

JUNE 3, 2020



CASCADES
ACADEMY

LOOKING AHEAD:

PLANNING FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR & BEYOND

DEAR CASCADES ACADEMY FAMILIES,

As we prepare for next school year and beyond, we want to provide a framework for our decision making process, offer an overview of our major areas of focus to date, and reiterate our commitment to the health and safety of our community as a top priority. As you might imagine, the conversations we are having right now are challenging, at times overwhelmingly, and full of complexity and countless decisions. On some days, it feels as if we have more questions than answers. And yet, each day as we dive deeper into our planning, I am astounded by the creativity, commitment, and innovative thinking that permeates our discussions and moves us forward one intentional step at a time. I hope this communication offers you some helpful insight into our approach and our unwavering commitment to providing a safe, positive, and vibrant educational experience for your child.

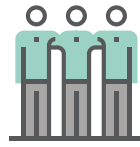


OUR MISSION

Cascades Academy is an engaged, vibrant community that weaves challenging academics with experiential learning to inspire socially responsible individuals ready for a diverse and changing world.

OUR VALUES LIGHT THE PATH

As we engage in our scenario planning for next year, we are guided by the following framework when making our decisions:



STUDENT CENTERED

To continually ask “What is best for our students?” at every stage of planning.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

To promote the health and safety of all community members as our highest commitment.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION

To build upon, preserve, and protect community strengths, connection, and culture.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

To preserve our robust commitment to mission and core values including learning excellence, experiential learning, and social / emotional health and wellness.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

To demonstrate our values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



LEADERSHIP

To incorporate student and family feedback and commit to program iteration, rapid responsiveness, and innovation to respond to changing needs.

During this time, we look to guidance from a variety of experts in the public health and educational realms, including:



- Deschutes County Public Health
- Oregon Health Authority
- Oregon Governor, Kate Brown
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Considerations for Schools
- National Association of Independent Schools
- Northwest Association of Independent Schools



NOW, NEAR, FAR: CASCADES ACADEMY RESPONDS TO OUR NEW LANDSCAPE

Our Pathways Forward team, composed of staff leadership and trustees, mobilized swiftly to craft Cascades Academy’s operational and strategic response to the pandemic.

NAVIGATING THIS JOURNEY **TOGETHER**



FEBRUARY 26, 2020

Faculty and Staff
COVID-19 Response
Team Formed

APRIL 1, 2020

Pivot to Remote
Learning after
Spring Break

MAY 11, 2020

Financial Assistance
Pathways Announced

JUNE 26, 2020

June Planning
Update

AUGUST 2020

Fall Reopening
Plan Shared

MARCH 16, 2020

Schools Closed by
Governor Due to
COVID-19 / Beginning
of Spring Break

APRIL 28, 2020

Pathways Forward
Committee Formed

JUNE 2, 2020

“Looking Ahead”
Communication

LATE-JULY 2020

July Planning Update

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

First Day of Classes
for the 2020-21
School Year

NOW

(APRIL THROUGH AUGUST),
THE TEAM IS FOCUSED ON:

- Creating Financial Pathways options to support our families experiencing unanticipated financial hardship
- Monitoring the most current guidelines from public health officials and educational leadership experts
- Creating new health policies and procedures for both summer camps and next school year
- Undertaking in-depth scenario planning for fall reopening
- Investing in leading edge faculty and staff professional development to support diverse teaching and learning environments
- Undertaking in-depth scenario modeling for potential responses to shifting public health directives

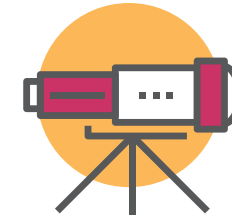
NEAR

(2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR),
THE TEAM IS FOCUSED ON:

- In-depth scenario planning for on-campus instruction including scheduling, educational program delivery, and social / recess time
- New requirements for arrival/departure procedures, social distancing, and consistent cohort groups throughout the day
- Enhanced hygiene practices for all community members
- New staffing models to support program delivery and increased supervision and health and safety requirements
- Possible accommodations for students / families who are health compromised
- Responsive programming for additional social, emotional, and wellness support
- New considerations for field trips, travel, all-school gatherings, parents on campus, etc.
- Preparations for intermittent campus closures if mandated by health authorities
- Evaluating school-year calendar models to maximize in-person instruction with any changes communicated no later than June 26
- Raising additional funds to support increases in tuition assistance, program, and staffing expenditures

FAR

(2021 AND BEYOND),
THE TEAM IS FOCUSED ON:



- Sustaining student enrollment through strategic application of Financial Pathways support
- Stewarding our most valuable asset through retention and support of our gifted educators and staff
- Building multi-year financial models in preparation for evolving enrollment, financial assistance, and capital expenditures
- Capitalizing on the unique opportunities presented by the rapidly shifting educational landscape to support and grow the CACO educational community

AS WE ENGAGE IN SCENARIO PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR, I am reminded of how fortunate we are to have a state-of-the art facility and expansive grounds as a setting for our intimate learning community of roughly 210 students. We know how important both in-person learning and social relationships are for all students. We are also acutely aware of the unique social and academic needs of our youngest learners and are prioritizing their time on campus in our planning. We will be providing more details about our approach to cohort groups and the daily and yearly schedules in our next communication at the end of June.

As you may recall, The Board of Trustees launched a new strategic plan two years ago entitled “Poised and Ready” which focused on an increased commitment to educational leadership and innovation, community partnership, faculty investment, and financial sustainability. We could never have predicted how the events of today would propel us to embrace these strategic initiatives with new alacrity. And even though the title of the plan seemed appropriate two years ago, the words offer new meaning during this time when it will be more important than ever to be “Poised and Ready” for our students, for our families, and for our future.

I look forward to keeping you updated over the next few weeks, and I thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to the Cascades Academy community.

Sincerely,



Julie Amberg

Head of School



CASCADES
ACADEMY

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL PK-12