19 situation means that Lab will need to be strict about students arriving on time and not before. Should you need regular early care, Early Day is available for students in Grades N–5 and begins at 7:30 a.m. *All students using Early Day must be registered in advance for the quarter.*

Can I use drop-in Early or Late Day care as needed?

No. In order to align the Extended Day program with cohorts and classrooms, as much as possible, students must be registered for Extended Day for an entire quarter. No drop-ins will be allowed to Early or Late Day.

Will Extended Day Special Classes be offered after school?

No. Based on current building restrictions, Special Classes will not be offered. Instead, Lab is offering a simplified, five-day before and after school program.

Will breakfast still be served in Early Day?

No. Breakfast will not be served and no food may be consumed while in Early Day.

Will snacks still be provided in Late Day?

No. Students should bring a refillable water bottle and their own snack to Late Day. Snacks can also be ordered via Café Lab. Our leaders will follow proper distancing whenever children are eating.

What program options are available for Extended Day?

Lab is offering simplified, five-day Early Day and Late Day programs for students in N–5. Families must register for all five days for the length of the term.

What are the dismissal options for Late Day?

Late Day will dismiss at 5 p.m.

Can I register for fewer than five days per week?

No. Given the current pandemic-related uncertainties, Extended Day programs will be limited. Lab will only run a five-day-a-week program, and we will ask that families sign up for full terms in advance.

What is the cost of Extended Day?

Pricing will be available when you register.

How do I pay for Extended Day?

You will be billed monthly through our registration platform. More information will be available at the time of registration. (Billing will no longer be processed through FACTS.)

[Click here for more specific Extended Day program FAQs.](#)

In-Person School Days

Will parents or visitors be allowed on campus?

No. Whenever possible, we encourage parents, alumni, colleagues, and prospective families to consider a virtual meeting or a phone call. Any visit to Lab offices must be pre-arranged through the respective school office. School faculty or staff will continue to schedule phone calls or Zoom meetings when there is a need for contact with parents/guardians.

What can my student bring to school with them each day?

Students should bring their backpack, school supplies, a **fully charged** laptop or tablet, and headphones/earbuds daily. If a student needs assistance obtaining a laptop/tablet or headphones/earbuds, they should [contact the IS help desk](#). ***We strongly recommend that students bring wired headphones/earbuds, as there may not be an opportunity to charge wireless items during the school day.***

For younger students, toys from home and unnecessary items must remain at home. A list of any necessary school supplies will be provided by your child's teachers.

How will my student's belongings be stored at school?

Lower School students will be assigned lockers. Students will be required to empty their lockers at the end of each school day. Middle and High School students will not be assigned lockers and will be required to keep their school materials in their backpacks each day. It is recommended that materials brought to and from school be disinfected each evening.

How will emergency drills be conducted?

[Per Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\) guidance](#), Lab will conduct emergency drills in accordance with Phase 4 health and safety guidance. Accordingly we will run multiple drills to avoid bottlenecks in stairwells and hallways and congestion at gathering points. Drill dates and times will be shared in advance with faculty.

There are three types of drills which we practice throughout the year: fire evacuation drills, lockdown drills, and inclement weather drills. Because the lockdown and inclement weather drills require that students and staff move from their regular classroom area to an area that, by necessity, involves congregating in a space that would not allow for six-foot separation from another person, these drills will NOT be practiced. However, the faculty will discuss with their students the proper procedure for such emergencies and explain the importance of the practice.

Fire drills require evacuating the buildings in an orderly manner and then assembling in an outdoor area to account for all students and staff. All exit routes will remain the same and are posted in each room and office for the faculty and staff to follow. When exiting the building, it may not be possible to maintain the six-foot separation from other cohorts, but such contact with another group will be brief. Once outside the building, the cohorts will assemble in spaces so that each cohort will be grouped together and separated from another by an appropriate distance, managed by faculty and staff.

In the event of an *actual* emergency, life safety will be the priority. This means prioritizing actions that save time (exiting a building as quickly as possible) and are medically prudent (CPR) over attempting to maintain social distancing.

Can students use school printers and copiers?

Yes. After each use, the student will be expected to sanitize and wipe down the equipment using the cleaning materials provided and as directed on signs posted by each copier/printer.

Can students arrange meetings with teachers while in-person?

Teachers can hold in-person individual student meetings during in-person days if feasible.

Will the libraries be open?

Lab is continuing to work to safely offer library services with new health and safety protocols to students in all grade levels whether in-person or remote.

What if families are running late to pick up a student from school?

Lab has designated spaces where a student can sit and wait for a late parent/guardian in the case of an emergency. Lab buildings close at 4 p.m. each day for cleaning.

After School and Playgrounds

Will Jackman Field and the tennis courts be open to the community?

Jackman Field and the tennis courts will remain closed and be reserved for Lab physical education and athletics programs. Additional information on these programs will be provided as it becomes available.

Will playground structures be open for use? How will they be cleaned?

All playground structures will be open. Students will wash/sanitize hands before and after use.

Will the fitness center be open to employees and students?

No. The fitness center will remain closed for the time being.

Outside of School Activities

What will happen if students and families gather together outside of school—evenings and weekends?

In-person learning is predicated on every single member of the Lab community doing their part to keep one another safe. We hope that families and students choosing to return to campus for in-person learning understand that their actions outside of school help keep everyone in school safe and healthy.

Students who have routinely gathered with peers outside of school, and especially if they have not upheld COVID public health guidelines (maintaining physical distance and wearing of an appropriate mask), should immediately stop doing so and quarantine for 10 days prior to returning to school, or should continue to attend school remotely.

I am aware of students/families who opted into the in-person program who are not upholding public health and Lab/University guidelines. What should I do?

Adapted from the UChicago Forward website:

The University's experience so far indicates that there is widespread determination across the UChicago community to uphold COVID-19 health and safety requirements. If you see someone in a UChicago building without a face covering, not following social distancing requirements, or violating the health and safety requirements in another way, we encourage you to take the following steps:

- Politely urge them to adhere to the UChicago Health Pact, noting the specific requirement they are not adhering to.
- If the person continues to violate the requirements or becomes confrontational, please do not pursue the issue further in person. Instead, please remove yourself from the situation (particularly if you feel unsafe).
- Depending on the urgency of the situation, you can report the situation:
 - Immediately to a teacher, dean of students, school counselor or advisor;
 - Via [UCAIR](#), the University's incident reporting system for COVID-19 safety matters. When reporting through UCAIR, please provide as much detail as possible in your report, which will be reviewed for follow-up (typically within 24 hours) by the appropriate campus administrator. As a reminder, UCAIR reports can be submitted anonymously if preferred.

Tuition and FACTS

Is there a difference in tuition between the remote option and in-person school?

No, tuition for in-person and remote programs is identical.