



Dear Ararat Charter School Parents/Guardians,

We are excited to share that Ararat Charter School will offer full-day instruction, five days a week, along with recess, lunch, and meal breaks for all students in grades TK – 5, for the 2021-2022 school year, and we are ready to welcome our students back on Monday, August 16, 2021.

We have committed to emplace multiple high levels of safety standards and protocols at both our campuses. All set measures meet or exceed the state and local guidelines for COVID-19 and thus far have proven to be very successful in preventing any community outbreaks at our school throughout last year.

We recognize the importance of students learning in a classroom and spending time on campus with their friends. We are prepared to welcome our students back in the safest way possible.

While this past year has been difficult for many families, Ararat Charter School is committed to supporting our staff and families for a safe, fun, and successful return to our campuses.

However, we understand that some families have medical, social-emotional, or other concerns with an in-person return. Per Assembly Bill 130, Ararat Charter School will offer an independent study program for those students for the 2021-2022 school year.

A component of our independent study program is Ararat Virtual Academy (AVA), where students will receive limited live online instruction and will complete independent work when not learning directly with a teacher. This program will be taught by contracted credentialed teachers, who will cover the content standards.

Independent Study Overview

Independent study is a form of educational activity undertaken by an individual student with limited supervision. This is not the same as the virtual instruction provided during the 2020-2021 school year. Significant parent support will be required as part of this program. Additionally, the daily schedule for independent study students will be different from our in-person calendar.

For pupils in TK through grade 5, there will be daily synchronous and asynchronous instruction. *Daily synchronous instruction may be only a short period daily. For the remainder of the day, students would need to complete work independently.*

DEFINITIONS:

Synchronous instruction: Virtual instruction that is provided when both the teacher and the student are online at the same time.

Asynchronous instruction: Students are completing work provided by the teacher independently.

Families can choose for their child to participate in the Online Program by completing the below survey with the link below. Please complete this by noon on Wednesday, August 4, 2021.

If we do not hear from you by Wednesday, August 4, 2021, we will plan to see your child in person for face-to-face instruction on August 16.

Please expect follow-up information from your school before opening if you complete the survey.

Survey Link: [Click Here](#)

We encourage families to consider the best option for their student(s) for the entire semester so they can have an optimal learning experience.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL - Highlights

- More opportunities for personalized learning support and small group instruction
- Additional teaching and support staff to provide support in the classrooms
- Updated technology for all students who need it
- More social-emotional learning opportunities
- More mental health services will be available for students, such as counseling, school-wide wellness campaigns, training for positive school culture, and crisis management
- More staff will be available to connect families with resources and provide ongoing support
- More direct services will be offered for students with learning differences and disabilities



A DAY ON CAMPUS

Spending a day on campus will look and feel very similar to what school was like before our campuses closed, but with a few extra precautions to make sure students can learn and play safely and comfortably.

Recess and Lunch Breaks

Students will use the playground and enjoy activities during recess and lunch following the latest public health and safety guidelines.



Lunch/Meals

All students get a meal at no charge. Breakfast and lunch will be served in the cafeteria, and supper may be taken home. Students may eat meals with friends following the latest public health and safety guidelines.

OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Ararat Charter School is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safety for public schools.

- **Guidance From Health Officials**

ACS will continue to adhere to the most recent COVID guidelines issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA), Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) and the State of California.

- **Robust Safety Protocols**

Robust safety protocols are in place at both campuses, including needed personal protective equipment, frequent disinfecting, and hand cleaning, among others.

- **Upgraded Air-Filtration Systems**

Our school has upgraded air-filtration of school buildings.

- **Hygiene**

As always, restrooms and handwashing sinks in classrooms are stocked with soap and paper towels. Hand sanitizer stations are available in locations throughout both campuses.

- **COVID-19 Testing**

Operating a school-based COVID-19 testing and contact tracing program for all students and staff.



STAYING SAFE: HOW CAN I BE SURE MY STUDENTS WILL BE SAFE AT SCHOOL?

- **Face Masks** will be required for all students, staff, and visitors while on campus.
- **Physical Distancing** will be based on the latest LACDPH guidelines.
- **Daily Health Screening** will be required for all students, staff, and visitors before coming on campus.
- **COVID-19 Testing** will continue for students and employees on campus.

**Ararat Charter School will follow the latest public health guidelines for student safety and will continue to work with public health agencies and experts to update these protocols as necessary. All guidelines here are based on the information available to us at the start of July and may be subject to change.*



BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST



You can make sure everyone is prepared and ready for the start of school by following the steps below:

- Check the emails sent by school for the latest COVID testing requirements.
 - Enroll your student in the COVID-19 Testing program by following the link that will be sent to you next week.
 - Make sure your student has a clean face mask to bring to campus. Masks should be worn at all times, except when students are eating. Should a student need a mask for any reason, one will be provided.
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- Alternative protections may be followed for students with disabilities or those needing verified accommodations.
 - Update your contact information by completing the Google Forms that will be shared with you next week. You can reach out to our school office for support on signing up.
 - Practice new routines with your children such as waking up and getting dressed on time, wearing their mask for a prolonged period of time, eating on a regular schedule, and getting comfortable around other adults and children are all important parts of the transition back.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: How will this school year be the same as the pre-pandemic school years?

A: This school year will feel similar to pre-pandemic school years in many ways! All students will have access to a full day of school and enrichment activities. The majority of students and staff will be back on both campuses.

Q: My child is nervous or hesitant about returning to a full day of in-person programming. How can I help them prepare for this change in routine?

A: Children and adults may feel scared, confused or anxious because of the impact of the pandemic. Practicing routines early and often are very important. If a child is experiencing other mental health challenges, families may contact our school's office to request services from school site providers and local community agencies.

Q: Who may participate in the Online Program?

A: All students in grades TK-5 are eligible for the Online Program, including English Learners and Students with Disabilities. Necessary accommodations should be discussed with the school's office and Special Education Team to determine the appropriate placement options.

Q: Will I be able to switch between in-person learning and the Online Program?

A: It may be possible for students to switch between the in-person and online programs with advance notice.