The Massachusetts State of Emergency ended on June 15, 2021. In September, OSS welcomed all students for in-person classes, Monday through Friday!

Our highest priorities continue to be the health and wellness of our community members and the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of our learners. Vaccinations in people age 5+ help us have much more freedom at school, but we recognize that we host unvaccinated learners too. Therefore, we continue to make modifications that reflect public health guidelines recommended by the CDC, MA DESE, and New Bedford Health Department; scientific data and research; and the input of other experts.

Updates are subject to change and will be made as needed. We continue to welcome ideas, questions, and feedback from students and families as an important part of the process.
VACCINATION

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- No OSS@Home Pathway
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EACH FAMILY’S ROLE FOR A HEALTHY CAMPUS
VACCINATION

We very strongly encourage vaccination for eligible children aged 5+ and adults. (At this time it is not required.) If a student is vaccinated, please provide vaccination details to the school to be added to their health record. Please also inform us if and when a student has tested positive for COVID-19. This will help speed our understanding of community immunity and help us to make programming decisions as the year progresses.

OSS hosted a community vaccination clinic for eligible children and adults on August 13, starting at 3:30 pm. The follow-up appointment for second shots was Tuesday, September 7 at 4:15 pm, also at OSS. General information is also available through the New Bedford Health Department website and videos in multiple languages from MA Trust the Facts Get the Vax site.

We know there may be some who have questions about the vaccinations, and we encourage you to contact Nurse Gale Beaton as you need. Staying healthy is still a collective effort -- higher vaccination rates allow for more vibrant, relaxed learning and community experiences. Please consider how vaccination protects others--including highly vulnerable family members in our extended community--and how it dramatically reduces symptoms, hospitalizations, and deaths in positive cases.

FULL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Academic Schedule
Rich, challenging, and student-centered academic learning continues! Most courses and programs on pause last year will run again in the Monday-Friday schedule.

No OSS@Home Pathway
The OSS@Home Pathway is no longer an option. We are thrilled to learn with all Sister Sailors in person! If a student needs to quarantine or experience an extended absence for any reason, we will support their continued studies using multiple strategies in a timely fashion. Personalized study plans take a little time to develop so please be patient.

Personal Learning Kits

- Students will each have their own learning kit containing the supplies they need for individual work. Supplies will be a combination of materials provided by OSS and gathered by families. Please see 2020-2021 School Supplies List. Some supplies will also be available in classrooms for community use. Returning students should bring in last year’s supply boxes (or an alternative container). Replacements are available for purchase.
- Each student will have access to a Chromebook in school for the entire year. A limited number of Chromebooks are available for check-out and home use as needed.
SAFE CAMPUS FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

Facilities Features

- Outdoor Classroom with potable water, two sinks for handwashing, toilet, many picnic tables, and a large tent (as weather permits)
- Application before September of nontoxic-to-humans mosquito/tick insecticide
- Hand sanitizers and surface cleaning spray available in all spaces
- Increased fresh air circulation through the use of recently assessed, high functioning HVAC unit ventilators or open windows.

Cleaning and Custodial

As always, we are all responsible for maintaining excellent hygiene and cleanliness in our shared learning spaces! Our Sisters’ School will have the following systems:

- Professional custodial services will deep clean three (3) evenings per week.
- All learning spaces will have surface cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- Students and staff will wipe down indoor surfaces, such as desks and tables, with disinfectant as needed and at the end of each day.
- Students and staff help with recycling duties. Trash and slop buckets duties will be determined.

Although shorter, Evening Homeroom is still part of the daily schedule for calm and thorough personal organization and clean-up at the end of each school day.

Transportation: Arrival/Drop-off and Dismissal/Pick-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 - 8:15 am</td>
<td>Drop-off, Homeroom</td>
<td>breakfast served 8:00 - 8:10 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15 pm</td>
<td>Pick-up, “Cars Rolling”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15 - 5:15 pm</td>
<td>*Evening Study</td>
<td>by choice and/or invitation only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Doors will open for arrival and breakfast service at 8:00 am.
- Students must arrive at homeroom no later than 8:15 am to be marked on time. Attendance will be entered daily into Gradelink by 8:15 am.
- Cars will be “rolling” for first pick-up at 4:15 pm and at 5:15 pm after Evening Study.

Visitors are again invited inside the building while wearing a mask. Please sign the log upon arrival. Without a mask, please come to the front door and connect via the camera.

* Evening Study is again by family choice and/or invitation only. To enroll, please fill out this Google Form by September 10 or contact Ms. Wohl. Morning Study is no longer offered.

^for arrival procedure, please see the Arrival Screening section on page 8.
Physical Distancing

Physical distance of 3 feet is recommended outdoors (with or without masks), if possible, and is preferred indoors. This helps avoid direct contact and prevent exposure. We organize space and movement to:

- Allow students to learn together while maintaining comfortable physical boundaries
- Provide ample access to outdoor spaces for academics, lunch/recess, & breaks
- Reduce students assigned to sit on floor seats and again permit two students at long tables
- Limit capacity to six (6) in student bathrooms with supervision at high-traffic times

5/6 and 7/8 Grade Bands can now mix for instruction and other activities.

All-school gatherings, including Community Meetings, will resume both indoors and outdoors with some safety protocols. The Morning Speaker program will resume weekly on Tuesday mornings from 8:15-8:45 am.

Bus and Car Transportation

During bus and car transportation for Community As Campus off-site learning, Sister Sailors will wear masks and keep the windows open when possible. Up to two (2) sit in a seat on buses at a time.

Food Protocols

Lunch and SSR

Lunch with unstructured play time (recess) and Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) are two very important parts of the OSS day that occur on a daily basis.

- We will return to one, all-school lunch and a simultaneous SSR period afterwards.
- Before and after lunch, all community members will wash hands with soap and water or apply hand sanitizer.
- On most days (all conditions except heavy rain or thunderstorm), we eat lunch and enjoy recess in the Outdoor Classroom.
- SSR is held in homerooms or a part of the Outdoor Classroom.
- For indoor lunch and recess, each grade will spread out across its homeroom, the Community Room, and Creative Suite.
- Masks will not be required while eating, and students and staff will maintain a distance of at least 6 feet with them. Once done eating, we will wash hands and put masks back on for indoor play.
Breakfast

- **Students must eat a hearty breakfast daily, either at home or at OSS.** Breakfast service at OSS will usually occur outside in the Outdoor Classroom as weather permits, or in the Community Room. Masks will not be required while eating, and everyone will physically distance.
- For indoor breakfast, students can expect to enter the Community Room, pick up their meals, eat at a table, wash hands, and proceed to locker and homeroom.

Snacks

To reduce touching our mouths outside of lunch time, students are not encouraged to snack at their lockers. Students who stay for Evening Study will eat their personal snack at 4:15 pm.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Our number one priority remains the health, safety, and wellness of our community members. Since last year we have achieved 0% transmission of COVID-19 on campus, and incidents of other viruses and infections dropped as well.

**Vaccination for COVID-19**

We very strongly encourage vaccination for eligible children aged 5+ and adults. (so far it is not required.) If a student is vaccinated, please provide vaccination details to the school to be added to their health record. Please also inform if and when a student has tested positive for COVID-19. This will help speed our understanding of community immunity and help us to make programming decisions as the year progresses.

OSS hosted a vaccination clinic for eligible children and adults on August 13 from 3:30–5:30pm. More information is also available through the New Bedford Health Department website and videos in multiples languages from MA Trust the Facts Get the Vax site.

We know there may be some who have questions about the vaccinations, and we encourage you to contact Nurse Gale Beaton as you need. Staying healthy is still a collective effort -- higher vaccination rates allow for more vibrant, relaxed learning and community experiences. Please consider how vaccination protects others--including highly vulnerable family members in our extended community--and how it dramatically reduces symptoms, hospitalizations, and deaths in positive cases.

**Facial Masks**

There is mounting evidence that the virus most effectively spreads person to person through airborne respiratory droplets and that facial coverings are a very strong first prevention tool.
OSS will take a conservative approach and continue to require that all staff, learners, and visitors wear mask facial coverings over both nose and mouth when indoors and students are present.

All OSS staff and students should have several fitted masks and learn to wash and handle them properly. (Bill Nye the Science Guy made a viral TikTok on how masks work to protect us. Check it out.)

The School has plenty of masks available to anyone who needs them.

Masks will not be required outdoors at all, nor while eating indoors. Until more students are vaccinated, students and staff will strive to maintain a distance of 6 feet or more as possible when indoors and eating. Once done eating, we will put masks back on for play indoors.

Need to take a quick personal mask break? Sure! We can take short, personal mask breaks to stay comfortable but only at a distance of at least 6 feet from others and preferably outside the classroom or outdoors.

**Hygiene Routines**

**Handwashing and Sanitizer**

Handwashing and sanitizing are now part of our routines and rituals and are always great habits to practice! Hand sanitizer will be available and easily accessible in every space; washing with soap and water is even better. It is safe to carefully share objects, materials, and sports equipment when we focus on keeping our hands clean.

- Before and after lunch, all community members will wash hands with soap and water or apply hand sanitizer.
- Grade cohorts will each have an assigned indoor sink to reduce the number of people ever waiting for a sink (bathrooms, science lab, art studio, outdoors).
- Up to six (6) students will be allowed in each bathroom at a time. Students will use them only during supervised blocks, not during passing time.

**Flu Shots**

Given that mild COVID-19 symptoms can be confused with flu symptoms, health officials have strongly recommended in the past that we get a flu shot early in the season (begins in September). OSS will encourage students and staff to follow state and local recommendations for this year when they are updated.

**Routine COVID-19 Testing Recommended for Unvaccinated Students and Staff**

OSS encourages unvaccinated students and staff to be tested for COVID-19 before September 1 and throughout the year. If someone tests positive, please contact Ms. Herman. Please also make sure you do not get charged $ and communicate if you need access to free testing.
**Arrival Screening**

- Families are responsible to screen their learners for symptoms at home before coming to school each and every day. Staff must screen themselves as well. **It is in all of our best interest to stay home if we have any symptoms.**

  Feeling under the weather? Stay home! Protection and prevention are the way to go! Nurse Beaton will follow up with you at home.

- OSS students and staff without symptoms are welcome to come to school in the morning. Regular arrival and homeroom time begins at 8:00 am.

- Upon arrival, a member of the friendly Admin Front Door Team greets students and provides a squirt of hand sanitizer. We no longer take temperatures.

**Protocol for Symptomatic Student at School**

This protocol is adapted for OSS based on the recommended MA DESE protocol.

1. As stated, families are the most important first line of defense for monitoring symptoms. However, OSS teachers and other adults will be prepared to take the following steps with love if any student presents **any** symptoms during the school day.

2. Students will not be able to check themselves into the Nurse's Station during this time and should communicate with a teacher as usual.

3. Teacher will ensure that the student is properly wearing a mask that fully covers the nose and mouth at all times.

4. Teacher will bring the student to the Health Station and/or directly to an Admin Team member, or reach out to the Front Office to dispatch another adult to pick up and attend to the student, as needed.

5. Symptoms like injuries and menstrual cramps can be treated at the Health Station. But if a student presents possible COVID-19 symptoms upon evaluation, the adult will accompany them to the secure Medical Waiting Area. They will wait together at a safe distance for pick-up.

6. The student needs to get tested at one of the [Massachusetts test sites](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/covid-19-testing) and isolate at home until the test results are returned.

7. Test Results:

   a. If the **test is negative**, the student may return to school pending the guidance from their clinician and at least 24 hours have passed without symptoms.
b. If the **test is positive**, the student should remain home, rest, and monitor symptoms for a minimum of 10 days. The parent/guardian should communicate with Ms. Herman or Ms. Wohl and participate in follow-up steps under Nurse Beaton’s guidance.

**Close Contact with a Positive Case**

It might happen that a student or staff person is asymptomatic and has close contact with a confirmed positive case outside the school (e.g. family member, close friend). Such close contact is defined as **within 6 feet while indoors for at least 15 minutes**.

If so, individuals who are **fully vaccinated** (two weeks after completion of vaccine regimen or more) or are within 90 days of a confirmed infection themselves do not need to quarantine as long as they do not show any symptoms. The CDC and New Bedford Health Department recommend getting tested 3-5 days after exposure.

Individuals who are **not fully vaccinated** should stay at home and be tested 5 days or later after last exposure.

a. If the **test is negative**, the student may return to school after 7 days of quarantine without symptoms.

b. If the **test is positive**, remain home, contact a member of the admin team, and Nurse Beaton will guide you through more steps of the recommended protocol.

c. If the person **is not tested**, remain home in self-quarantine for 14 days from exposure without symptoms. Communicate with Ms. Wohl about how to keep up with academics during that time.

Unvaccinated close contacts who were exposed to a confirmed positive case in the classroom or on the bus while both individuals were masked do not have to quarantine **unless they were indoors within 3 feet of the positive individual for a total of 15 minutes during a 24-hour period**. Follow quarantine and test protocols above.

**Campus Closure**

Per response plan changes made in May 2021, OSS campus will remain open if a positive case presents in a student or staff member. Campus would only close due to multiple cases as advised or directed by public health officials. (No “cut-off” is defined at this time.)

**Travel Policy**

- Per state and federal guides, there are no travel restrictions for vaccinated people of any age.
- Unvaccinated travelers must quarantine for 10 days upon their return if they have been out of the New England area for 24 hours or more except for travelers who have not been on a plane and received a negative COVID-19 result on a test administered at least 72 hours following their return to MA.
- Unvaccinated travelers who have been on a plane still require a negative test result and 7-day quarantine, or else a full 10-day quarantine, before returning to OSS.
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The OSS community has demonstrated incredible levels of adaptability and resilience so far! None of us has ever lived through a pandemic before and certainly not one compounded by so many concurrent economic, social, and political shifts. We commit to maintaining a strong community of care.

Some of the ways we attend to and support mental health and emotional wellbeing at Our Sisters’ School include but are not limited to:

- Including study of trauma-sensitive practice and antiracism in staff professional development
- Providing counseling services onsite
- Practicing routine mindful breathing techniques throughout the school day
- Explicitly teaching and practicing Community Core Tools, strategies for facing and coping with present challenges, and ways to communicate and respect personal boundaries
- Providing generous access to materials for artistic self-expression
- Differentiating and personalizing instruction to meet each learner’s needs to the best of our capacity
- Providing academic support as needed
- Making space for students to process feelings and experiences without “overdoing it” -- fostering a school environment that is safe for sharing but also a hopeful refuge from worry
- Encouraging critical thinking and respect for facts and sound research over uninformed fear or rumors
- Being mindful of physical demands (including screen time) in the creation of schedules and assignments
- Providing opportunities for regular physical activity like fitness and sailing
- Offering optional yoga classes
- Directing current families and graduates to community resources
- *Communicating Clearly* with and *Listening to Learn* from each other

Communications

Any very important message regarding the pandemic or changes at school will be communicated in Ms. Herman’s weekly email. This includes notice of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a student or staff person who has been on campus.

RESOURCES

- CDC: for Schools
- MA Dept of Public Health
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- NB Health Department
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Mental Health Resources for Families and Children
- Clean, Care for, Store a Mask
OSS COMMUNITY PLANNING

The COVID Response & Transition Planning Team has updated our plans for the fall, taking into consideration the voices of many community members including staff, students, and families. The committee will meet at least once in anticipation of each new trimester and as otherwise needed.

The Committee includes:
Sarah Herman, Head of School
Gale Beaton, RN, Consulting Nurse
Alison Coolidge, Co-President of the Board of Trustees
Martha Sullivan, Co-President of the Board of Trustees
Carlene LeBlanc, Director of Finance and Operations
Ariana Wohl, Academic Dean and Humanities Chair
Jocelyn Mitchell, Science Chair
Tobey Eugenio, Creative Suite Chair
Eric Charlesworth, Mathematics Chair
Amy Sanders, Secondary School and Graduate Support
OSS 2021-2022 HEALTHY CAMPUS UPDATES: Winter 2021 updated 11.5.21

EACH FAMILY’S ROLE FOR A HEALTHY CAMPUS

We are pleased to welcome all learners on the OSS campus in September with the care and attention still required to prevent transmission of the virus. Below are updated steps families, students, and staff must take to ensure the healthiest year possible.

All subject to change based on evolving public health recommendations.

Vaccination
We strongly encourage vaccination for children aged 5+. (At this time it is not required.) If a student is vaccinated, please provide vaccination details to the school.

Travel Policy
- There are no travel restrictions for vaccinated people of any age.
- Unvaccinated travelers must quarantine for 10 days upon their return if they have been out of New England for 24 hours or more except for travelers who have not been on a plane and received a negative COVID-19 result on a test administered at least 72 hours following their return to MA.
- Unvaccinated travelers who have been on a plane still require a negative test result and 7-day quarantine, or else a full 10-day quarantine.

Daily Health Screening
Before leaving home each day, we all must screen everyone in our households for COVID-19 symptoms. If a student, staff person, or family member has symptoms, please contact the School, and we'll follow up appropriately. We no longer take temperatures upon arrival.

Close Contact
If a child has close contact with a COVID-19 case, they may come to school as long as they are at least 2 weeks past their second vaccination dose. Otherwise, they should follow guidance on what to do when someone has known exposure.

Face Coverings
In accordance with new guidelines from the State, face coverings outdoors are now optional. Students and staff may choose to participate in outdoor learning with or without masks.

When indoors with students in the building, OSS continues to require that all staff, students, and visitors wear clean mask facial coverings over both nose and mouth.

Physical Distancing
Physical distance of 3 feet is recommended outdoors (with or without masks) and indoors. This helps avoid direct contact.

Hand Hygiene Routines
We continue to follow regular handwashing or sanitizing protocol throughout the day as part of our rituals and routines. It is now ok to share objects, materials, and sports equipment. Please use hand sanitizer which is available in every learning space. Continue to wash hands before and after eating.

Respect and Clear Communication
As a community of care, we will continue to teach and practice clear communication and respect for any personal boundaries that may differ at this transitional time.