



**Blacksburg New School**

[www.blacksburgnewschool.org](http://www.blacksburgnewschool.org)

2500 North Main Street, Blacksburg VA 24060

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Est. 1971

August 5, 2020

Dear BNS Community,

This update is going to be short and sweet. The start of school is getting very close. This week, you can expect to start getting information about daily schedule and drop-off and pick-up plans.

Please continue to use [the community padlet](#) as this will inform our FAQ documents. Please also know that you can reach out to your classroom board representative, detailed below, or to the board on the whole.

Sincerely,  
The BNS Board

Previous weekly updates files in [this google drive](#) and this [dropbox folder](#)

**Classroom Board Representatives -**

**Red** - Courtney Simón Grohs; [csgrohs@gmail.com](mailto:csgrohs@gmail.com)

**Orange** - Jen Irish or Robert Weiss; [jennifer.l.irish@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.l.irish@gmail.com) or [weiszro@gmail.com](mailto:weiszro@gmail.com)

**Yellow** - Cindy Smith; [clsmith125@comcast.net](mailto:clsmith125@comcast.net)

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Ombudsperson – Lauren Catherwood-Ginn, [ombudsperson@new-school.org](mailto:ombudsperson@new-school.org)

## **Planning Committees Updates**

### **Education Logistics Committee**

- Nothing new to report: the committee has transitioned its work to teachers.
- Anne Larsen is working on finalizing the daily schedule.

### **Online Education Committee**

- A digital equipment package was prepared and presented to teachers for their review and consideration.
- Equipment orders have been (and are being) made for teachers.
- Details for outdoor teaching are continuing to be fleshed out.

### **Facilities**

- Final quotes on 20' x 40' tarps, poles and pole connectors have been collected and everything has been ordered. Due to illnesses, manufacturing and delivery time has been delayed from the previous quote. delivery of the outdoor classrooms may be delayed a few days past the start of school. Students will still be able to participate in time outside, even without the tarps.
- All components of the outdoor handwashing stations have been secured (thank you to this community for your generous donations).
- Numerous aspects of the HVAC system have been (or are in the process of being) repaired by a combination of parent volunteers and professional service providers. Those that have been deemed to be of high priority - including fixing the fresh air dampers to allow more fresh air into the system, fixing exhaust fans that were moving less air than expected, and fixing exhaust fans that were not working – are anticipated to be fixed by the start of school.
- Facilities committee has also confirmed that opening windows and doors and moving air through the room with fans will also acceptable exchange.
- Individual student desks I've run into a delay in production and delivery. The company from whom the desks were purchased has offered to loan us desks until the new ones can be delivered.
- Extra PPE (spare masks and gloves) for teachers that was ordered on July 6 has not been delivered. According to the website, ordering by July 7<sup>th</sup> means delivery on or before August 14<sup>th</sup>. Kiyah has emailed the company for an update.
- Free-standing HEPA units have been ordered.
- MERV 13 filters have been ordered.

### **Communications**

- Communications committee has reviewing the Travel Guidelines, Self-Quarantine Guidelines, and handwashing policies. These will go out to the community in a separate email and will also be shared widely as soon as they are ready. (ultimately they will be shared in our drive and dropbox and likely on our website as well).
- The Health Committee finished drafting a Statement of Community Responsibility. Unlike what was reported last week, this will not need to be signed, but it is something that we would like each family to review carefully.

- Please continue sharing your questions to the padlet. The FAQ is being updated from questions we get there (among other places).
- The Health Committee’s notes include recommendations for features to look for in selecting a mask for your kids. Our committee would like to encourage your kids to practice wearing a mask for a little while.
- The Q&A between the health committee and teachers went well (Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>).
- You can also expect a few more video emails from TJ (a video version of the hall talk!) and an email containing other important “return to school” emails. One of these will also contain the plan or morning drop off an afternoon pick up. Please reach out to us if you have any questions as these come your way.
- The governor announced [COVIDWISE](#), the official COVID-19 exposure notification app for the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Department of Health (VDH). According the app page: “Your personal use of COVIDWISE will significantly help inform Virginians suspected of having been within close proximity to someone with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.” **We do not require anyone at BNS download or use this app, this is just an FYI.**

### Personnel Committee

- Personnel committee has setting up a health training for teachers on August 11<sup>th</sup> (2:00 pm). Confirmed that recording the meeting is feasible and an acceptable form of providing training to any TRO parents who need it.
- The personnel committee is working with teachers (with input from the health committee) to create a plan for substitute teachers.
- Position descriptions for the remote liaison and yellow room teaching assistant have been drafted and posted. A call to the community for participation in the hiring committees has gone out widely.
- The personnel committee is discussing what will happen if a qualified candidate for the teaching assistant position is not found by August 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Personnel chair is working closely with and Larsen to create a daily schedule for all classrooms.

### Health Committee

- The committee (thank you Ash!) created a document about ***What to look for when buying a mask, along with some information about putting on and taking off PPE.*** ***This can all be found in [our shared google drive](#) and [our shared dropbox folder](#).***
- Please encourage your children to practice wearing a mask.
- You can expect an email from the health committee shortly with a video link demonstrating how to properly put on and take-off masks. Please share this with your children and practice, practice, practice.