



# COVID-19 Policy

## Overview

Little River Montessori School has decided to reopen our campus on August 3, 2020. Our decision to reopen our campus recognizes that (1) LRMS families and staff are balancing the educational, social, emotional, economic and other benefits of opening with the risks associated with the pandemic, (2) our school must reopen with many new health and safety protocols to do everything we can to responsibly mitigate risk to the extent possible, and (3) each family and staff member must decide how to balance those risks, and whether to return to campus.

We understand that reopening entails increased risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. This document explains the policies and procedures we are employing to mitigate the COVID-related risks at school. That approach involves intensive new health monitoring and screening procedures, as well as new on-campus protocols and procedures. These plans are designed to complement community and family mitigation strategies.

The information in this document in no way warrants that COVID-19 or other communicable disease infection will not occur through participation in our programs.

LMRS is following the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Tennessee Department of Health, and local county health departments to guide our policies in response to COVID-19. Where policies conflict, preferences will be given to the local governing body.

Per Robert Schmidt, MPH, County Director for the Blount County Health Department,

“Tennessee Department of Health recommends that all policy considerations should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. However, districts are encouraged to develop criteria for the consideration of closure of school(s) and/or the district. Every effort should be made to prevent a district-wide closure, and district administrators should consider it appropriate to close one school, or even a portion of a school, when a case or small outbreak affects only a small number of students or staff. Closures should be as limited as possible to minimize spread from close contacts with the case. District administrators are strongly encouraged to consult with state or local public health officials prior to finalizing a decision to close a school or district. It is critically

important that schools be able to pivot from in-person to distance learning so that disruption can be minimized while students and staff need to be away from school for extended periods of time. District administrators are discouraged from using metrics such as county active case rates as the sole determinant of school or district-level closures.”

The Tennessee Department of Health provides the following school recommendations, released 08/22/2020 (updates are highlighted in blue):

- Any student or staff who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 must isolate at home for a period of 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (or the date they were tested, if asymptomatic) AND must be fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medications ) AND have improvement in symptoms for at least 24 hours. This is not optional.
- Any student or staff who has been a close contact (within 6 feet for >10 minutes) of a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 must quarantine at home for a period of 14 days from their last exposure to that individual. This is not optional. Household contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals may be required to quarantine for a longer period of time, depending upon the circumstances. Consult CDC guidance for detailed guidance for quarantine of household contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>.
- Parents should be instructed to keep their child at home if they are ill.
- Any student or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, or who reports symptoms of COVID-19, should not be present at school.
- Every school should have an identified location where a student or staff member who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 may be taken to isolate them from others until the individual can be picked up from school.
- School districts should have human resources policies in place that empower staff to remain home when ill.
- CDC recommends that people, including teachers, staff, and students, wear cloth face coverings in public settings as able when around people who live outside of their household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Children under age 2 years should **not** wear cloth face coverings. Young children who will not tolerate wearing a cloth face covering or who continuously play with, suck on, or chew their face covering, should be excused from wearing one. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/CFC\\_Guide\\_for\\_School\\_Administrators.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/CFC_Guide_for_School_Administrators.pdf)
- Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be readily available for use by students and staff and students and staff should be reminded to frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, especially before eating. Young children should always be supervised when using hand sanitizers and other cleaning products.
- Classrooms and high-touch surfaces such as door handles should be disinfected regularly throughout the school day.  
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>)

- Students and staff should maintain six feet between themselves and others whenever possible, and classrooms should be structured in such a way as to facilitate this distancing, to the extent possible.
- Congregating of staff in lounge areas or other shared spaces should be discouraged.
- Schools should not hold mass gatherings such as assemblies and pep rallies unless appropriate social distancing can be maintained.
- Schools should not plan in-person field trips but are encouraged to plan virtual field trips, where feasible.
- Parents should drop off children external to the building. Entry of parents and other community members should be strictly limited. Pick-up and drop-off times should be staggered to limit crowding.
- Lunchtime should be restructured to allow children to eat lunch in their classrooms or outdoor spaces, rather than the cafeteria. Individuals should not wear masks while eating or drinking. Students and staff should be reminded to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.
- Children who ride school buses should be seated one child per seat with an empty seat between them and the next child, if possible. Students from the same household may sit together.
- Bus drivers and students should wear a cloth face covering unless contraindicated as above. Buses should be disinfected between routes.
- Schools should have policies in place that limit visitors in the school. Those that do visit should be screened for symptoms, have their temperature taken, and wear a cloth face covering while on campus.

## General Information and Policies

- Restricted access – only students and staff will be permitted in the building.
- Studio Programs – will be canceled for the time being. We hope to be able to bring these programs back in the future.
- Handwashing/Sanitizing – Children and staff will be expected to wash their hands more often throughout the day.
- Sanitization - Increased cleaning by staff in high traffic areas, surfaces after snack and lunch, and lessons used throughout the day with approved cleaners. Commercial cleaners will provide frequent cleanings throughout the week at all campuses.
- Masks - Masks/face coverings are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and will be utilized in an effort to keep all members of our community healthy. Staff will wear masks/face coverings while inside, during arrivals and departures, and when social distancing of 6 feet is not possible. Parents/guardians will wear masks/face coverings during arrivals and departures (including car line procedures).
- HVAC - all classrooms have their own HVAC unit and only circulates air within that classroom.
- Restrooms - each cohort/classroom is assigned their own restroom so as to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

## Arrival Pre-Screener Questions

Each morning, parents will ask and answer these pre-screening questions for their child/children and share the answers with LRMS arrival staff. If the child/children can answer yes to any of the following questions, we will refer to the policy statement and make appropriate arrangements. If the child/children are not able to come to school due to answering YES to pre-screening questions, the family will contact the school so that LRMS can contact the local Health Department and follow their recommendations for contact tracing, etc. Additionally, staff members are required to conduct the same screener questions and temperature check (and record) each morning.

### **Arrival Screening (with temperature check) and Screener Questions**

- Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or stomach symptoms?
- Have you had a fever (100.4 or greater) in the last 48 hours?
- Have you had NEW loss of taste or smell?
- Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?

## Illness

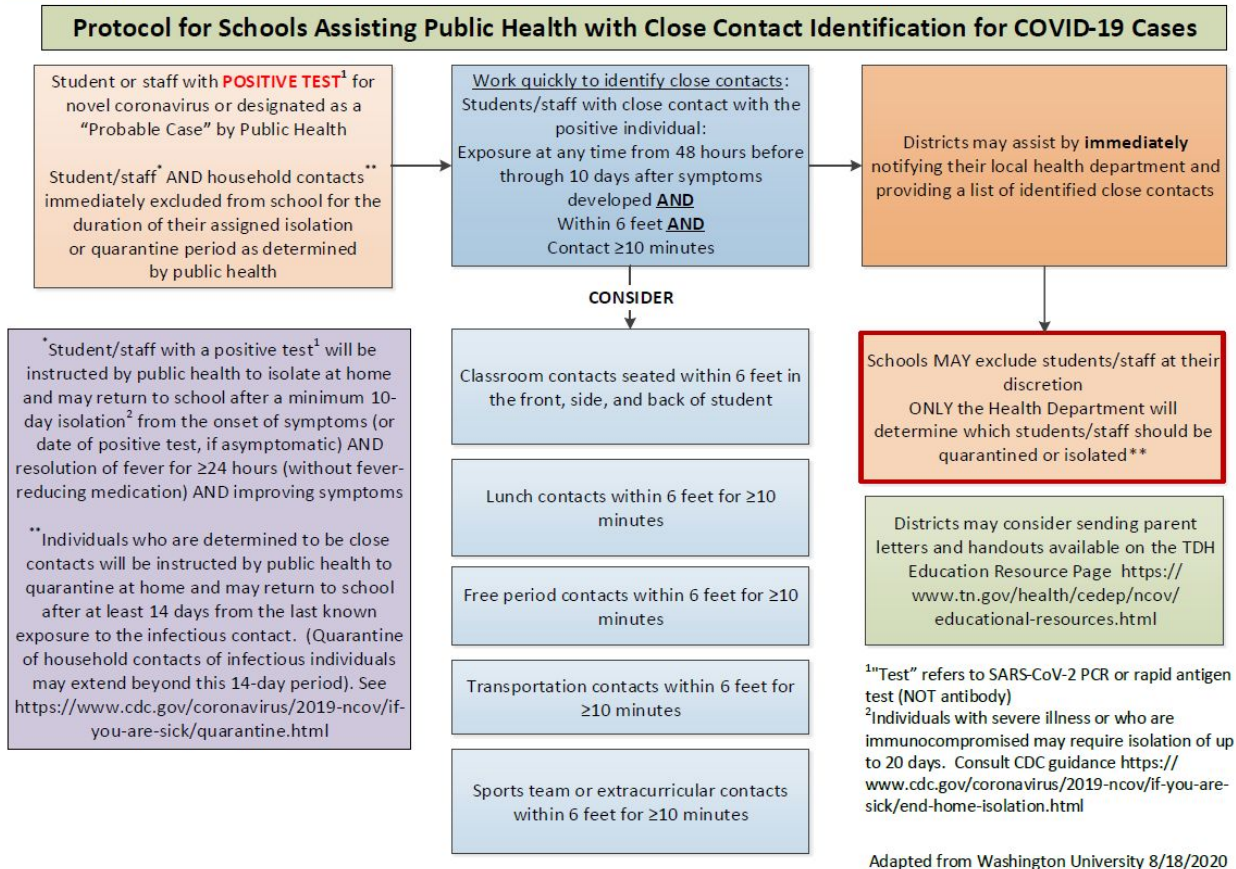
Students and staff will not be permitted to come to school or remain at school with a fever (100.4 F). Additionally, children who exhibit COVID-typical symptoms such as shortness of breath, severe cough, loss of taste/smell, vomiting, diarrhea, or unidentified rashes will be removed from the classroom so that a call can be made to request that a parent or guardian to come pick up that child. Staff who exhibit COVID-typical symptoms such as shortness of breath, severe cough, loss of taste/smell, vomiting, or diarrhea, will be advised to remain at home.

Please notify LRMS if someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19 and/or if someone in your household has been notified by the Health Department to quarantine due to a possible exposure.

If a diagnosis of COVID-19 arises in the school community, LRMS will follow the local Health Department guidelines for safe quarantine for that individual and anyone identified as a “close contact”.

Each child will be provided with 180 school days as required by the state of TN. If your student must be quarantined or your student’s classroom is closed, your student’s teacher will provide you with customized support during that time. School days missed due to quarantine, closure, or inclement weather in excess of 10 days will be made up at the end of the year.

## When Someone Becomes Ill:



## Return to School:

The following is recommended when considering when students and staff may attend school after illness:

- Any student or staff who exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are to be masked and isolated immediately and sent home as quickly as possible.
- Students and staff who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or whom have been in quarantine due to exposure to a confirmed/probable case of COVID-19, are NOT required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test or a note of clearance from a health care provider or the Department of Health prior to returning to school but **MUST** meet **ONE** of the criteria below:
  - Students and staff may return to school if the answer to **ANY** of the following questions is YES:
    - Did the individual have a positive COVID-19 PCR/antigen test (with or without symptoms), complete isolation for a minimum of 10 days from the

onset of symptoms (or the date of the positive test, if asymptomatic) AND have resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medication) AND improvement in COVID-19 symptoms of at least 24 hours? If so, the individual may return to school. No medical evaluation or proof of negative COVID-19 test is required. Note: individuals who were severely ill with COVID-19 or who are immunocompromised may be required to isolate for up to 20 days per CDC guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

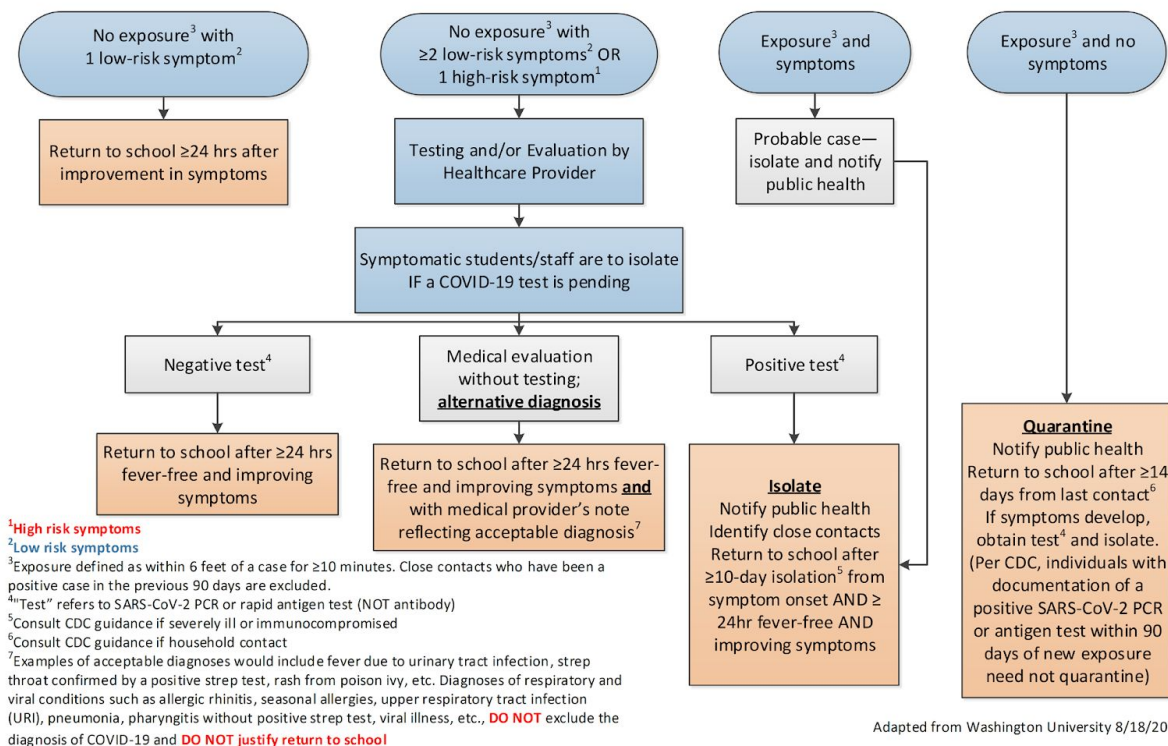
- Was the individual quarantined for a minimum of 14 days due to exposure to a confirmed/probable cause to COVID-19? If that individual has remained asymptomatic and has completed at least 14 days in quarantine, the individual may return to school. Note that household contacts of a confirmed/probable cause may be required to quarantine for a longer period, per CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>. No medical evaluation or proof of negative COVID-19 test is required. If symptoms developed during the quarantine period, the individual must complete isolation as above.
  
- Does an individual who was ill with symptoms of COVID-19 have written documentation from their medical providers confirming their illness was not due to COVID-19 because another explanation was identified? If so, the individual may return to school at the direction of their medical provider if they have been without fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for at least 24 hours and symptoms have been improving. Examples of acceptable diagnosis would include fever due to urinary tract infection, strep throat confirmed by a positive strep test, rash from poison ivy, etc. Diagnoses of respiratory and viral conditions such as upper respiratory tract infection (URI), pneumonia, pharyngitis without positive strep test, seasonal allergies, allergic rhinitis, viral illness, etc., DO NOT exclude the diagnosis of COVID-19 and should not be considered adequate to authorize return to school until another criterion is met. Individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 who are without an acceptable alternative diagnosis are treated as infected and are to isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms AND have resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medications) AND improvement of symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to school unless the next criterion is met.
  
- Does an individual who had symptoms to COVID-19 without documentation of an alternative diagnosis and without a positive



COVID-19 test during this illness have a negative COVID-19 PCR test after the onset of their symptoms? (e.g., individual develops a fever and cough, is evaluated by a medical provider, tested for COVID-19 while having symptoms, and the test is negative. Fever resolves and symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.) In this instance, the individual may return to school if fever has resolved without fever-reducing medications and symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours. This doesn't apply to anyone who had a positive test at any point during the illness—that individual must isolate for a minimum of 10 days from offset of symptoms (or the date of the positive test, if asymptomatic) AND have resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medication) AND have improvement in COVID-19 symptoms of at least 24 hours.

- Has an individual who had any symptoms of COVID-19, but who was never tested during that illness and has no confirmed alternative diagnosis, completed isolation for a minimum of 10 days AND had resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medications) AND improvement in COVID-19 symptoms for at least 24 hours? If so, the individual may return to school. No medical evaluation or proof of negative COVID-19 test is required.
- Does the individual who was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case have documentation of a positive SARS-CoV-2 antigen or PCR test within 90 days of the last contact with the case? If so, the individual is not required to self-quarantine.

**Public Health COVID-19 Return to School Decision Support Algorithm** – Symptoms of COVID-19 include the following: **new cough, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, fever (>100.4°F)<sup>1</sup>, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, headache, myalgia<sup>2</sup>**



Further guidance:

[www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/School\\_Recommendations.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/School_Recommendations.pdf)

## Toddler and Early Childhood Classrooms

The goal in all of this is for the school to remain open unless absolutely necessary. Our ability to remain open will depend highly on the number of specific cases we encounter, as well as any people identified as “close contacts” to those cases. We are optimistic that we will be able to continue with in-person instruction, but we will need your help to make that happen.

The information is based on recommendations from the local Health Department, CDC, and AAP. As always, we will continue to keep you updated, should things change.

**Face Coverings** – Face coverings are strongly encouraged for students. Staff will wear masks/face coverings while inside, during arrivals and departures, and when social distancing of 6 feet is not possible. If you plan on having your child wear a face covering in the classroom, please provide several clean masks each day and contact your child’s teacher for details.

**Arrivals** - Arrivals will be from 7:30-8:00 this year and there will be no carline. Families will park and walk students to their drop-off area (playground gate for Toddlers and front sidewalk for Early Childhood). We ask that the adults wear face coverings and follow the markers for social distancing. Students and staff will have their temperature checked upon arrival. Parents will be



asked a series of screening questions at drop off. **Please stay with your child until they are invited into the building or onto the playground.** If you arrive past the arrival time slot you may ring the doorbell and the office staff member will greet you at the door. Please be patient while waiting for the office staff member to arrive at the door.

**Dismissals**- We will continue to have a carline circle for 3:00 dismissals. We ask that you pull up to the sidewalk, park, and a staff member will walk your child to your car. Staff members will not be allowed to put children in the cars, so we ask that you get out with a mask on to receive your children.

**Cohorts** - To the degree that it is feasible, we will keep student groups separate throughout the day.

**Lunch** – Lunches will be brought from home each day. We are unfortunately unable to continue our hot lunch service with Southland Café. Children **MUST** bring a water bottle to use at school. This **MUST** go home each day to be washed. LRMS will not provide water bottles. Children must also bring their own silverware and two cloth napkins each day (one will be used as a placemat). Milk will no longer be provided.

**Laundry** – Napping linens will be sent home every week (or more often if needed) to be laundered by the family. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily. Masks (if utilized by the student) should be washed after each day of use.

**Snack** – LRMS will provide snacks for students.

**Cleaning** – In addition to our normal routine, commonly used materials and surfaces (high touch areas) will be disinfected often throughout the day.

## Toddler and EC Phases

It is possible due to contract tracing that just one cohort or classroom can move to another phase level without the entire campus moving to that same level. Please check all LRMS emails that are sent to you so that you have the most up to date information.

### Green Phase

LRMS is open as usual with no limitations or provisions.

### Yellow Phase

LRMS is open as usual with staff wearing masks/face coverings while inside the classroom or when social distancing of 6 feet is not feasible. Students who can successfully wear masks/face coverings are encouraged to do so. Aftercare may continue as usual or may not be provided - the Director will make this decision as necessary.

### Red Phase

School is closed to in-person instruction. Online instruction starts. Each classroom will tailor their online instruction to their students' needs, and can include virtual lesson presentations, videos, online community building, and packets to be completed at home with guidance from the

parent/guardian. We will only move to Orange or Red Phase at the direction of local health officials or guidance.

## Elementary Classrooms

The goal in all of this is for the school to remain open unless absolutely necessary. Our ability to remain open will depend highly on the number of specific cases we encounter, as well as any people identified as “close contacts” to those cases. We are optimistic that we will be able to continue with in-person instruction, but we will need your help to make that happen.

**Arrivals** - Arrivals will be from 7:00-8:00. Students will exit the vehicle to have their temperature taken and parents will remain in the car to respond to screener questions. If you arrive tardy please call 777-0197 to schedule a screening and the Office Manager will meet you at the drop off point.

**Dismissals**- Students will be loaded at the playground gate. Staff are not permitted to buckle students in.

**Cohorts** - To the degree that it is feasible, we will keep student groups separate throughout the day, in Upper Elementary and Lower Elementary cohorts.

**Lunch** – Lunches will be brought from home each day. We are unfortunately unable to continue our hot lunch service with Southland Café. Children MUST bring a water bottle to use at school. This MUST go home each day to be washed. LRMS will not provide water bottles. Children must also bring their own silverware and two cloth napkins each day (one will be used as a placemat). Milk will no longer be provided.

## Elementary Phases

It is possible due to contract tracing that just one cohort or classroom can move to another phase level without the entire campus moving to that same level. Please check all LRMS emails that are sent to you so that you have the most up to date information.

### Green Phase

LRMS is open as usual with no limitations or provisions. Shuttle service will be provided.

### Yellow Phase

LRMS is open as usual with staff wearing masks/face coverings while inside the classroom, during arrivals/departures, or when social distancing of 6 feet is not feasible. Students are expected to wear masks/face coverings inside the classroom or when social distancing of 6 feet is not feasible. Please provide several clean masks each day. Staff will guide students towards successful mask/face covering usage and work with families on an individual basis. Shuttle service will be provided and all riders will wear masks/face coverings. Aftercare may continue as usual or may not be provided - the Director will make this decision as necessary.

## Orange Phase

In the Orange phase, the hybrid model starts. Students will receive a total of 6.5 hours of virtual and in-person instructional time. Shuttle service will not be provided during this phase. Aftercare will not be provided. Staff will wear masks/face coverings while inside the classroom, during arrivals/departures, or when social distancing of 6 feet is not feasible. Students are expected to wear masks/face coverings inside the classroom or when social distancing of 6 feet is not feasible. Please provide several clean masks each day. Staff will guide students towards successful mask/face covering usage and work with families on an individual basis.

Lower Elementary would attend in-person class from 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and online class from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM. Participation in the virtual component is required and attendance will be taken daily. Those who do not participate will be marked absent for half of the day.

Upper Elementary would attend online class from 8:00 AM to 10:30 AM and in-person class from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM. Participation in the virtual component is required and attendance will be taken daily. Those who do not participate will be marked absent for half of the day.

School would be closed from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM for cleaning.

In-person class time would be devoted to language and mathematics instruction. Online learning will focus on cultural subjects - music, art, geography, history, cooking demonstrations, practical life, mindfulness, movement, science, Great Books, and spelling.

We will only move to Orange or Red Phase at the direction of local health officials or guidance.

## Red Phase

School is closed to in-person instruction. Online instruction starts. Students will receive a total of 7 hours of virtual and self-guided instructional time from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Participation in the virtual component is required and attendance will be taken daily.

The proposed virtual class schedule will be:

8:30 AM - Welcome Game, Class Meeting

9:00 AM - Movement and Mindfulness

9:30 AM - Composition and Literacy

10:00 AM - Language (Spelling and Grammar)

10:30 AM - Practical Life and Cooking

11:00 AM - Lunch

12:00 PM Recess

12:30 PM - Math

1:00 PM - Geometry

1:30 PM - Botany and Zoology

2:00 PM - Art

2:30 PM - Music

3:00 PM - Geography and History  
This schedule is subject to change.

We will only move to Orange or Red Phase at the direction of local health officials or guidance.

We will continue to try and stay ahead of the information provided by various agencies and make the best decisions that we can for all of our families. Executing these plans requires a solid partnership between families, students, and staff. The safety of ALL members of the LRMS community is of the utmost importance. We are grateful for each and every family at LRMS and will do our best to provide the safest school environment possible for our children.

## References:

### **CDC "When You Can Be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19"**

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html)

### **CDC Schools and Childcare Programs: Plan, Prepare and Respond**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

### **CDC Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>

### **CDC Considerations for Schools**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

### **American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry**

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>