



Lower School

[Click here to view sample schedules for the Lower School.](#)

How will schedules and day-to-day protocols change by division?

While the school will work hard to keep as many pieces of the Lower School day as normal as possible, new procedures and protocols will be put into place to ensure the safety of our students. Students will mostly stay within their homeroom throughout the entire day, although math acceleration and 4th/5th grade reading acceleration students will rotate into seats at the back of the classroom, staying physically distanced with facial coverings.

How will the Lower School handle Special Subjects and PE?

The Lower School schedule will incorporate the Special Subjects PE, Music, Art, Computer and Spanish. The Special Subjects teachers will move to each cohort to allow students to remain in one room and will be held outdoors as often as possible. Additionally, while the library will be closed throughout the fall, story time will be held through interactive read-aloud sessions during literacy instruction in the classroom.

Will students change into PE uniforms?

Students in the 4th and 5th grades will not change for PE class while physical distancing restrictions are in place. All Lower School students are now allowed to wear athletic shoes each day to school throughout the entire year.

Will Pre-K/K students follow different protocols than other grades?

Worcester Prep is closely working with the Office of Child Care for Maryland and evaluating guidelines from the CDC to develop specialized protocol for Pre-K and Kindergarten. These protocols may look different than the protocols created for other grades due to the age of these students. Additional information specific to this will be released as soon as possible.



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Lower School

Will students still have recess opportunities?

Students in Lower School will have daily recess opportunities. Students will be organized by homeroom and stay in these groupings for recess. Each group, or cohort, will have a specific place on the campus or playground to play. Students will be allowed to use recess equipment, which will be sanitized after each recess time. Students will not intermingle with other cohorts during recess and will stay physically distanced.

**Will lunch service be offered?
Where will LS students eat and how will lunch be structured to allow for physical distancing?**

Each student will eat lunch at his or her desk in the classroom and teachers will remain in the room with students throughout the lunch period. All lunch items should be brought in from home, as purchased lunch service will not be available for the Lower School during the fall.



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Middle & Upper School

[Please click here to view a sample MS/US Schedule.](#)

How will schedules and day-to-day protocols change by division?

The Middle and Upper Schools will adopt a 5-day, 7-period schedule for the 2020-2021 school year. This schedule will minimize room changes, limit movement and create a realistic platform for continuous learning, in the event our school is mandated to close over the coming year. With this schedule, each student will have the core academic classes every day. As soon as safely possible, WPS will return to the 7-day rotating schedule put in place last year, due to the benefits it provides to our students.

How will the Middle and Upper Schools handle special subjects and PE?

Each week, all Middle and Upper School students will have art, music, computer, modified PE and electives. The school is still evaluating the safest way to incorporate PE and additional information will be shared with the school community as soon as a plan is finalized. Part of this conversation includes whether students will change into their PE uniforms and how many days a week PE will be offered. The MS/US schedules will allow for special subjects, electives, and a modified PE time.

Will lunch service be offered?

Middle and Upper School students will continue to eat lunch in the Dining Hall while observing physical distancing requirements. However all lunch items must be brought in from home, as purchased lunch service will not be available the throughout the fall. Additionally, students will not have access to microwaves or snack/drink machines. The school will re-evaluate this decision periodically during the school year.



Health & Safety

What happens if a faculty/staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19?

The school is developing a comprehensive plan and specific instructions to manage a possible COVID-19 infection on the WPS campus. The school is working in close coordination with the Worcester County Health Department in order to finalize a comprehensive plan. The specific instructions for an employee or student who receives a positive test result include requiring the test result to be reported to the school nurse as soon as possible. The nurse will then contact the Health Department for guidance on contact tracing and the notification of any individual considered a close contact of the person who has tested positive. At this time, close contact exposure is defined as being within 6 feet of a person for 15 minutes or longer, without wearing a mask or face covering. Based on the health and safety measures being put into place by the school in all classrooms and throughout the entire campus, simply being in the same classroom as an infected person will not necessarily constitute a close contact exposure. Current CDC guidance requires anyone testing positive for COVID-19 to isolate at home and stay away from others. Ending this period of home isolation is dependent on various factors and ultimately depends on your healthcare provider's advice, guidance from the Health Department and the availability of testing. Any individual testing positive will not be allowed to return to campus without a letter of consent from a healthcare provider or the Health Department.

Will facial coverings be required in classrooms and how will mask breaks be incorporated into the school day?

Based on the information currently available, all individuals on the Worcester Prep campus will be required to wear facial coverings. This includes the wearing of facial coverings in all buildings, hallways, indoor commons areas, restrooms and classrooms. However, safe mask breaks for students and staff will be created throughout the day. Due to physical distancing and the addition of personal dividers on every desk, when students are seated and working independently they may be permitted to remove facial coverings for short breaks. Each student will be assigned a clear divider, so that dividers are not shared. These will remain at the school and be disinfected each day. Additionally, the school is looking into large, clear barriers for each classroom to be placed between the teaching area and student desks. When faculty members are behind these barriers, they will be permitted to remove facial coverings. These safety measures, coupled with newly installed M13 medical grade filtration HEPA air purifiers, will allow the school to incorporate these breaks as safely as possible.



Health & Safety

What is the self-monitoring protocol for faculty/staff each morning prior to reporting to school?

Faculty and staff will be instructed to perform a health self-screening before coming into work each day. Employees will be asked not report to work if they are experiencing any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19.

What is the self-monitoring protocol for students each morning prior to reporting to school?

Parents will be instructed to perform a similar health screening of their children each day before sending them to school. Parents will also be asked not to send their children to school if they are ill or experiencing any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Will a school counselor be added to staff?

In order to provide important curriculum components and be a mental health resource during such uncertain times, Worcester Prep has hired a Master's level, certified school counselor as a full time employee. This counselor will be available for staff and students who may face stress and anxiety throughout the school year, as well as be available to help the school community manage other social and emotional situations that may arise. The new counselor will help coordinate and participate in Advisory for Middle and Upper School students, as well as facilitating Character Talks for the Lower School. More information about this position and a formal introduction of the new counselor will be shared in the August letter to all families.



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Health & Safety

Will student temperatures be taken each morning upon arriving at school? What is the protocol if a student has an elevated temperature (above 99.9F)?

How will the school handle substitutes throughout the year?

At this time, WPS is planning to check the temperature of every student entering the building each morning. Any temperature above 99.9 will be documented and the school nurse will be notified. The nurse will isolate and place a medical mask on the student, while the school notifies his or her parent/guardian to pick up the student from school. WPS is also currently creating a plan to organize drop-off procedures in the most efficient way possible, in order to allow faculty and staff members to check temperatures using non-contact thermometers.

WPS is currently in the process of contacting the substitutes on our list. In order to create the safest environment possible, the school will ask any individuals interested in being on the substitute list this fall to commit specifically to Worcester Prep, so there will not be crossover with other area schools. We will also work closely with all substitutes to provide professional development specific to new COVID protocol.



Building & Grounds

What are the additional cleaning/sanitizing procedures for the fall?

WPS has purchased 2 electrostatic sprayers which provide an electrical charge to disinfectant solution, providing wrap-around, ultra-effective, even coverage when sanitizing larger areas. Classrooms and offices will be cleaned at the end of every day followed by full disinfection using the electrostatic sprayer. Rooms will not be accessible until the next day upon teacher/student arrival. The school will also use these to disinfect the playground, outdoor classroom, and dining hall between uses by different cohorts each day. Protocol will also be issued to faculty and staff members explaining when and how to disinfect specific areas of classrooms and offices. Additionally, maintenance staff will continually disinfect and sanitize restrooms and doors throughout the day.

Has the school purchased any equipment to address air quality & purification?

Thanks to a very generous donation from a WPS Trustee, the school purchased 60, M13 medical grade filtration HEPA air purifiers that will be used in each classroom. These M13 filters will remove 99.9% of particles in the air down to 0.1 microns, improve air quality and are able to filter out virus particles.

Will *The Nest* be available for seniors?

Unfortunately, The Nest will not be open to start the school year. We will monitor the regulations and guidelines throughout the year with the intent of opening the Nest Lounge should the COVID Crisis subside.



Building & Grounds

Will there be opportunities for classes to use the outdoor facilities?

What additional PPE purchases have been made as related to safety procedures?

Each Lower School homeroom class will have an outdoor area designated for their classroom space. This space will be available at all times throughout the school day so that each class may go outside and learn in an open air environment. Middle and Upper School classes will also be held outside as much as possible with additional outdoor time safely scheduled for students during breaks. Also, thanks to the Parents' Association, WPS now has a dedicated outdoor classroom. This space will be used for a variety of outdoor learning purposes across divisions and will be disinfected between uses.

In order to create an extra layer of protection and allow for mask breaks in the classrooms, WPS has purchased clear, personal-space, desk dividers for each desk in the school. The school is also re-searching the purchase of 6' by 6' clear barriers for each classroom to separate the faculty teaching space from student desks. These barriers will allow teachers to safely remove facial coverings during instruction, as it is crucial for students to be able to see their faces and expressions during lessons. When a faculty member moves around the barrier to work with students, he or she will put on a facial covering. A supply of facial coverings, masks and gaiters, has been purchased and each student will be provided with one of his or her preference.



Continuous Learning

What plans will WPS utilize in terms of continuous learning and hybrid instruction?

The Mallard Strong Task Force is focusing on two types of instruction, full-week on campus and fully virtual Continuous Learning with an emphasis on synchronous lessons. The Middle and Upper Schools will follow the new 5-day, 7-period schedule, allowing students to mirror their typical school day at home. The Lower School Continuous Learning schedule will also mirror the instructional school day through synchronous and asynchronous lessons, and resume the use of the Seesaw online platform. Because these Continuous Learning schedules closely follow the on campus schedules, the school will be able to easily and effectively transition to a virtual platform in the event the Governor issues an Executive Order closing all school campuses in Maryland. Finalized details will be shared with school community as soon as possible.

At this time, the school is not incorporating a hybrid model. Institutions creating hybrid models typically do not have the capacity to safely bring back their entire student body while practicing physically distancing. We are fortunate to have the space, both indoors and outdoors, and flexibility that provides a school environment with as much normalcy as possible and appropriate safety protocols.

Can students utilize continuous learning rather than attend in-person school?

WPS is exploring our ability to offer a Continuous Learning option to any students not ready to return to campus at the start of the year. This option would also be available to students who experience an illness or extended absence. This Continuous Learning option will mirror the school day as closely as possible and including requiring students to wear their uniform. The school will work to finalize this plan as quickly as possible and will communicate updates over the next few weeks. Please note, this option will be available to families at full tuition.



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Transportation, Drop-off & Pick-up

What is Worcester Prep's involvement in bus transportation, which is provided through Dutton Bus Service?

Dutton Bus Service is a transportation provider that operates independently of the school. Dutton contracts directly with parents and prefers to be the point of contact for customers when providing information on procedures, bus stops and pricing. The Task Force has developed a good working relationship with Dutton having several meetings with the company over the past few weeks. Dutton is currently still formulating plans for the fall in terms of number of buses, planned bus stops, cleaning procedures and additional protocol. In cooperation with the school, a parent liaison has been appointed to help with communications and to provide parent perspective on several topics. Dutton is currently working with the parent liaison to create and send a questionnaire to all current parents regarding bus service for the coming school year.

Will there be any changes to drop-off procedures?

Families with students in grades 2-12 will continue to drop-off using the back parking lot. Students will be assigned a specific point of entry to the school based on their grade. Buses and families with students in Pre-k through grade 1 (along with any siblings) will drop-off using the front parking lot. These parents may park and walk students to their assigned point of entry, however they must wear facial coverings and will not be permitted to enter the building. A detailed map will be provided for every family outlining drop-off procedures and points of entry in August.



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Tuition & Enrollment

Is there flexibility with tuition payments based on the current COVID climate?

The school's Business Office will work with each individual family regarding flexibility with tuition payments. Our Board of Trustees recognizes the economic impact COVID has had on many families and is working to be as flexible as possible in these uncertain times.

Will there be a discount if the school must pivot to Continuous Learning at some point during the school year?

At this point, tuition adjustments are not being considered for the 2020-2021 school year. Continuous Learning requires extensive work by faculty and staff as well as the infrastructure required to move into and successfully execute our curriculum in this platform. The Continuous Learning program being designed will be rigorous and robust, and in order to be as prepared as possible we are providing extensive Professional Development to our faculty and staff.



Extra-Curricular & Calendar

Will there be fall sports for Middle and Upper School?

WPS is currently proceeding as if fall sports will continue as planned, meaning official practices will begin in August. As ESIAC Conference leaders continue to meet, updates will be provided to Middle and Upper School families. As plans are finalized, several options will be considered if a full athletic schedule is not possible. These options may include creating a fall intramural season with the participation of only WPS athletes.

How will the school handle field trips and outings?

The school will not plan any field trips to start the 2020-2021 school year. The school will reevaluate this decision as the year progresses with the hopes of reintroducing local field trips in the spring. Any trips outside our area, overnight field trips or trips abroad will be cancelled this year due to border closings and travel restrictions enacted by individual states.

Will the Lower School still host Grandparents' Day in the fall?

Grandparents' Day will be scheduled for the spring in the hopes that restrictions will ease enough for our school to host this wonderful event. If the school is unable to hold the event at that time, a virtual celebration will be planned for our grandparents.

How will WPS move forward with other types of school gatherings such as concerts and plays?

While the school will be unable to host our typical shows and concerts in the fall, our talented and committed faculty will explore the possibility of producing virtual versions. The school will revisit this decision throughout the year and re-instate these shows, plays and gatherings as soon as possible.



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College Counseling Program

How will the WPS College Counseling Program be delivered during the 20-21 academic year?

The College Counseling Office will be open every weekday during the school year and college counseling sessions for the Class of 2021 will be scheduled throughout the fall. Class of 2022 college counseling sessions will begin after November 1st. The Class of 2023 will meet with the college counselor in the spring. These sessions can either be in person (physical distancing and facial coverings required) or via Zoom.

Will the College Counseling Office continue to host parent events and college representatives?

Coffee & Conversations with Ms. Garner will be held virtually each month for all Upper School parents. Additional sessions will be held for parents of seniors and juniors navigating the college process in 20-21. As colleges are not planning to travel to schools at this time, virtual visits with College Admission Representatives will be scheduled throughout the fall. All seniors are welcome to attend these sessions and juniors may join with permission. College Information Programs with college admission deans and directors will be presented virtually throughout the year addressing a variety of college related topics. A schedule of these programs for Upper School students and parents will be available at the beginning of the school year. By utilizing Naviance, the College Counseling website, and social media, students and parents will be kept informed of upcoming events and news and information.