

Plan to Reopen  
Amelia Academy  
2020-2021

In accordance with recommendations and requirements as stipulated by the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE), Amelia Academy has developed a Re-opening Plan with thoughtful consideration of the Academy's mission to "educate the whole student including, but not limited to, ethical, intellectual, and physical development."

The 2020-21 school year operation will include modifications designed to insure the safety and health of all students, faculty, and staff. Within those parameters, the Academy will endeavor to create a productive and nurturing learning environment.

This document presents a comprehensive approach to re-opening school with all faculty, staff, and students in attendance on-campus. Special accommodations will be provided for at-risk students and faculty who must remain in a distance-learning format.

## **1) Planning to re-open**

### **a. COVID-19 team –**

Rodney L. Taylor, Head of School  
Sherry Reynolds, Business Manager  
Jennifer Faeth, School Counselor  
Joanne Garner, Lower School Director  
Angela Anderson, Director of Student Affairs and Athletics  
Jesse Roberts, Director, Pre-School

### **b. Local Health Department –**

Amelia County Health Department  
16320 Church St, Amelia Court House, VA 23002  
(804) 561-2711

Rhonda L. Pruitt, MPH  
Piedmont Health District  
Virginia Department of Health  
111 South Street, First Floor  
Farmville, VA 23901  
(434) 392-3984

### **c. Plan for Health and Absentee Monitoring**

Student absences are documented in Gradelink (the Academy's online record system). Gradelink allows for multiple daily attendance reports. Any repeat days of student absence will be investigated with sensitivity to confidentiality and HIPPA laws. An alert is sent to notify parents that their son or daughter has been designated absent. When a student or faculty member returns within two (2) days, regular monitoring for COVID-19 will occur. However, if a student or faculty/staff member is absent for three (3) or more days, a physician's release clearing the person for entering school will be required.

Students, faculty, and staff, will be monitored before entering the school building each day. Parents will be discouraged from entering the school building at arrival or dismissal times and must submit to the same health screening if required to enter the building. Any visitor entering the school building must first register in the office where a temperature check will be administered and other screening information obtained.

Body temperatures of all members of the Academy community and visitors will be measured and must be below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Faculty and staff will be asked the following questions as they enter the building, and each student will be asked the following questions:

- 1) Have you traveled within the past fourteen (14) days?
- 2) Have you been exposed to anyone with a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 within the past fourteen (14) days?
- 3) Have you had in the past 24 hours any of the following symptoms:

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Fever (CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4F or greater, feels warm to the touch, or gives a history of feeling feverish)

Chills

Muscle pain

Sore throat

New loss of taste or smell

If more than ten (10) Academy community members report to school with a fever and/or other symptoms associated with COVID-19, the COVID-19 team will meet on the same day and provide guidance for testing requirements.

Families will be encouraged to notify the school if there is likelihood that someone in their family has been exposed to COVID-19. Close contact is defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as “any individual within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before the person became sick.”

d. Develop a communications strategy that includes:

- i. Orientation and training for staff and students specific to new COVID-19 mitigation strategies

An in-person orientation and training session will be conducted before school begins for faculty and staff. This session may also be recorded and/or live-streamed via Zoom for any at-risk faculty and staff. The goal of this session will be a reiteration of the objective to fulfill the Academy’s mission and strive to keep the Academy community healthy while also helping in the public health initiative to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The symptoms of COVID-19 will be presented, and faculty/staff will be instructed to monitor students carefully for signs of illness as well as self-monitor for symptoms. New protocols covering daily procedures for entering the building and cleaning strategies will be presented, and paper copies of new protocols will be distributed.

ii. Plans for communication with staff, parents, and students of new policies

The Academy's website, social media accounts, and instant alert system will provide myriad opportunities to communicate new protocols for returning to school. A letter from the Head of School, traditionally mailed to families before school begins, will also serve as an opportune venue for disseminating information related to operating school within the COVID-19 pandemic concerns. The Academy's student handbook will include new information about procedures and strategies to minimize the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus. Parents and students will sign and return a form indicating that they have read and understood the handbook with special indication that they understand the new procedures involving school operation during a pandemic.

iii. Plans for how to communicate an outbreak or positive cases at the school

Given the small size of the Academy community, any information related to positive cases may quickly spread among faculty and students. The goal may therefore involve a mitigating influence to reduce undue concern. If and when the school is notified of a positive case for COVID-19, the person or persons will be given instruction not to return to the school campus for fourteen (14) days. He or she must be symptom-free and present a physician's release for return to school.

The Academy's COVID-19 team will meet to consider the potential risk to the Academy community. Attention will be focused on reducing any further spreading of the virus without creating a panic atmosphere and protecting the privacy of those infected individual(s). Communication will involve a letter and/or instant alert message to the Academy community.

If a member of the Academy community tests positive for COVID-19, the COVID-19 team will meet and determine which individuals and/or groups need to be quarantined for fourteen (14) days before returning to school. During this time, individuals will have access to virtual instruction and be required to participate when they are recovered.

Contact tracing data will be gathered and provided to the Health Department in order for official notification of people facing potential risk of exposure.

e. Participate in community response efforts

Academy officials will remain in contact with the local health department and participate in whatever is deemed appropriate in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Every effort will be made to notify local officials of COVID-19 cases within the Academy community. Contact tracing data will be shared with the local health department or other entities in an effort to help reduce the potential for spreading COVID-19.

f. Prepare your division's student health services

In anticipation of the need for increased focus on health concerns during the pandemic, the Academy is renovating a former storage area to serve as an expanded "sick room." Located adjacent to the front office, this space will allow for isolation of anyone in the Academy community who displays symptoms associated with COVID-19. The former "sick room" space

will provide overflow for sick students as well as a respite for students who are sick but not potentially COVID-19-positive.

Three of the Academy staff have earned certification in Medication Administration Training (MAT).

g. Assure provision of medical-grade PPE for health services staff

All three (3) MAT-certified staff members will be provided with gloves, N95 or equivalent masks, and face shields

h. Assure and maintain typical (non-COVID-19) health services

All health services will be provided concurrent to the extra focus placed on reducing the spread of COVID-19. This includes careful monitoring of students for symptoms and potential illness and/or injury. Protocols for notifying parents and emergency personnel as needed will continue unchanged.

i. For the provision of mental health services

The School Counselor (grades 6-12) and Lower School Director will monitor all referrals for mental health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the stress and anxiety experienced by student populations as well as faculty and staff.

The goal will be to reduce interference in daily instruction while also promoting a healthy and safe environment for the entire Academy community. Special attention will be given to minimizing the focus on pandemic-related issues and the resulting potential for bullying and/or social isolation. It is the goal of the Academy to reduce stress related to the pandemic by carrying out the educational mission within the “new-normal” parameters.

If a member of the Academy community is known to have COVID-19, every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the individual and his or her family members in accordance with HIPPA laws that prohibit the disclosure of a case-positive individual’s identity. Dissemination of risk potential will be conducted with special emphasis on reducing the stress level for all involved.

**2) Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread of COVID-19**

a. Create an education/training plan for staff, students, and families.

i. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette

In accordance with CDC guidelines, the Academy community will be trained in the following protocols to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

Wash hands often and for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing. Hand sanitizers will be provided at several stations within the school and within each

classroom. Instruction will be given to cover all surfaces of hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Emphasis will be placed on avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or using the inside of the elbow will be required.

ii. Use of cloth face coverings

Face coverings will not be required for students under the age of 10. Teachers who are working within close proximity to students when explaining a math problem, for example, may choose to wear a face covering.

In areas where close contact of less than six(6) feet may be unavoidable (hallways and bathrooms, for example), faculty, staff, and students (over age 10) will be encouraged, and may be required, to use face coverings.

Students, faculty, and staff, whose medical status puts them in a high-risk category for COVID-19, may choose to wear a face covering at any time while on the Academy campus.

iii. Staying home when sick

Pursuant to current Academy guidelines for individuals who are sick, anyone with a fever (100.4 or greater) is required to remain at home until he or she has not had a fever for 24 hours. Students, faculty, and staff will be encouraged to remain home if he or she does not have a fever but does have two or more symptoms associated with COVID-19. When information is presented about someone with this medical status, the COVID-19 team may meet to make decision about requiring a COVID-19 test.

iv. Avoid close contact and stay 6 feet from others if possible

Everyone in the Academy community will be instructed to promote social distancing. Signage and markers will be placed to provide visual assistance in determining the correct social distance.

b. Maintain adequate supplies to promote health hygiene

Under the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act, the Academy has funding to include supplies that are specifically directed toward reducing the spread of COVID-19. E-mist disinfectant sprayers are being purchased in preparation for daily disinfecting of public areas. This will include classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and hallways. Regular disinfecting cleaning procedures will continue as well. Hand sanitizer stations will be positioned in the school, and hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom. Other supplies, such as disinfectant wipes, will also be supplied for use throughout the school.

c. Provide signs and messaging to promote healthy hygiene

Outside of each entrance will be placed signs indicating that anyone entering the school building must first register in the office where a temperature check will be administered and other screening information obtained (see Section 1). Within the school building, signs will be placed

in hallways and bulletin boards to promote awareness of ways to reduce risk. Signs in the bathrooms will promote thorough hand-washing. In each classroom, there will be reminders to wash hands/use hand sanitizer and practice social distancing. If it is deemed necessary after school begins, floor markings will help promote accurate social distancing of six (6) feet.

d. Promote physical distancing

i. Modify layouts of classrooms, communal areas and buses to ensure social distancing is maintained.

All classrooms will have desks placed six (6) feet apart, and students at all grade levels will have their own desks for the year. All books and other materials will be kept at the desk, thereby eliminating the need for lockers. In the Middle and Upper schools, teachers will change classes with minimal need for students to change locations.

Bathroom use will be monitored with a limited number of people allowed in the bathroom at one time. Floor dots will encourage social distancing of 6 feet. Faculty, staff, and students will be encouraged, or required, to use a face covering when entering spaces such as the bathroom where social distancing presents a challenge.

Other areas such as the gymnasium and café will have limited usage when school re-opens. If a need to use these areas becomes imperative, tape markers or other temporary markers will provide social distancing indicators.

ii. Develop strategies for food/dining services; these should be consistent with plans to optimize physical distancing

Amelia Academy's dining service includes a morning break with breakfast and snack foods served and a hot lunch. Approximately 50 percent of all students order lunch with a slightly greater percentage of middle and upper school students ordering food at break.

To meet social distancing requirements, students will eat in their classrooms at all grade levels. Extra trash cans and cleaning supplies will be provided in classrooms. The dining staff will deliver meals to the classrooms with staggered delivery times to allow students to move in the hallways for bathroom breaks.

iii. Limit size of gatherings consistent with Executive Orders and impose strict physical distancing during gatherings

The small student population of Amelia Academy means that the size of gatherings can be met in all facets of the school's operation. The only exception is school-wide assemblies, which will be suspended during the 2020-21 school year or until restriction is lifted on groups during Phase IV. Information will be disseminated within classrooms or livestream via a Zoom or other similar platform. If there is a need for a gathering of more than 50 students within the gymnasium space, students will be instructed to sit at appropriate physical distance. The gymnasium seating will be thoroughly sanitized after any such gathering.

iv. Follow relevant Virginia Phase [1] for Schools and CDC guidance for recreational sports, school-related sports and other recreational activities

Amelia Academy will conform to all requirements for Virginia Colonial Conference (VCC) athletic competition to include the Virginia Phases [I], [II], and subsequent Phases for Schools as well as CDC guidance.

Physical education courses will be re-aligned to allow for physical activity within requisite social distancing requirements. For example, physical education classes may include lesson plans geared toward individual activities that require minimal equipment.

Recess periods for younger students in the Lower School will include more structured and organized physical activities. These activities will also include some free play time, especially for the youngest students for whom constant social distancing would prove difficult and unduly stressful.

All students will be encouraged to use appropriate hygiene when sneezing or coughing, encouraged not to touch their faces, and wash hands or use hand sanitizer when returning from physical education classes or the playground.

### **3) Maintaining Healthy Environments**

#### **a. Plan for daily health screening questions of staff and students.**

Before students, faculty, or staff enter the school building or immediately within the school building during inclement weather such as rain or extreme cold, a body temperature will be taken. In order to enter the building freely, a person's body temperature must measure below 100.4F. If the temperature is 100.4F or higher, the faculty or staff member must return home and not return until he or she is without fever for 24 hours. Any student with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be directed to the sick room. A parent or guardian will be called to come to school and pick up the student. He or she must not return to school until fever-free for 24 hours.

Students with an acceptable body temperature will be asked, or the parents of younger students will verify, if they have any of the following symptoms – Cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. They will also be required to confirm if they have traveled or been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the past fourteen (14) days.

If any person with a fever also has another symptom of COVID-19, the Academy may require a negative COVID-19 test and/or physician's approval before the person may return to school. If the Academy is notified of a positive COVID-19 case, the protocol for case identification will go into effect (see section 6).

Faculty and staff will be asked to self-monitor for symptoms – a new fever (100.4F or higher), cough, shortness of breath, chills, or a sore throat. After a temperature check, they will answer affirmatively that they have self-monitored and are symptom-free.

During daily attendance recording, teachers may be required to enter pre-set coding results to indicate they have satisfied the symptom check for each student.

b. Hygiene practices:

i. Create cleaning and disinfection protocols that include frequently touched surfaces; transport vehicles; schedules for increased cleaning; routine cleaning and disinfection; ensuring adequate cleaning supplies and correct use/storage

\* The Academy is purchasing an E-mist disinfection device and cleanser to thoroughly disinfect all areas of the school each day.

\*When an area, such as a desk or table, will be vacated by one person and subsequently occupied by another person, that space will be disinfected with a disinfectant wipe. Wipes will be supplied for each classroom and office for this purpose.

\*The Academy will maintain routine cleaning and disinfection that includes cleaning bathroom facilities and mopping floors with a bleach and water mixture or other disinfectant.

\*All cleaning and disinfectant supplies are kept locked in the custodian's closet.

ii. Provide additional hand sanitizer/washing stations

Through the funds provided by the CARES Act, the Academy will purchase several hand sanitizer stations that will be placed throughout the school facilities in order to enhance access to hand washing. Faculty, staff, and students will be encouraged to wash hands thoroughly at the sinks available in the bathrooms.

iii. Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing to the extent possible (e.g., dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, computers, etc.)

Disinfectant wipes will be used whenever equipment, such as computers, are used by more than one student. The computer lab and library have multiple computers; however, these devices will inevitably be used by more than one person in a given day. Students and faculty will be encouraged to bring personal laptops, particularly for classes that require daily or regular use of a computer.

c. Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible

The ventilation will be inspected, and filters changed on a timely basis to help ensure virus-free air exchange. The windows in classrooms and offices have screens, which will allow outdoor air circulation when weather conditions permit the suspension of air conditioning or heat.

d. Ensure that water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.

Given the small size of the Academy campus and its proximity to houses and commercial spaces, water system safety has not been compromised during the shutdown.

#### **4) Maintaining health operations**

##### **a. Implement protections for staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.**

Faculty, staff, and students at higher risk for complications from COVID-19 will be given greater flexibility in returning to the school campus with increased health risk superseding any adjustment or inconvenience. These individuals will have the option of remaining at home for virtual instruction without penalty. Faculty members at higher risk may choose from a range of options that include limiting their physical proximity to students while at school to remaining at home and delivering lessons virtually. Once a risk factor is identified, the individual will be invited to meet with the Head of School and/or the COVID-19 team to create a plan to lower the risk factors during the pandemic.

##### **b. Align plans for gatherings, field trips, and volunteer restrictions consistent with any Executive Order in place.**

Gatherings on campus will be limited to the required number of participants and social distance guidelines (see Section 2).

Field trips will be suspended until Phase IV, and volunteers must follow the same protocols as faculty, staff, and students before entering the building.

##### **c. Implement sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff, and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed to COVID-19.**

Once identified as sick or at risk due to exposure, an individualized plan will be implemented based on the person's needs. Greater decision-making in these instances will be given to the person and his or her physician. The Head of School and COVID-19 team will seek to create opportunities for individuals to continue their participation in the Academy community based on whatever limits are required.

If they are sick and unable to work, no member of the faculty/staff, or student will be penalized in any way due to COVID-19. Every effort will be made to re-integrate individuals, either on-campus or at home, once they are recovered from the virus.

##### **d. Train back-up staff to ensure continuity of operations**

Substitute teachers will receive training in the technology implemented to allow for virtual instruction if a faculty member is COVID-19-positive and cannot return to work during an isolation period.

The faculty will use the systems in place, such as Gradelink's teacher pages and electronic assignments, to facilitate virtual instruction for students affected by COVID-19 who must remain home.

## **5) Protecting Vulnerable Individuals (e.g. 65+, underlying health conditions)**

### **a. Create policy options to support those at higher risk for severe illness to limit their exposure risk (e.g. telework, modified job duties, virtual learning opportunities)**

Once a person is identified as higher risk for complications resulting from contracting COVID-19, a personal plan will be created within the objective of sustaining normal school operation. A range of modifications to include teaching and learning from home or greater isolation at school will be considered.

### **b. Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff, and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed.**

The policies regarding absenteeism for faculty, staff, and students will be suspended once a person is COVID-positive or been exposed to a COVID-positive person. Appropriate investigation will occur to determine the risk level. Once a determination has been made, the number of days absent for sick leave and student attendance will be suspended.

### **c. Develop policies for return to class/work after COVID-19 illness.**

After fourteen days of isolation, full recovery from COVID-19, and a physician's release, faculty, staff, and students may return to the Academy campus and resume activities without restriction. Every effort will be made to minimize attention and undue scrutiny of the individual(s) in order to facilitate a normal routine for all involved.

## **6) Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick**

### **a. Separate and isolate those who present with symptoms**

A protocol for identifying anyone preparing to enter the school building has been developed (see Section 3).

### **b. Facilitate safe transportation of those who are sick to home or healthcare facility**

Safe transportation home or to a healthcare facility will follow present guidelines in place. However, due to the greater risk presented by COVID-19, a person potentially infected will be strictly isolated from the rest of the school population.

Once a person is identified as sick and isolated in the sick room, a decision will be made by the Head of School and/or COVID-19 team, whether the person can safely drive home (faculty/staff or student driver). A parent or guardian will be contacted and required to come to school and pick up younger students.

In the event that a member of the faculty/staff cannot drive safely, his or her emergency contact will be notified to come and drive him or her to home or a healthcare facility.

If the person is experiencing an emergency situation, the local EMT will be contacted to transport the person to a hospital or designated healthcare facility.

c. Implement cleaning and disinfection procedures of areas used by sick individuals.

The sick room and any other areas used by a sick individual will be thoroughly disinfected using bleach and/or other appropriate disinfectant. The E-mist device, used daily within the school facilities, will be another safeguard against the risk of surface exposure.

**7) Planning to close down, if necessary, due to severe conditions**

a. Determine which conditions will trigger a reduction in in-person classes.

If the Academy experiences a localized outbreak, during which it is determined that a substantial number of the Academy community have become sick or exposed to COVID-19, the COVID-19 team will implement virtual instruction for a period of up to fourteen (14) days. Once the isolation period is complete, in-person instruction will resume. If a smaller outbreak occurs among a select group, such as a grade level or the pre-kindergarten class, more limited isolation with virtual instruction will allow for continuing operation in-school for individuals not at risk.

b. Determine which conditions will trigger a complete school closure.

Complete school closure will only occur upon the Executive Order of the Governor, the Virginia Counsel of Public Education, or the recommendation and/or requirement of the Health Care Department. Once such a recommendation has been made, the COVID-19 team, the Head of School, and the Board of Directors will determine the virtual instruction implementation and timeline needed to ensure the health and safety of the Academy community.