Parent Guide to Reopening at The Diener School

Back to School
2020-2021
Guiding Principles

1. Safety
Diener’s highest priority is the health and well-being of our community and the broader community. Our intended standard of care is to go above and beyond what is mandated to ensure the safest possible environment for students, teachers, and staff.

2. Optimal Instruction
With safety in mind, Diener recognizes that the optimal learning environment for children is one in which they are learning in person from their teachers and fellow students. In accordance with official health guidelines, we will seek to provide as much on-campus instruction as possible for all students.

3. Academic Coherence and Excellence
While health circumstances may necessitate certain changes or restrictions to student life, our ultimate goal is to continue to provide excellent academic instruction and support our students’ learning and development as seamlessly as possible.

4. Flexibility and Adaptability
Diener recognizes that any policies we design in response to external health conditions must be able to change at a moment’s notice due to circumstances beyond our control. Our goal is to create continuous learning structures that are durable enough to adapt to possible future COVID restrictions.
Diener’s Pyramid of Learning

Focus & Foster a Whole Child with a Healthy Self Esteem

Responsible Community Members

Confident, Able Learners

Logical Reasoning & Problem Solving Skills

Strong Social Skills Component In & Out of Classroom

Creative Expression, Arts and Movement

Cognitive Functioning Abilities Through a Neurodevelopmental Approach

Strong Sensory Based Program

Behavioral Management & Daily Reinforcement System

Strong & Flexible Academic Curriculum with Experiential & Multisensory Approach

Rich Language & Communication Based Environment
A Conscientious Decision

Surveys
Diener administration extensively surveyed teachers, staff, and parents to gather information to make the best decision for the 2020-2021 school year.

Support
Outside educational consulting firm organized data and created a comprehensive plan for returning to school.

Stakeholders
All stakeholders were engaged in collaborative planning to address health, safety, teaching, learning, and student social/emotional well-being.
Parent Satisfaction of Virtual Learning

- 75% of parents reported the program improved since the transition.
- Majority of Virtual Learning ratings is 5 stars.
Testimonials Page - Parent Surveys

What We are Doing Well

- The 180 degree flip to online learning was amazing.
- Administrative communication is excellent, teachers are caring and committed.
- The teachers have consistently shown skill, support, patience, and incredible commitment to building [our child’s] skills, confidence, and independence.
- Teacher skills and heart are unmatched at any special ed school in the DC area.
- Amazing social-emotional support and encouragement, helping each child feel like an important part of the Diener community.
- Distance learning was a significant challenge for all involved. Our family appreciates how quickly the Diener staff adapted and dove head first into unfamiliar territory - so thank you!
- Overall experience at Diener - LOVE IT. LOVE IT. LOVE IT.
Testimonials Page - Parent Surveys

What We Could Improve On

- Just miss them being at Diener. You've done a great job with distance learning but it will never be the same as in school. **The social aspect of school is all the more clear now.**
- We hope you **improve technology training** at Diener so students and teachers are ready to deal with whatever the next school year throws at us.
- Having teachers **communicate lesson plans, learning objectives**, and highlighting events coming up would be helpful, particularly in the virtual learning context.
- It will be helpful to **keep offering weekly, virtual parent check-ins** with teachers to ensure **continued communications**, assuming parents and teachers will not be able to see each other in person at school.
Save-the-Date and Upcoming Events

1. **September 1st**
   Parent Virtual Learning Training

2. **September 8th**
   First Day of School. Begin the school year with virtual learning.

3. **Mid-September**
   A decision will be made regarding virtual/in-person learning moving forward.

4. **September 23rd**
   Virtual Back-to-School Night

Be on the lookout for our comprehensive Parent Virtual Learning Guide that will be sent out to all families.
Parent Virtual Learning Guide Contents

1. Virtual Learning Classroom Structure
2. Virtual Learning Guidelines
3. Sample Elementary School Schedule
4. Sample Middle School Schedule
Diener Virtual Learning Day Plan

1. Developmentally appropriate length of classes.
2. "No Tech" Breaks throughout the day.
3. Time frames for student socialization with friends.
4. Daily Teacher Office Hours.

Elementary School
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Middle School
8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
What a Typical Day Would Look Like

○ Morning Meeting/Greeting
○ Mandatory core subjects
  ■ Language Arts
  ■ Math
  ■ Writing & Read Aloud
  ■ Science & Social Studies
  ■ SPOT/SEL & Guidance
○ Help and Hello’s: Student help and check-in (by appointment)
○ Optional Subjects: Art, Yoga, Fitness, etc.
○ Teacher office hours
# Sample Schedule for Elementary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 8:25 a.m.</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Grab a snack or water, use the restroom, get some fresh air, stretch it out!</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Grab a snack or water, use the restroom, get some fresh air, stretch it out!</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Grab a snack or water, use the restroom, get some fresh air, stretch it out!</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Grab a snack or water, use the restroom, get some fresh air, stretch it out!</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Grab a snack or water, use the restroom, get some fresh air, stretch it out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
<td>Morning Block Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Student Help/Hellos!</td>
<td>Student Help/Hellos!</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student Help/Hellos!</td>
<td>Share, Show, and Tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Break/ Finish assignments</td>
<td>Break/ Finish assignments</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Break/ Finish assignments</td>
<td>Break/ Finish assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Electives Block</td>
<td>Electives Block</td>
<td>Electives Block</td>
<td>Electives Block</td>
<td>Electives Block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COLOR KEY**

- **Optional**
- **Break/Lunch**
- **Mandatory**
- **Teacher/Parent**
## Sample Schedule for Elementary School - “Morning Block”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10:30-11:00</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K/1</td>
<td>SPOT/SEL</td>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Social St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>SPOT/SEL</td>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>SPOT/SEL</td>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>SPOT/SEL</td>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>SPOT/SEL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11:30-12:00</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K/1</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>OT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Social St</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Sample Schedule for Middle School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MIDDLE SCHOOL</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Advisory or SEL</td>
<td>Advisory or SEL</td>
<td>Advisory or SEL</td>
<td>Speech or OT</td>
<td>Speech or OT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:35 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>Community Service or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 10:10 a.m.</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:10 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>Writing or OT/Study Skills</td>
<td>Writing or OT/Study Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
<td>History or Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>No Tech Break - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Student Help &amp; Hellos!</td>
<td>Student Help &amp; Hellos!</td>
<td>Student Help &amp; Hellos!</td>
<td>Student Help &amp; Hellos!</td>
<td>Student Help &amp; Hellos!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Writing or Study Skills</td>
<td>Writing or Study Skills</td>
<td>Science or Community Service</td>
<td>Science or History</td>
<td>Science or History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Electives Team Meetings</td>
<td>Writing or Keyboarding Skills</td>
<td>Electives Team Meetings</td>
<td>Keyboarding Skills</td>
<td>Keyboarding Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Yoga or Fitness</td>
<td>Fitness or Art</td>
<td>Art or Fitness</td>
<td>Fitness or Yoga</td>
<td>Fitness or Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m. - TBD</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Amplifying our Virtual Learning

- Comprehensive **virtual learning guides** for teachers, students, and parents.
- **Summer faculty professional training** on virtual learning and technology.
- **Parent training on virtual learning** and technology.
- Ongoing faculty professional development on integrating **best practices of educational technology and distance learning**.
- New faculty resources including teacher laptops, document cameras, and video conferencing technology.
- Students provided Chromebooks, if needed.
Setting Up Your Child for Success

1. Device should be placed in a common space for in-class time.
2. Device should have audio, microphone, and video abilities.
3. Please use headphones/earbuds.
4. Device should be fully charged.
5. Prevent distractions, such as smartphones, TVs, or other devices.
6. Test the camera and audio functions before class.
7. Parents may be available to assist their child but not participate in the lessons.
THANK YOU!

- Thank you for your support AND your patience.
- Thank you for your trust in the Diener School.
- You make all of this possible.
- We have your family's' best interest at heart.
- Please reach out to us for help at any time!