



School Year Re-Opening Work Plan

August 10, 6260 (2020)

Keeping Our Community Safe,
Whole, and Loved



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Message from the Director



Blessings Ile Omode Family, Staff, and Community,

We're living in unprecedented times. In March, when the state's governor announced a required quarantine to halt the spread of COVID-19, many of us, myself included, presumed that the steps would be sufficient to return our students to their classrooms in the fall. Months later, after witnessing some of the most incompetent governance in this country's history, we are all left to navigate a return to some modicum of normalcy for ourselves.

With the death toll from COVID-19 slowly approaching 170K in five months, people are still arguing about the merits of something as simple as wearing a mask. We will not engage in such foolishness, and will take all intelligent steps towards ensuring the safety of every member of our community.

Each of us is far too valuable, and the continued advancement of our people requires that we remain not just healthy, but rise each day to embrace our own power.

At the same time, we will not allow our students to lose a single day of instruction. Black communities are even further marginalized by this country's response to the coronavirus, but we will marshal any and all resources to ensure we remain mission driven, and "give birth to the genius resident in every child".

Jahi Awakoaiye, Director

Task Force Members

The Task Force met weekly to develop a plan for re-opening the school. Special thanks to all of the members of the task force for taking time to help ensure our community's safety.

Ile Omode Staff

Jahi Awakoaiye, Director
Pamela Williams, Business Manager
Kelly Kouyate, Preschool Director
Tyanne Moore, Teacher

Public Health College Interns

Maya Jenkins (c'14), UC Merced
Khukheper Awakoaiye (c'14), Howard University

Working Groups

Parent Coordination

Roland Wilson, Care Administrator
Irah Griffins, Heavy Equipment Operator/Coach
Tivonna Stern

Jerry Jenkins, Port of Oakland Longshoreman
Vicky Jenkins, Quality Control Manager
(Stability Program) in Biotechnology

Health Experts

Josephine Agbowo, Family Medicine doctor
Unique Laylor, Nurse Anesthetist
Barbara Anku, RN, BSN (neonatal intensive care unit)

Education

Jamal Cooks, Dean, Chabot College
Jaliza Eagles, Principal, Creekside Middle School



Re-Opening Work Plan Guiding Principles

The role that Ile Omode plays in the education of our children is vital, and we're taking every step possible to ensure a continuous and uninterrupted educational experience for our young people. Our Work Plan was developed with several objectives in mind, including:

- Adhering to governmental guidelines
- Exercising common sense
- Ensuring the safety of staff members and students
- Providing a level and quality of instruction that matches the traditional in-person experience as much as possible
- Remaining in communication with our families and exercising full transparency at all times

This document covers the plans for re-establishing instruction in the coming school year. It does not address the specific details for instructional delivery nor does it cover the second phase of re-opening when the school returns to in-person instruction. For information about remote instruction, individuals are referred to the school's "Distance Learning Handbook" available from the school's website.

Consistent with the state's mandate, the school will begin the 6260-61 (2020-21) school year with distance learning. As soon as the state allows for students to participate in in-person instruction we will slowly implement a return to school. There are various models governing how we might return and these will be shared in future releases. However, we don't anticipate that any easing of restrictions by the state will result in a school-wide *immediate* return to the school in a pre-pandemic model.

No community can guarantee an environment free of COVID-19, and the measures described in this plan recognize that reality. While much has gone into this effort to protect the Ile Omode community, we trust that all its members — staff, parents, students and visitors alike — will ultimately take responsibility for their own health and safety and act in a manner that demonstrates respect and consideration for those around them.

The *COVID-19 Re-Opening Work Plan* is a dynamic document, and updates will be provided as conditions require.

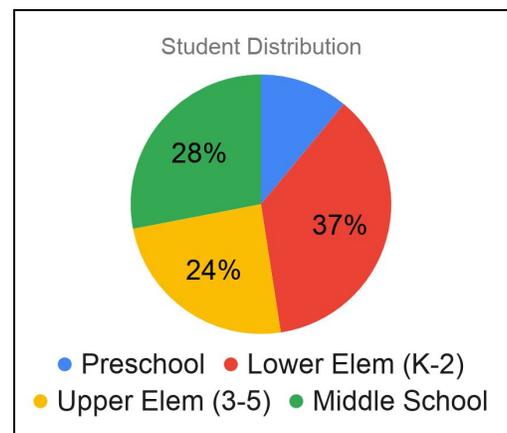


Survey Results

A survey was created by the Re-Opening Task Force, and made available on July 11. We wanted to make sure we clearly heard from our parents, and this information helped to structure the re-opening plan and the task force's focus. A summary of the survey's findings are provided.

Background Information

Sixty-one parents responded, with 85% of the respondents providing their names. The respondents represented 82 students (approximately 80% of our returning student population). There were more total responses, but duplicate submissions were removed. Families were asked to provide only one response per household, but where a second survey was submitted, its results were included (there were few of these).



- 72% found **TeacherEase** to at least be useful, with a higher percentage for older students (86% for middle school, and 82% for 3rd-5th grades)
- 74% found **Google Classroom** to be useful with the highest percentage occurring for middle school and K-2nd (both at 86%)
- Parents were asked to assess their children's **engagement with Zoom** from 1 (rarely engaged) to 5 (very engaged), and 3.8 was the average response, indicating that Zoom was a generally useful tool to deliver instruction.
- 70% believed their child(ren) were able to **adapt to online instruction** (18% reported their children thrived, and 10% felt their children struggled)
- Advantages of distance learning (top 2 responses): (1) knowing their child was safe (88%), and (2) being able to see their child's work (76%).
- There was no consensus regarding parent's **level of comfort for their student's return** to in-person instruction; ratings were between 5 (very comfortable) and 1 (not comfortable at all), and 35% rated a 4 or higher.
- In considering **different instructional schedules**, 78% chose a hybrid model (2-3 days of in-person instruction each week), followed by all online instruction (50%).



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- Over half of the respondents **did not plan for their child to return** to in-person instruction because they were concerned safety measures would not be adequate (70%), and member(s) of their household has elevated risk factors (40%).
 - Nearly everyone (96%) had interest in considering **weekend social activities** for children.
 - Two-thirds of parents were **not willing to have other students in their home** for online instruction.
 - Two-thirds of parents could support a **single guardian pickup** each day.

4th - 8th Grade Parents

- If a **hybrid instructional schedule** was necessary, 56% would prefer alternating days, and 36% would prefer alternating weeks.
- If an **off-site location** is necessary to conduct classes, 93% of parents would be in favor (45% fully support, and an additional 48% if it's the most reasonable approach to providing in-person instruction).



Health and Wellness

Ile Omode continues to comply with all CDC Guidelines, County of Alameda health guidelines, and California state mandates. While engaging in critical assessment and evaluation, we endeavor to meet these requirements - always placing the safety of our students and staff as our first priority.

For the foreseeable future, we expect anyone on our campus to adhere to basic safety measures. Prevention measures are similar to those utilized against the common cold and flu. Those measures include frequent hand washing, avoiding touching one's face with unwashed hands, and coughing into one's elbow if needed. Additionally:

- Face masks or coverings must be worn at all times, beginning the moment the grounds are entered until departing. This is required for all adults and children over 3 years of age. The CDC guideline calls for cloth coverings, not surgical masks or N95 masks.
- Where feasible everyone is expected to maintain a safe distance of 6 feet or more.
- Everyone is required to use the hand sanitizer station or wash their hands *immediately* upon entering the building. Individuals staying on campus for more than one hour are encouraged to wash their hands every 45 minutes.

Additionally, cleaning wipes are available at various locations, and individuals should wipe surfaces which they come in contact with. The water foundations are unavailable, and their water supply has been turned off. The school does offer water bottles, and visitors may help themselves at any time.

Staff are required to provide daily health self-assessments, and quarantine themselves if they exhibit any common symptoms, including shortness of breath, coughing, etc. We are evaluating mobile health self-assessment tools in preparation for student return, and we'll use a manual method during our fully remote instruction when only staff are in the building. In the event an instructional staff has symptoms, they may continue instruction from home for as long as their health permits, and may return to the school to conduct distance learning at the building once their symptoms abate (14 days) or they are cleared by a physician.

Until further notice the cafeteria is closed, and no food is prepared on-site. Catering or other food delivery is not allowed unless meals are individually prepared. Unfortunately no sharing of food is allowed, and any offerings of food items must be prepackaged.



Training

All staff members, including administrator, auxiliary, and instructional staff received COVID-19 training in preparation for the coming school year. It is important that staff understand the risks associated with COVID-19 and the approved methods for reducing the risk of contagion and spread of the virus. Enhanced communication is provided through posted signage, regular staff meetings, and ongoing communication (i.e. text and email) as necessary. We want to ensure that all members of the Ile Omode staff are clearly cognizant of the requirements and take responsibility for creating a healthy and safe environment.

All parents must attend at least one required training session prior to, or just after the start of school. One family member from each family must attend. We want to ensure that every family in our community is operating from the same set of basic facts, and that we all understand our collective responsibility is reducing the virus' spread and steps necessary to protect our community. This is vital because the community extends beyond the immediate children served but includes the parent, grandparents and other nearby extended family members as well.

Prior to returning to in-person instruction, students will also receive training and an orientation to the new rules and expectations.

Testing

At this time, the school does not require COVID-19 viral testing as a condition for returning to work at the school site or to receive instruction on-site. Any staff member or student receiving on-site instruction who displays any symptoms is required to self-quarantine for 14 days or receive a negative COVID-19 test. Testing should be done for anyone who demonstrates symptoms or as a precautionary measure as warranted.

Some persons may wish to take the COVID-19 antiviral test (which determines if a person has already contracted the virus). If a person tests positive for this test, they may have some immunity from re-contracting the virus, but these individuals must still adhere to all safety and health precautions while at the school site. According to the CDC, "If you test positive or negative for COVID-19 on a viral or an antibody test, you still should take preventive measures to protect yourself and others".



Anyone who has come in immediate contact with an infected person is barred from the campus until they complete a self-quarantine or receive a release from a licensed physician. This will include, but is not limited to, family members of staff persons (sharing the same house) and immediate family members of our parents and children. Individuals are expected to be forthcoming and communicate this information to Ile Omode staff. The school will maintain a database of infected individuals, with the required reporting information (name, DOB, location, symptoms, and symptom-onset) for the information to be entered daily by the designated individuals.

There are a number of local testing centers, including Roots Community Health Center, a nearby clinic, located at 9925 International Blvd, Oakland, CA 94603 (510.777.1177).

High Risk

Ile Omode will encourage those who are at high risk because of age or a health condition to consult with their health care provider prior to returning to campus if they have any concerns. These conditions include; Moderate to severe asthma, Severe obesity (>40 Body Mass Index), Diabetes, Immunocompromised conditions, Chronic Kidney Disease, Liver disease, and/or, Serious heart conditions, and other such condition by which the individual has a high risk of severe illness if COVID-19 is contracted.



Facility Upgrades

Ile Omode has taken several steps to reduce the spread of the virus on our grounds. These steps include:

- Installation of hand-sanitizer dispensers on each floor and outside
- Regular cleaning of high-touch areas, including tables, chairs after each seating, and frequent cleaning of doors
- Deep cleaning of each classroom daily, followed by either machine scrubbing or wet mopping completely with a neutral floor cleaner.
- Disinfectant will be applied to all light switches and door handles, and empty trash receptacles and replace liners.

The school has contracted with a cleaning service to provide daily cleaning once staff returns. More stringent and frequent cleanings will be implemented when (and depending on how) students return for in-person instruction.

HEPA filters have been proven effective at capturing ultrafine particles, although their effectiveness at reducing COVID-19 spread depends on many factors. While the filters won't serve as a first-line of defense, we view it as one of many tools to deploy to reduce the virus' spread by improving the indoor air quality, as the CDC does suggest considering, "the addition of portable solutions (e.g., portable HEPA filtration units) to augment air quality in areas". Thus these filters will be deployed throughout the school. The school will purchase HEPA filters to be installed in as many classrooms and multi-use spaces as possible. We will also upgrade the filters in use in the building central heating system.

The school is seeking funding to upgrade the plumbing fixtures to non-contact devices. This would include the toilets, bathroom faucets and the indoor water fountains. It may also include other touch-free amenities, such as light switches.

This document will be updated prior to the return to school by students. Nevertheless we anticipate providing staffing support to ensure outdoor equipment (the play structure, balls, etc) are disinfected after every outdoor session.



Enrollment and Finances

Enrollment

Current Families

We understand that some of our families may have limitations which make the present learning conditions untenable. Given the constraints on instruction and other family concerns, *current parents* may elect to opt out of enrollment until a return to pre-pandemic instruction. Families certainly have that right. However, enrollment opportunities will remain open for new families, and while current families will be given first priority to return, no spots are held in anticipation of a family's return.

In an effort to accommodate families who are unable to leave their children at home or who don't have child care, the school is attempting to create on-site technical hubs. Tech hubs would allow students who are unable to remain at home, to instead participate in distance learning on-site. This is only under evaluation, but updates will be provided as the program is further explored.

New Applicants

While it may be advantageous for prospective families to take advantage of the remote instruction until their primary schools resume, Ile Omode will discourage temporary enrollment. Ile Omode has offered a distance learning program, but this remains a temporary instruction model until in-person instruction resumes. Families should therefore only consider applying for enrollment if it is their intent to continue schooling beyond remote instruction.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available, albeit limited. Families who are experiencing significant financial hardship may apply for a tuition reduction or adjusted payment arrangement. We will make every attempt to support our families, but our tuition has always been very affordable.

Ile Omode is an independent school, and as such, receives essentially no government assistance. The school's tuition, particularly when coupled with other services, is far below the area's average tuition for comparable private schools. Thus it is difficult to provide sizable tuition discounts, since the current tuition is barely adequate to meet the cost of instructing our



students. While we understand the financial constraints of our parents, it is equally necessary that families understand the school's tuition is already tremendously discounted.

Business Services and School Visits

All individuals conducting business with the school should do so by means other than visiting the school. Where engagement requires a physical presence then visitors are expected to follow the guidelines as laid out in this document, and posted on school grounds. Anyone who is unable to adhere to these guidelines will not be granted entry. There are no exceptions.

The first step to getting the help students need is knowing whom to contact. Please note, it is nearly impossible for teachers to respond to requests via email or text while conducting a class.

- If a student has difficulty with their school email address they should contact Baba Derwin Wyatt (derwin.wyatt@ileomode.org)
- Accessing the correct Zoom ID for instruction - kelly.kouyate@ileomode.org
- Difficulty with a school issued laptop or tablet device - derwin.wyatt@ileomode.org



Academic and General Calendar

Please consult the school's calendar available on the website for a detail of events. Critical events from the opening day until winter break, particularly those affected by the pandemic, are listed below (this is not a complete list of all events). The first day of instruction is Tuesday, September 8. The week prior (week of August 30) the school will have orientation and material pick up events for students. Further information will be provided via text and email to parents.

| Date | Event |
|-----------|---|
| Sep 8 | First day of instruction (conducted online) |
| Nov 6 | End of the first marking period |
| Nov 23-27 | Thanksgiving break (week) |
| Dec 18 | Last day before winter break |
| Mon-Fri | Martial Arts Aerobics class by Baba Abubakar Omari; hosted via Zoom |

The following events have been cancelled due to the pandemic. At this time there are no plans to reschedule these events.

- Annual school camping trip (usually in September)
- Wo'se Sunday service for Ile Omode families (usually in September)

The events listed below are shifted to remote delivery.

- Monthly family meetings are conducted via Zoom, and meeting information will be provided. We expect to have a fuller family meeting on the second Thursday of each month (consistent with previous years), and will host a second meeting each month (4th Thursday of each month) for as long as there is sufficient information to share.



Instructional Staff

During distance learning, our building will remain open, and staff members are encouraged to teach from the school. The school has taken efforts to expand support services on-site along with adding tools to further strengthen our distance learning efforts.

Nevertheless, flexible working arrangements are available. We are allowing staff members to elect to teach from home, rather than on-site, as long as they have sufficient bandwidth, and the instructional quality is not overly compromised. This option is extended to all staff, but especially to staff members who have health conditions which might place them at higher risk.

The school's staff is fairly small, and so complex distancing and hybrid solutions on-site are not necessary. We are taking some steps however, that will enhance the safety of our staff. Staff are segregated by floor and will remain restricted by floor while teaching on-site. Both entry and exit points will be designated by staff groupings to minimize unnecessary social crossings. On-site staff meetings will be held virtually whenever possible, and if a face-to-face meeting is necessary, staff members will stay greater than 10 feet apart. In the event that larger meetings are necessary, staff will meet on the multi-purpose first floor and will be sufficiently spaced apart.

Ile Omode will provide personal protective equipment (PPE) in the form of masks or face coverings and sanitizing agents to all staff. During all in-person meetings, face coverings will be required, as they are while in the building. Face coverings are only optional in the building when staff members are isolated in their classrooms or offices.



Mental and Emotional Well-Being

As distance learning is extended into the new school year it is vitally important that all members in our community consider both their mental and emotional well being, and take time to ensure that regular and consistent efforts are in place to ensure both.

The pandemic and required shut-in, along with employment uncertainty or demands, can impose enormous stress on care providers, so it is important that parents tend to their own well-being; meditations, periodic walks, and gardening are just a few of many recommended activities. Mental and emotional health experts suggest that individuals should endeavor to disconnect from electronic devices more often during this time. Families may want to have a daily “black out” at home, where all devices are turned off. Many families organize weekly “game nights”, and this is something that families should consider.

Many of our spiritual communities provide online religious service and other supporting options during the pandemic. Wo’se Community offers Sunday service at 10:30 am and book studies and classes throughout the week. Likewise, Imani Baptist Church also provides an online spiritual service each week.

The school sponsors Baba Abubakar Omari, a staff member, who conducts martial arts aerobics classes throughout the week. These classes are available to all members of the Ile Omode community, and will be required for our students. Students are required to participate in a class at least once each week. We are also considering offering a yoga class as well for students and adults.

The Ile Omode Babas group has taken responsibility for planning periodic outdoor activities. As long as all safety protocols are practiced, we believe it is imperative that our children have an opportunity to stay physically active, and engage in some degree of social interaction. These outings will be limited to small groups, and can take a number of forms, such as bike riding, archery or other activities.



Classroom Management

Per the directive from the state, all schools in Alameda County (one of the designated “watch” counties given the incidence of COVID-19 spread) are required to begin the school year with remote instruction. This directive therefore confines our plans, and is fairly consistent with the views of the majority of parents. In our parent survey regarding distance learning and our re-opening plans, greater than half of the parents did not have a willingness for their children to return to in-person instruction. It will become important therefore to improve our technical capacity.

We are currently working with potential partners who are helping to upgrade the school’s technical infrastructure. The effort is expected to result in greater bandwidth for streaming content, provide loaner equipment for families, develop a technical hub, and provide more laptops and tablet devices for our students.

The school will continue to make every effort to provide loaner laptops and tablets for student use for any Ile Omode family. Families should contact the school (see specific contact information in this document) to arrange a loaner. Parents are responsible for any devices used by their children, and any damages and/or replacement will be charged to the family’s account.

All classes will be taken online in a synchronous mode (i.e. live instruction) via Zoom. In some instances, the live instruction will be videotaped, and this will be made available for later viewing within a restricted time period (perhaps one week, owing to limitations on online video storage). Some instructions, especially with younger students will be supplemented with asynchronous instruction (i.e. offline).

Pending a return to the campus, families may elect to withhold their students from an immediate return. Where possible, efforts will be made to broadcast instruction. Unfortunately, we can not guarantee this offering will be available, as cost and instructional challenges (i.e. serving both an in-person and online audience) may be challenges we can not overcome.

Office hours will continue to be conducted virtually, and every instructor will staff office hours, Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 4:30 pm. For a detailed instructional schedule, consult the school’s distance learning website.



Resuming In-Person Instruction

The state of California has mandated that all schools (both public and private) in counties on its watch list must begin school remotely. The list comprises approximately 20 counties, including Alameda County, and nearly every county in the San Francisco Bay Area. Thus the school will begin with remote instruction on Tuesday, September 8; continuing the distance learning program we created and executed in March of the prior school year.

The watch list is based on new infections per capita, the test positivity rate and the hospitalization rate. To be removed from the watch list, a county must be off the state's watch list for 14 days before in-person instruction can begin. Once off the watch list, the decision would be left to local officials, and presumably private schools would be able to make their own determination.

When in-person instruction is allowed, we would anticipate a gradual return to school by our students, although there is a consideration to remain in distance learning until winter break (returning to school in January, 2021). It is not believed that schools will return to "normal" in the short term, but rather COVID-19 will require continued management, and alterations to the typical school day for some time to come.

The Re-Opening Task Force will continue meeting to determine the particulars of face-to-face instruction. Although nothing is finalized, we do anticipate some new protocols when the time comes, including:

- A required health self-assessment check each morning. The school's online management system, TeacherEase, provides a tool for parents to update each morning prior to coming to school.
- Students will be required to undergo a non-contact temperature check before entering the gates, and we'll limit how many items they may bring to school.
- Parents and guardians may not be allowed onto the school grounds.
- Parents will be provided a minimum requirement for PPE for each child, and children above a minimum grade (to be determined) will be required to wear masks. No child would be allowed entry without a mask.
- Students displaying any symptoms must be picked up from school, and would be required to self-quarantine for 14 days or upon receiving a physician's clearance to return.



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- Teachers will be required to receive a COVID-19 test every 2 weeks, and a negative test is required to continue teaching on campus.

There is more to resolve, but we hope this provides some idea for the guidelines we're considering.