

August 3, 2020

Dear Koraes Families,

Thank you for providing feedback to your preferences in our survey last week. 68% of our families want 5 day on campus instruction. 24% prefer a blended learning schedule. 10% prefer a full distance remote learning experience. The Koraes School Board voted unanimously to offer two options for families to return to school this fall. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to offer all three options. We are pleased to announce that Koraes will reopen for full-day, in-person instruction five-days per week provided the state permits reopening as we anticipate. This is one of those times that being a small school has advantages! The second option is Distance Remote Learning. Tuition will be the same for both options.

Orthodox Christian Unity

The School Board has been meeting weekly to determine the best course of action for our return to school on campus. We have strived for unity with our community. Each family has a different level of comfort, and their extended family situation is different. We respect each family's decision as to how they move forward for the new school year. We pray for each of our Koraes families as we approach the new school year.

We live in unprecedented times and we understand that there are many strong views as to what needs to be done globally, nationally and locally. In the midst of all of these challenges, we respectfully request prayers for our community. We ask our families to live in an understanding way with others who may have different views (1 Corinthians 8). This is a work in progress since we are in uncharted territory. In a recent Metropolis meeting of all Orthodox day schools, all of our school reopening plans were quite similar. We will continue to consult with them as well as with the ISBE (Illinois School Board of Education) IDPH (Illinois Department of Health) and the CDC (Center for Disease Control). We are confident that we will make decisions that will protect our children and staff as much as possible.

Full Day Return to Campus

While we proceed with preparing for school on-campus, it will look different as we adapt to new protocols to provide a safe environment for our students and staff. Our commitment to provide a high-quality educational experience, a nurturing environment, dedication to instruction in Greek language and culture along with using our Orthodox Christian faith will remain steadfast.

Koraes is required to follow the terms specified in the guidance document put out by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health on the safe reopening of schools. Because Koraes is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) we are required to follow the guidelines that they publish.

Grades K-8 will have an 8:30 - 3:15 school day, 5 days per week with before and after school care options as needed. As in previous years, preschool classes are available at 3, 4, and 5 half- and full-day options with before and after school care options as needed. Arrival and departure time will be staggered.

All K-8 grade level classes will have their own classroom where all students will be socially distanced to accommodate the number of students enrolled in the class. Preschool 3's and 4's will be in the same room as the enrollment in preschool is less than 20 students. Students will not be switching classes, the teachers will.

On-campus learning remains the best option for most students and allows for the most flexibility and adaptation within the learning environment. We have made changes however, which include adjusting the layout and format of the physical classrooms, changing student movement and flow, increasing cleaning protocols, changing the utilization of shared supplies and much more.

Health and Safety Procedures

Staff and students will have their temperature taken daily prior to entering the building. Students will have their temperature taken outside of their vehicle while the driver remains in the car. If a staff member or student is exhibiting any of the listed symptoms, the individual must remain at home, and/or seek medical attention. Staff and students with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be sent home. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school if the child has [COVID-19 symptoms](#) or has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

Koraes has added an addendum to our Employee and Student Health and Wellness Policy outlining steps students and staff will need to take before they return to school after an illness, including the procedures that will be used if there is possible exposure to and/or a positive test for COVID-19. Parents will be provided a copy of the addendum prior to the first day of school.

Primary Steps to Mitigate Spread of COVID-19

- Hand washing and sanitizing
- Social Distancing
- Elimination of large gatherings that do not provide sufficient physical distancing
- Temperature taking of all students and staff entering the building and symptom screening
- Enhanced cleaning protocols

Regular times will be designated for hand washing and access to hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the day, with a specific focus on arrival to school, entering the classroom, and before and after lunch.

Koraes will have a designated space to use as a holding area for individuals that are ill and waiting to be picked up. These students must be picked up from campus within one hour. Students who come to the office for injuries, lost teeth, medication and the like will not come in contact with ill students.

A full time day janitor will perform the new, intensified cleaning protocols that have been put in place for classrooms, restrooms, and other shared spaces. Frequently touched surfaces (such as restrooms and doorknobs) will be cleaned throughout the day with an EPA-approved

disinfectant. Limitations will be placed on the number of people who can be in restrooms and other shared spaces at the same time. Air purifiers will be placed in each classroom. Deep cleaning will occur on weekends.

Face Coverings

All persons entering Koraes must wear a face mask when in the building and around others, as well as outside when they are less than 6 feet apart from others. It is the responsibility of each family to provide their own face masks. If a family is unable to secure face masks, the family is asked to contact the school. Students must have an additional face mask at school in a sealed enclosure in case their face mask is compromised or soiled. If a student has a medical reason that he/she cannot wear a mask, the student must provide a doctor's note on the doctor's stationery that he/she may wear a face shield.

Students in grades K-5, weather permitting, will have four times each day to be outside: two scheduled breaks, recess and PE. Staff will guide students when it is permissible to lower face coverings if the location and activity allows for safe social distancing. Middle school students will have three scheduled outdoor times during the day.

Lunch and Recess

Lunch will be held in classrooms or outside weather permitting. Larger classes will split the lunch period with half going to recess and the other half eating lunch in order to accommodate children removing masks. Water bottles will be brought from home. Water fountains will be turned off. Milk will be delivered to the hallway outside of the classroom. Students will bring their snack from home. Shared snacks will be provided only if they are individually packaged. Classrooms will be disinfected after students eat in the classroom.

K-8 students will utilize different play "zones" when outside for recess. Students will sanitize their hands before and after recess. Additional recess times will be staggered as much as possible. Students may bring a drawstring bag for personal recess items to school. The bag will be stored in their locker. Items at recess will not be shared.

Classroom Set-up and Instruction

Students will remain in their designated classroom with student desks set up 6 feet apart facing the same direction. Student lockers will be used to store jackets and lunches. Middle school students must keep items in their backpack and keep their backpack with them during class times. Supplies will be kept in the classroom. Students will not share books, manipulatives, and learning aids unless they have been sanitized.

Non-homeroom teachers will go to the students' classrooms as much as possible. Greek, art, and religion will be held in homerooms. During physical education, person-to-person contact sports or activities will be avoided. All equipment will be sanitized between uses. Physical education classes will be held outdoors as much as possible. Children will not change into PE uniforms. It is recommended that gym shoes be worn daily. Girls will wear shorts under jumpers/skirts.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Koraes has designated three areas for families to drop off (in the morning) and pick up (after school) to minimize large groups of people entering or exiting the school at the same time. Each family will be assigned a designated drop off and pick up spot, which will be communicated prior to the first day of school. Students will have their temperature taken and the driver will answer the screening questions for each child. Drivers must wait in the carline until the process for their children is completed. After getting their temperature taken students will sanitize their hands upon entering the building and then go straight to the classroom

Arrival and dismissal times will also be modified/staggered to reduce the number of students arriving at the same time in order to maintain social distancing. Families will sign up for either an 8:15 arrival and 3:00 departure time or 8:30 arrival and 3:15 departure.

Before and After School Care

Families that need Before and After School Care will need to be pre-registered in order to allow for adequate staffing and space. There will be limited capacity. Cost for either before or after care is \$125 for the year per child. If a family needs both before and after school care, the cost will be \$200 per child for the year. **Families must register by August 19 for this program.** Before School Care begins at 7:30 and After School Care ends at 4:30. Before School Care students will enter the main school entrance, the East doors. A staff member will meet the student at the vehicle to take his/her temperature. Drivers must wait until this process is completed before leaving. For After School Care, drivers will pick up using the East entrance. Drivers will call the school to have their child escorted to the door, and must wait in their vehicles.

Distance Learning

If a family desires to remain enrolled at Koraes but is unable to attend classes on campus due to health concerns, distance learning will be available. While we strongly prefer to have our students on campus, we understand that each family will have different needs. Our goal is to eventually have all of our students regathered on campus.

Based on family interest, Koraes is offering a year-long distance learning program. Curriculum will be provided to parents and they will be responsible for the majority of instruction. Distance learners will have access to assigned teachers during specified times during the school week. All homework, tests and projects will be submitted to an assigned teacher. **All assessments will be taken on campus as well as NWEA assessments.** Distance learners will be required to be on a school issued device under school Go Guardian monitoring. Families who choose this option and determine that they would like to transfer to on campus learning may enroll their child **only at the start of each trimester.** Preschool students will need to contact the Preschool Director for a return to on campus learning. Students enrolled in distance learning will be issued a Koraes report card as long as the guidelines are followed. Each student's participation will be assessed every mid-term of each trimester as well as final grades issued.

Students or classes that are quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure will be provided distance learning within 48 hours of the quarantine. Should the state prohibit in-person schooling due to

COVID-19, Koraes teachers will provide distance learning to ALL students throughout the closure of in-person schooling.

Extra-curricular Clubs, Activities, and Field Trips

All volunteer programs, clubs, off campus field trips will be suspended for the year. This includes in-person before and after school clubs and activities, ethnic or holiday programs, and all off-site field trips.

Volunteers and Visitors

In alignment with the Metropolis guidelines and our Greek School counterparts, we will suspend all of our volunteer programs to limit the number of people inside our buildings. Visitors, including parents, will be restricted to only essential school workers.

A storage bin will be set up outside of the east entrance to the school for drop off of items your child has forgotten. Parents will call the school office to notify them of an item drop off and they will see that the items are delivered to your children. School staff will escort children to the doors to meet parents if children are leaving school early.

Clean Uniforms

Students will wear Koraes uniforms on M/W/F and school spiritwear or solid school colors on Tuesday and Thursday in order to provide parents time to wash uniforms. Due to the amount of time students will be outside, they are encouraged to wear gym shoes. Girls will wear shorts under jumpers/skirts. See the school supply list for details.

Tuesday and Thursday are [non-uniform days](#). The following is acceptable to wear:

- Solid Koraes colored pants or skorts: blue, black, gray, khaki
- Solid Koraes colored shirts, blue, black, gray, white
- Any Koraes shirts are acceptable (field days, clubs, trivia night, PE shirts, etc.)
- Koraes sweatshirts and jackets are acceptable
- No jeggings, leggings or skinny jeans
- No shorts
- No torn or ripped jeans
- No sweatpants
- No sport logos

Follow the links to purchase spirit wear, all orders must be submitted by August 15th:

[All School Spirit Wear](#)

[Middle School Spirit Wear](#)

[NJHS Students Only Spirit Wear](#)

School Board Meetings

Open school board meetings will occur digitally. The format of asking questions prior to the announced meeting and having them answered digitally will continue.

Closing Comments

This reopen plan is subject to change, of course, due to the quickly changing nature of pandemic issues, so we will be updating it as necessary. We wish we did not have to make many of these changes but are convinced they are necessary to be able to protect our students and staff and their families. Regardless of ISBE and IDPH guidelines, these measures are medically necessary and are a way of obeying Christ's commandment to love our neighbor (Matthew 26:36-40). We think this is an important lesson for our students—that sometimes we do things (or don't do things) out of love and concern for the welfare of others, even if it is inconvenient to us. Another "teachable moment" for all of us!

It is time for families to make a decision for fall enrollment. All enrollment decisions must be completed by Friday, August 7 @ 9AM. Use the form to share your decision.

We ask for your continued prayers, patience and support as we begin this new school year. The past six months have tested our ability to be flexible and show our inner "Grit." There will be many challenges, new procedures, requirements and possible disruptions but please know that our students and families make our school community the caring place it is! We will get through this together. #KORAESSTRONG.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Lind