



HillSprings Academy

HillSprings Academy Updated Reopening Plan 2020-2021

*** Because of a recent addition to our teaching staff, we are now able to offer limited in-person class options for our Morning and After-School Programs. ***

Virtual class options remain available for all programs.

In creating our plans for the 2020-2021 school year, HillSprings Academy seeks to provide both an exemplary education program for our students and a learning environment that keeps the students and their teachers as safe from the COVID pandemic as possible. Results from the parent and teacher surveys show that both groups are concerned about what the “new normal” will look like and how we can stay safe from the spread of COVID. The results also indicate the majority of parents would prefer an on-campus experience for their children and the teachers would prefer to work from home.

Because of HillSprings Academy’s unique purpose, structure, and delivery model, we are able to offer a unique educational option that combines both family and staff preferences. Here is the “new normal” we plan to create for our students and staff:

At the opening of the 2020-2021 school year, HillSprings Academy will offer a virtual version of its signature half-day, small-group intervention program with online access available either from home or from HillSprings Academy’s campus.

Virtual Hill instructional delivery will look and feel much like the regular HillSprings Academy in-person program. For example:

- Virtual Hill classes will be done in small groups rather than individually.
- Morning Program and Mid-Day Program classes will receive a 50-minute block of reading, a 50-minute block of writing, and a 50-minute block of math instruction each day of attendance.
- After-School Program classes will receive 90 minutes of small-group instruction in their selected subject area each day of attendance. (A 5-minute stretch break will be included.)
- Class sizes will remain capped at four students.
- Live, interactive, and direct instruction will be provided by the teachers (as opposed to prerecorded video lessons).
- The same predictable structure and instructional routines will be followed.
- Individualized instruction will be based on what students’ assessment results show as their current areas of need.
- Instruction will move as quickly or as slowly as each student needs for mastery to occur.
- Camaraderie among the students will develop as they learn from and support each other.

We empower students with learning differences to become confident, independent learners.

Other Hill Schools around the country have been using the virtual version of the Hill Methodology with great success. One parent had this to say about their experience with Virtual Hill:

“Before the transition to distance learning we could only assume about the quality of teaching. After 11 weeks of firsthand hearing the instruction and Hill Method, it is far superior to what we could have ever imagined.”

Below is an outline of HillSprings Academy’s new norms for safely accessing Virtual Hill classes from HillSprings or from home.

New Norms for Accessing In-Person or Virtual Hill Classes from HillSprings

For families choosing to access Virtual Hill classes from HillSprings, please know that HillSprings Academy will follow all health and safety requirements endorsed by our state and county agencies, including but not limited to social distancing, frequent sanitizing, and the wearing of face coverings.

1. Classroom Arrangement
 - a. Large horseshoe table replaced by 3-4 individual student learning stations to allow for 6’ social distancing
 - b. Individual supply kits (containing pencils, pens, individual whiteboard, erasers, etc.) provided at each student learning station to minimize contact exposures
 - c. If possible, family-provided iPads to bring back and forth from home to school*
 - d. An adult to supervise the on-campus students
2. Ten-Minute Device-Free Nutrition Breaks
 - a. Taken twice each day after the first and second blocks of instruction
 - b. Time to wash their hands
 - c. Time to eat a healthy snack brought from home
 - d. Indoor and outdoor “brain break” activity stations designed to safely engage students in recharging their brains, letting out their wiggles, and interacting with their friends from a distance
3. Hallway Travel
 - a. Limited to one class at a time
 - b. One-way traffic around the school
4. Sanitizing
 - a. Hand sanitizing stations at each main door and in each classroom
 - b. Daily sanitizing of surfaces and supplies
 - c. Weekly deep cleans
5. Face Coverings
 - a. HillSprings-provided clear face shields for students to wear while in their classrooms
 - b. Face masks from home worn
 - i. Entering and exiting the building
 - ii. Walking within the building outside the classroom
6. Health Screenings
 - a. Temperature checks and health surveys as students and staff enter the building
 - b. Anyone with a fever of over 100.4 or exhibiting any COVID-19, cold, or flu symptoms will be required to study or work from home
 - c. Reserved and supervised isolation room should anyone begin showing symptoms of illness at HSA- only until they can be picked up by a parent

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New Norms for Accessing Virtual Hill Classes from Home

Even if your family plans to access Virtual Hill from HillSprings, you will need to prepare your home for the possibility of accessing the lessons from there as at-home access to Virtual Hill classes could occur at any time throughout the year.

1. Materials needed
 - a. A distraction-free student learning station such as a table or desk
 - b. An individual supply kit (containing pencils, pens, individual whiteboard, erasers, etc.) initially supplied by HillSprings
 - c. A student binder provided by HillSprings
 - d. An iPad* to access the HLS educational app
 - e. Another device with a camera and speakers such as a desktop, laptop, or another iPad to access Zoom
 - f. Reliable internet access
2. Successful Attitudes and Behaviors for Learning from Home
 - a. Come to your Virtual Hill class on time
 - b. Come dressed for school even if you are at home
 - c. Finish your breakfast or lunch before accessing class
 - d. Make sure your devices are fully charged
 - e. Have your class materials ready and handy
 - f. Commit to be device-free during the health and nutrition breaks

Program Scheduling

Virtual Hill classes will return to their former schedules. Students accessing classes from home and from HillSprings will follow the same schedule.

- Morning Program (formally known as Academic Year Program) will meet Monday-Friday 8:00-11:00 am.
- Mid-Day Program (formally known as Homeschool Program) will meet Monday/Wednesday OR Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-3:00 pm.
- After-School Program will meet Monday/Wednesday OR Tuesday/Thursday 4:00-5:30 pm.

*HillSprings Academy has several iPads which have been used for in-person access to the HLS educational app. We do not have enough for every student in every program without sharing them among the programs. To minimize the sharing of supplies, including the iPads, we request that each family provide their child with an iPad that can be brought back and forth to school when accessing class at HillSprings and/or used at home when accessing class from home. If this is a burden to your family, please let us know.

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