



GARDEN SCHOOL

Jackson Heights, New York

Christopher Herman, *Head of School*

Keeping Garden Safe & Learning Noteworthy Changes for the 2021-2022 COVID Manual (updated 8/23/21)

Our goal again this year is to keep the Garden Community safe and learning while avoiding prolonged periods of remote school if we can. Though we encourage you to read the reopening guide in its entirety, those familiar with last year's guide (or recently shared preliminary guide) will find it similar. Therefore, we offer this list of major and noteworthy changes and updates.

- **Masking.** Masks will be required for all students and adults regardless of vaccine status at all times except when eating or during rigorous physical activity.
- **Remote Learning.** We do not plan to offer a fully remote option this year. Remote access to classes will be made available for students quarantining after close contact with a positive individual.
- **Gateway Testing.** All students are required to submit a negative COVID test (administered after September 3rd) or proof of vaccination prior to the start of school.
 - Those traveling by plane domestically within seven days of the start of school will be further required to submit a second test administered on the FOURTH day following their return home.
 - Those traveling by plane internationally within seven days of the start of school are further required to submit a second test administered on the FOURTH day following their return home and follow CDC guidelines and complete a post travel 7 -day quarantine.
- **On-campus Testing.** We have determined that the safest way to start the year is the way we ended it, and thus will resume weekly on-campus surveillance testing this fall.
 - We will use all of the same vendors we did last year.
 - Surveillance testing will include a novel rotation of 25% of the community in divisions and clusters where the vaccine is not yet available.
 - Children in ECC, for whom producing a saliva sample was difficult, may be able to submit their own lab-performed tests after speaking with Nurse Elena.
- **Vaccination.** Though strongly encouraged, Garden does not require vaccination. However, all unvaccinated individuals who are eligible for vaccination will submit weekly tests to Nurse Elena.
 - Eligible, but unvaccinated students will find restrictions on activities.
 - The Independent School Athletic League will restrict participation only to vaccinated individuals. Students who are eligible for the vaccine, but who remain unvaccinated will not be permitted to play in or attend games.
 - Student travel will only be available to vaccinated students.
- **Testing Types.** Because rapid tests are better at detecting Delta, we will accept rapid tests enabling negative students with resolved symptoms to return to school sooner.
- **Quarantining.** Because Delta is detectable sooner, we are able to follow CDC guidelines for a shortened quarantine period - SEVEN days with a test on day FOUR.
 - When exposed, fully vaccinated individuals will not quarantine unless contact was with a close domestic family member. In that case, regular protocols will be followed. Regardless, after exposure, vaccinated individuals are asked to test.



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- **Movement.** While several clusters will resume some regular pre-pandemic movement throughout the day, N-3 will be more restricted than initially hoped and planned.
- **Communication.** In lieu of the REMIND App, we will funnel emergency communications through Blackbaud, our new Student Information and Learning Management System.
- **Ventilation.** In addition to regular air cleaning protocols and MERV rated filters in our HVAC units, we will also employ the use of HEPA H-13 air purifiers in all rooms where vaccination eligibility remains low.

The full manual provides much greater detail about how we plan to protect the community during this ongoing health pandemic. We remind you that all of our policies are subject to change as we stay current and informed on the risks associated with the virus as well as in compliance with any new or changing rules. If you have any questions regarding COVID protocols, please contact Chris Herman at cherman@gardenschool.org or call (718) 335 - 6363.