



The  
Diener  
School

# 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

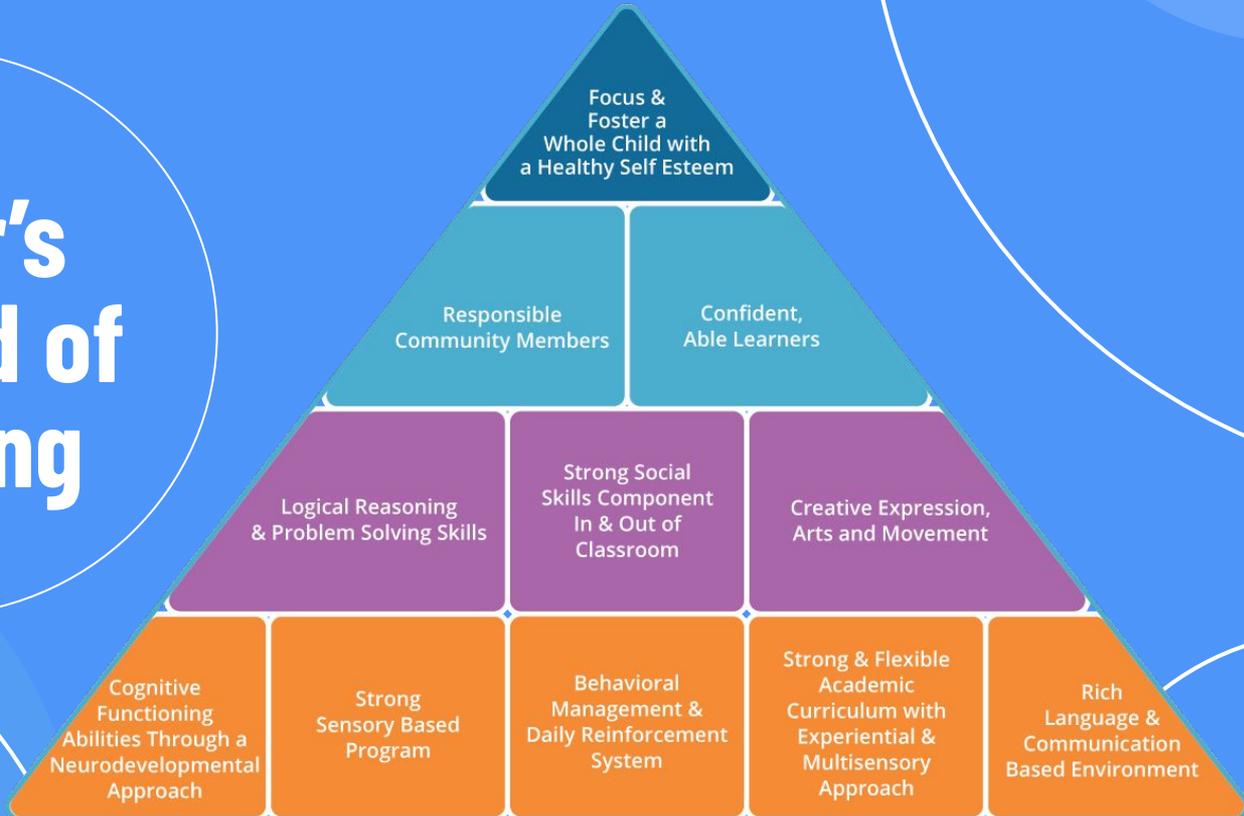
While health circumstances may necessitate certain changes or restrictions to student life, our ultimate goal is to continue to provide excellent academic instruction and support our students' learning and development as seamlessly as possible.

4.

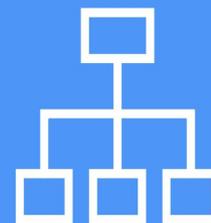
## Flexibility and Adaptability

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



# 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.



# Guidelines



[Maryland Dept of Education  
Recovery Plans](#)



[Maryland Dept of Health](#)



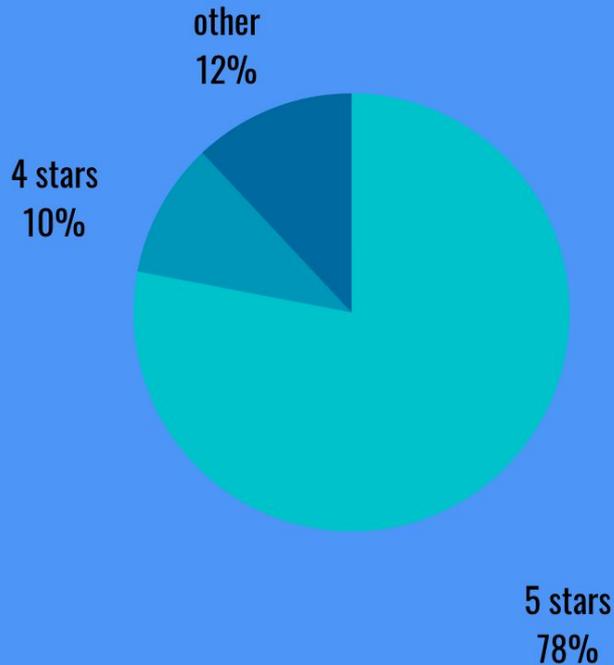
[CDC Guidelines](#)



[Montgomery County Dept of  
Health Guidelines](#)



# 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.

**3.**

Time frames for student socialization with friends.

**2.**

“No Tech” Breaks throughout day.

**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

## COLOR KEY

- Optional
- Break/Lunch
- Mandatory
- Teacher/Parent

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

# Sample Schedule for Elementary School - "Morning Block"

10:30-11:00	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
K/1	SPOT/SEL	Read Aloud	Writing	Science	Social St
2/3	Social St	SPOT/SEL	Read Aloud	Writing	Science
3/4	Science	Social St	SPOT/SEL	Read Aloud	Writing
4/5	Writing	Science	Social St	SPOT/SEL	Read Aloud
5	Social St	Writing	Science	Social St	SPOT/SEL

11:30-12:00	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
K/1	Social St	Writing	Guidance	Speech	OT
2/3	OT	Social St	Writing	Guidance	Speech
3/4	Speech	OT	Social St	Writing	Guidance
4/5	Guidance	Speech	OT	Social St	Writing
5	Writing	Guidance	SP	OT	Writing

# Sample Schedule for Middle School Students

## COLOR KEY

- Optional
- Break/Lunch
- Mandatory
- Teacher/Parent

MIDDLE SCHOOL	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Advisory or SEL	Advisory or SEL	Advisory or SEL	Speech or OT	Speech or OT
8:35 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts
9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	<b>No Tech Break</b> - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.				
9:30 a.m. - 10:10 a.m.	History or Science	History or Science	Community Service or Science	History or Science	History or Science
10:10 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	<b>No Tech Break</b> - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.				
10:30 a.m. - 11:10 a.m. (40 minutes) Mandatory	History or Science	History or Science	History or Science	Writing or OT/Study Skills	Writing or OT/Study Skills
11:10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<b>No Tech Break</b> - Give your eyes a break and try not to use technology at this time. Grab a snack, stretch it out, etc.				
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>				
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Student Help & Hellos!	Student Help & Hellos!	Student Help & Hellos!	Student Help & Hellos!	Student Help & Hellos!
1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Writing or Study Skills	Writing or Study Skills	TBD	Science or Community Service	Science or History
1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Electives Team Meetings	Writing or Keyboarding Skills		Electives Team Meetings	Keyboarding Skills
2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Yoga or Fitness	Fitness or Art		Art or Fitness	Fitness or Yoga
2:30 p.m. - TBD	Office Hours	Office Hours		Office Hours	Office Hours

# 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!

