

July 14, 2020

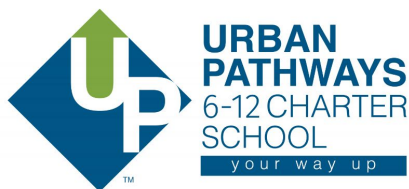
Dear Parents and Guardians,

We hope that your summer is going well, and that you are finding moments of gratitude even as COVID-19 continues to cause changes in our plans and summer traditions. We have been watching the numbers and the news obsessively as we have been working to make a plan for next year. We want to keep everyone safe, as well as do everything we can to make sure that our students are able to make progress academically. One thing that is for certain is that there will be at least some time spent this coming school year when the building will be closed, and teachers and students will be doing school virtually. Because of this, our teachers are spending time working this summer on making our online instruction as engaging as possible, and as focused as possible on what is most important to learn.

Please be advised that because of the constantly evolving conditions, our plan may be subject to change quickly. We will communicate as soon as possible when a change in the instruction plan is necessary.

Our plan to open the school year will be a scaffolded learning experience. Students in grades 6-10 will come into the school building EITHER Monday and Tuesday OR Thursday and Friday. We will let you know before August 12 which days your child will be in the building. If your family has safety concerns about coming into the building, you may also choose the virtual-only learning plan for your child(ren). On days when students are learning at home, they WILL be following their school schedule. They will be required to log in to the virtual classroom and to participate in the lesson of the day regardless of whether they are in the building or at home. On Wednesday all students in grades 6-10 will be learning virtually as the school is thoroughly sanitized for the second group of students.

Juniors and Seniors will be engaged in virtual learning daily. Because they are more self-disciplined and independently driven, they will be expected to log into their scheduled classes daily in order to participate in the day's lessons. Their teachers will be in the building on Wednesday mornings for office hours. Students are welcome to come in person, or to log in for a virtual one-on-one session during office hours.



As we find out how students are adapting to their learning plans, there may be adjustments made on a case-by-case basis. If you feel the plan is not working for your child by the end of September, please reach out to their mentor teacher to discuss how to better meet your child's needs.

Ultimately, our goal is getting students into the building full time as soon as it is safe. We put our hope in our nation's scientists to produce a vaccine or a treatment within the next several months so that students can come to school to be supported in their continuing academic and personal development.

As you know, things are changing daily. Our current plan aligns with the UPCS K-5 plan for scaffolded instruction, but we are also subject to Pittsburgh Public Schools and the PA Department of Education, as well as CDC guidelines. We think that our plan maximizes opportunities for in-person academic work while also limiting opportunities for the virus to spread. Keep an eye out in your email for a survey where you can make choices about your preferred learning plan for your child.

Stay safe! We are looking forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kathleen A. Garland'.

Kathleen A. Garland, Principal