

## **Governance Council Update 3/25/21: Red Tier Schedule Change for Grades 7-12**

March 24, 2021

Dear Summerfield Community,

On Sunday, March 14th, the state changed their metrics and Sonoma County went into the Red Tier, allowing, among other things, grades 7-12 to have class on campus beyond small group protocol. While this is a huge step forward, it does not mean a complete return to normal. The county and state still require many mitigation measures to reduce the chance of spread of the virus, and a spring surge is predicted and possible, so following the required protocols and recommendations helps us keep everyone safe and school open.

While protocol parameters and staffing dictate that we cannot return to full-school, full-day at this point, we will bring more students on campus, and we will start next week. Details and the new schedule for Grades 7-12 follow below, but overall we will keep ECE through Grade 6 schedule and space use as they are. Grades 7-12 will be split into an early and a late group. Each of these grades will be on campus for two of the three periods, meaning that the whole school will be on campus for 45 minutes in the middle period of the day.

The three most critical requirements that determine the amount of on-campus school time we can provide are 1) the mandated distancing, the space between desks, 2) the requirement to have stable groups - groups of students that do not mix with other groups, including the teachers and 3) the staffing needed to limit cohort mixing and safely teach and supervise. There are legally required limits on the first two aspects, and there is strong guidance from the health professionals that the less mixing and the more distance a school can create, the

less likely the virus will spread, the safer the environment will be for all, and the more school can stay open.

Given these factors and the new guidance about distancing, we will continue to be outside and six feet apart as much as possible, so that there is an opportunity to take off masks when seated at this distance; so ECE through 6th Grade will continue the protocols they have been using, and their day will be as it has been. To fit in the spaces for some 7th-12th Grade classes, we may need to reduce the distance between students, but we will only do this when necessary and to the smallest amount possible, and, if desks are less than six feet apart, masks will stay on. In other words, if we can fit the class with a few desks or one row under six feet we will. While not necessary with the current plan, if we must reduce to less than four feet for future plans, we will survey the parents first.

We have spent the week very focused on the schedule changes, logistics and staffing needed to make this work, and we are excited to begin. We will start this Monday, March 29th, with the last two weeks of the current block as phase one. We will continue to assess to determine if we can develop a phase two with the goal of opening even more, if the conditions, the guidance and our staffing allows. While we are aware of the transportation issues this new schedule causes, we hope it is an improvement for most and that we can work out individual challenges as they arise.

We know that, due to the need to stay home for vulnerable family members, symptoms or travel guidance, that classes on campus will have a zoom component for those at home. Having students in front of you as well as on the screen is very challenging for teachers, as it is for the students. We ask that you do all you can to bring your children to campus each day when scheduled and that staying home when scheduled only happens for reasons related to COVID.

We are excited about this development and are doing all we can to make the most of on-campus time in as safe a way as possible. This is a commitment we made in the summer, and it remains our top priority. We will continue to use our outside spaces for the time being, as the Red Tier is not Orange or Yellow, and our community in general has felt more confidence in the safety of outdoors.

We will keep you updated as the guidance adapts to the virus and any changes that may mean for us. Below find the schedule information that applies to you.

Jason Gross,  
For the Governance Council

## **March 29th - April 8th On-Campus Schedule for 7th - 12th**

Early Shift:

Grades 7, 11, 12 on-campus from 8:30-12:45 for Morning Movement, Main Lesson & Lesson 2 (Lesson 3 at home)

Late Shift:

Grades 8, 9, 10 on-campus from 12:00 to 3:15 for Lessons 2 & 3 (Morning Movement and Main Lesson at home)

A detailed schedule will be sent directly to 7th-12th grade families before the end of the week.