

Shuva B'Shalva

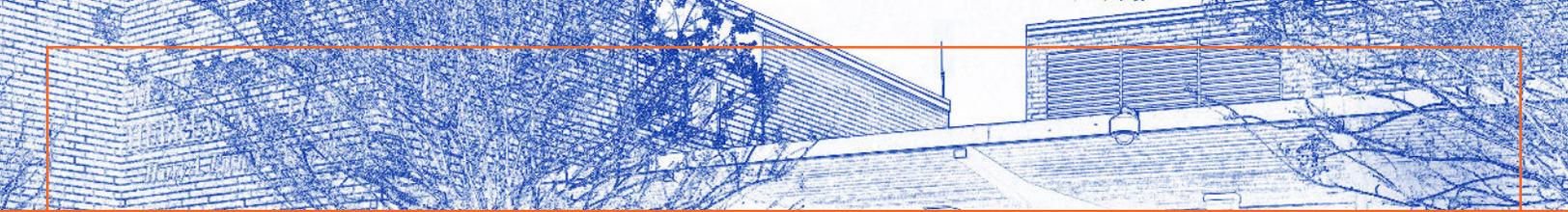
BERMAN'S BLUEPRINT FOR A PEACEFUL RETURN
TO OUR BELOVED CAMPUS



JULY 2020

BERMAN

MELVIN J. BERMAN HEBREW ACADEMY



Shuva B'Shalva

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A MESSAGE FROM RABBI DR. KASTAN

Dear Berman Community,

The past few months have been challenging for our community, but I continue to be inspired by the resiliency of our students, faculty, and families. We know there are more challenges to come, but we are confident our *Shuva B'Shalva* will provide a peaceful return to our beloved campus. This document outlines our goal to return to in-person learning with our students.

We have been working with our medical task force and have been preparing our facilities, policies, and protocols to ensure the health and safety of all of our students, faculty, and staff. This document will walk through what a return to Berman will look like, from symptoms screenings to educational models.

Our *Shuva B'Shalva* is focused on two main criteria:



**HEALTH AND
SAFETY**



**EDUCATIONAL
INTEGRITY**

Our safe return to campus is a community partnership, and as such, we will ask our community members to continue to be vigilant with physical distancing and other recommendations by the CDC and local health department.

The COVID-19 situation is dynamic and new information is rapidly coming out. We are continuing to closely monitor the County and State regulations, and we may need to reevaluate our approach should the situation change.

As always, thank you for your partnership. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Dr. Yossi Kastan
Head of School

RISK MITIGATION

We are creating multi-tiered efforts to mitigate risk for our students and faculty.

While there is no guarantee against the spread of COVID-19, our Medical Task Force, in accordance with CDC guidelines and local health authorities, has recommended that we institute multiple levels of protection to help mitigate risk.



**SYMPTOMS
CHECK**



MASKS



**PHYSICAL
DISTANCING**



**HAND
HYGIENE**



SANITIZATION

SYMPTOMS CHECK



Parents will complete a daily symptoms check survey for their children that screens for key COVID-19 symptoms, as well as potential exposure.

In addition, any essential visitor to our campus will be required to fill out a symptoms check with our front desk before further entry into the building.

Based on Maryland State Guidelines, students will not be allowed on campus if any of the following are true:

1. New onset cough, or shortness of breath; **OR**
2. **At least 2 of the following:** chills, shivering, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, or gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea).

Once completed, a notification will be sent to families indicating if they can attend school on campus, or if they need an additional conversation with our nursing staff. If your responses indicate a conversation with our nursing staff is necessary, please do not bring your child to campus. As always, **anyone with a fever of over 100.4 will not be allowed on campus.**

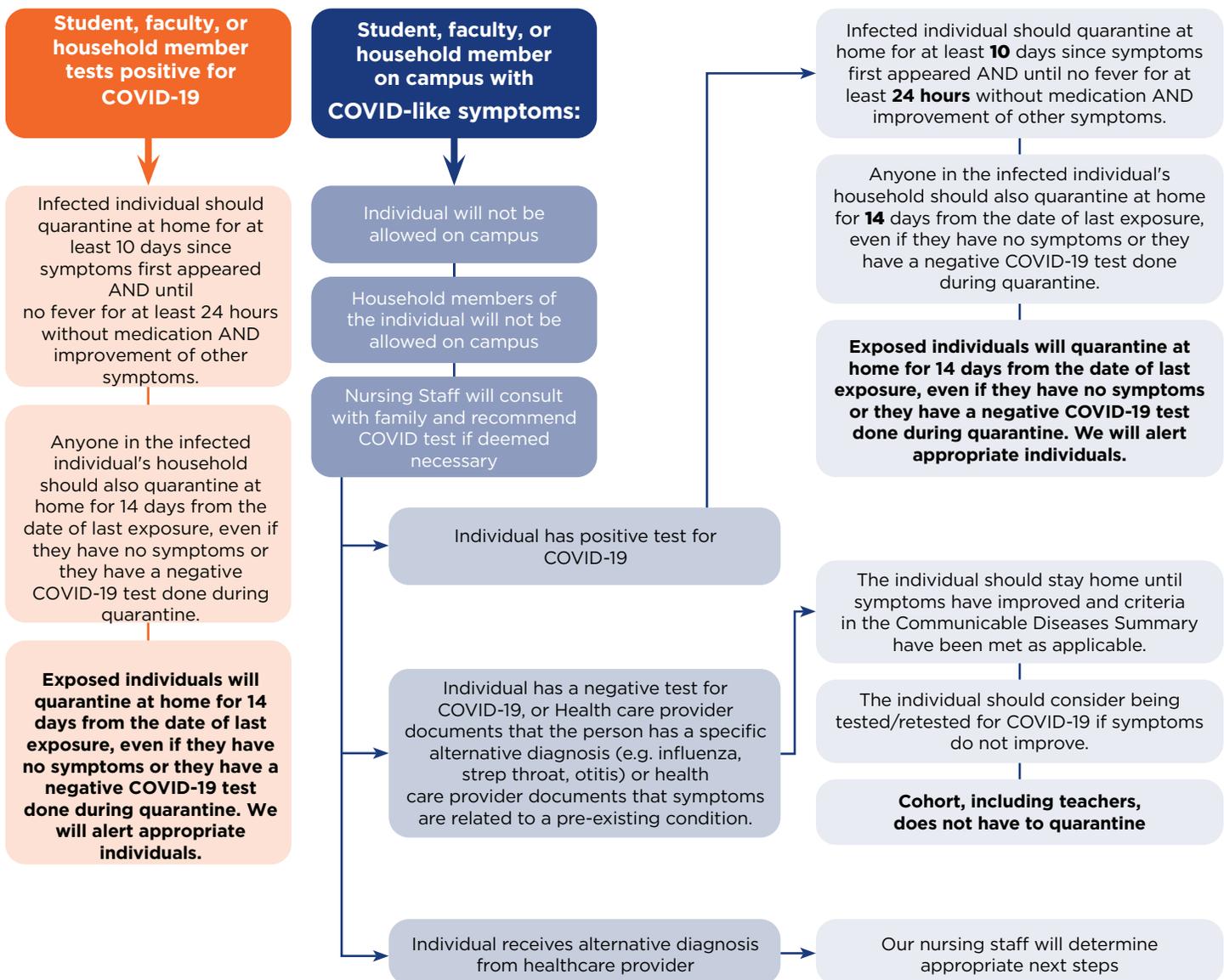
SICK POLICIES



In addition to our regular sick policies, we will follow the below guidelines in response to students, faculty members, or additional household members with suspected exposure, known exposure, symptoms of COVID-19, or confirmed cases of COVID-19. As always, protecting our community is a partnership and we are reliant on our parents and faculty to be forthcoming with their symptoms and known exposures. We are asking all families to complete a COVID-19 testing waiver indicating test results can be shared with the school.

Please note: Additional school closures may be deemed necessary by the Department of Health.

Based on the Maryland Department of Health guidelines, we will follow the below decision tree for determining when a cohort must shut down.



IMMUNIZATION POLICY



All students must have an updated immunization record on file before the first day of school. With the spread of COVID-19, it is of the utmost importance that our students are up to date on their immunizations to ward off other childhood diseases. In addition to our mandated immunizations by the State of Maryland, we are requiring that each student and faculty member get the flu vaccine by November 1 this year.

MASKS



In order to operate, Maryland State Department of Education is requiring cloth face coverings (indoors) for children ages 2 and up when possible. **All students in grades K-12 will be required to wear a face mask in the building.** Our Preschool students will be required to have a mask each day. We will work with them for proper usage, but we understand that this may not be developmentally appropriate for all students. Physically distanced mask breaks will be arranged throughout the day.

All adults, including visitors, will be required to wear a mask in the building.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING



Our classrooms are being set up to accommodate six feet of physical distance between each student. We will have hallway floor markers and signage to remind our students of the importance of physical distancing. Our arrivals and dismissals procedure (see p. 7), as well as classroom schedules, are being designed to reduce traffic flow in our hallways.

We understand that six feet of distancing is not always practical, especially for our younger grades. As with mask wearing, we will find a positive lens to this challenge and encourage our students, rather than reprimand. Our Preschool classes will distance when possible.

Faculty and staff will also be required to maintain physical distancing throughout the day. Alternative staff spaces are being created and staff meetings will be held via Zoom.



HAND HYGIENE



Proper hand hygiene is a value our school has always focused on and we will continue to do so. Hand sanitizing stations have been installed throughout school, and students will be asked to wash their hands at different intervals throughout the day. Teachers will remind students of proper handwashing techniques when they return to school, and signage will be up in the bathrooms as a reminder.

SANITIZATION



In addition to our regular cleaning and sanitization schedules, our facilities team will adapt the following procedures:

- **Restrooms:** Cleaned 2x a day and disinfected 2x a day
- **Trash Removal:** Additional and larger cans will be placed throughout the building
- **High touch Surfaces:** Handrails, Water fountains, Buttons, Door knobs- Disinfected 4x a day.
- **Playground:** Cleaned 2x a day and between pods
- **Bus:** Disinfected 2x a day
- **Ventilation:** Disinfected 2x a day

In addition to our regular cleaning, we will be utilizing the Clorox 360 spraying system during non-school hours for each classroom and common space.

LUNCH



Preschool and Lower School students will be eating lunch in their classrooms. Middle School students will eat in their classrooms or designated outdoor spaces. Upper School students will have designated outdoor and indoor areas. Students will still be able to bring lunch from home. If students purchase lunch from school, it will be individually wrapped and delivered to the classroom.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Students will participate in physical education and activities throughout the day. We will limit equipment sharing between pods, and equipment will be disinfected as needed. Physical education will be held outside as much as possible. We are looking into possibilities for our Upper School students to have an independent study physical education program. We will share more information prior to the beginning of the school year.

FACULTY SAFETY



In addition to cleaning supplies, our faculty is being provided with a daily supply of surgical masks, as well as face shields (upon request). In addition to the efforts we are taking to create physical distancing in the classrooms, we are also working on providing safe spaces for staff to collaborate and decompress while not in the classroom.

TECHNOLOGY



We are planning for the event that pods, or exposed students, may need to quarantine throughout the year. Our K-12 classrooms are being equipped with "The Meeting Owl," a high-tech, 360° camera, so students can Zoom into their live classes when needed. Our Preschool classrooms will utilize webcams and projectors. This will allow students who are home with mild symptoms to participate in classroom instruction, conversation, and learning while off campus.

DAILY SCHEDULE



Students will not be able to enter the building prior to 8:00 am. All students will arrive between 8:00 - 8:15 am. The dismissals schedule is as follows:

- Preschool:** 3:30 pm
- Lower School:** 3:30 pm
- Middle School:** 3:30 pm; optional supervised study hall 3:30 - 4:30 pm*
- Upper School:** 4:30 pm

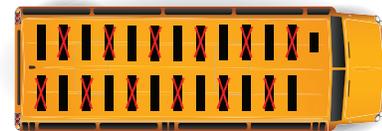
We are creating divisional entrances to help ease the flow of traffic both inside and outside our spaces. We will send updated procedures to all families once they are solidified.

* Since there are Middle School students with siblings in Lower School (which dismisses at 3:30 p.m.) and Upper School (which dismisses at 4:30 p.m.), this optional study hall will allow us the flexibility to dismiss Middle School students at the same time as their siblings. We will work with all Middle School students to create a dismissal plan.

TRANSPORTATION



Our buses will operate at 50% capacity and each student will sit by a window. Siblings can sit next to each other, but the seat adjacent to them will be empty. The windows will be down, weather permitting, and masks will be required for all riders. Buses will be cleaned after each route.



PRESCHOOL & LOWER SCHOOL

Preschool and Lower School students will arrive between 8:00-8:15 am, with Tefilla starting at 8:15 am. The school day will end at 3:30 pm.

We have created small cohorts of up to 15 people per room (including teacher and assistant) to help limit potential exposure. Our cohorts will learn together in the same classroom each day, and will not mix with other cohorts of students. If needed, teachers will rotate through classrooms. Our Specials teachers will take extra precaution when entering a classroom to minimize contact. While students will eat lunch in their classrooms, we will still be going outside for recess and other opportunities throughout the day. We are adding sunshades and canopies throughout campus and will create more outdoor learning times to fully take advantage of our campus spaces. This will also provide necessary mask breaks for our students.

Please note, even if Montgomery County does not permit the other divisions to open, we anticipate that our Preschool will remain open since it is licensed as a childcare center.

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL BLOCK SCHEDULE

The Middle School and Upper School will operate in grade level cohorts. We will be moving to a block schedule starting in the 2020-21 school year. **Classes will meet for a 70 minute block every other day.**

The shift to a block schedule is both educationally and logistically motivated. Educationally, we believe that having a longer period will allow for a depth of learning and analysis that is often limited in a shorter class period. A longer block also provides opportunities for various types of learning activities within the classroom. Finally, it will allow students to have a more balanced workload since classes meet every other day and the homework will be distributed in a similar way. Logistically, moving to a block schedule will minimize the frequency of transitions through the school day. Decreasing the number of student transitions during the day is strongly encouraged as it will also limit the mixing of students as well as the need to disinfect spaces between classes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School students will arrive between 8:00-8:15 am, with Tefilah starting at 8:15 am. Middle School will end the academic day at 3:30 p.m.

After Mincha, there will be an optional supervised study hall between 3:45 -4:30 p.m. for all middle school students. Since there are Middle School students with siblings in Lower School (which dismisses at 3:30 p.m.) and Upper School (which dismisses at 4:30 p.m.), this optional study hall will allow us the flexibility to dismiss Middle School students at the same time as their siblings. We will work with our Middle School families to develop a dismissal plan.

In addition to our block scheduling, Middle School students will have specials and community-building activities throughout the day.

UPPER SCHOOL

Upper School students will arrive between 8:00-8:15 am and dismiss at 4:30 pm.

Our current medical guidelines allow us to host two Upper School grades on campus. Our goal (until medical guidelines evolve) is to run a block schedule on a weekly rotation with A/B days. Each week, two grades will be on campus while the other two grades learn virtually.

In addition to our block scheduling, Upper School students will have a daily block for student activities, advisory, clubs, and other fun community-building activities.