



Stronger Together

ACA's Reopening Plan

2020-2021

Table of Contents

Stronger Together: Message from the ACA Board.....3

Introduction4

ACA Mission, Vision and Motto.....5

Health and Safety.....6

Instructional Models Overview.....10

In-Person Learning.....11

ACA Digital Academy.....14

Intermittent Distance Learning.....16

Resources and Safety Supplies.....17

Stronger Together: Message from the ACA Board

AssalamuAlaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

I begin in the name of Allah the Most Gracious the Merciful. I pray to Allah that you are all safe and sound under the pleasure of Allah. And, I seek refuge from Him against all evil and all sickness.

Without a doubt, Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) is testing humanity with extraordinary trials and tribulation, but surely EASE follows every hardship

The pandemic has posed, essentially, an existential challenge to ACA and its mission in the community, however, with the blessing of Allah (*SW*), the cohesiveness and hard work of our community ACA has adapted genuinely and switched to virtual education overnight, facing the challenge head on, *Alhamdulillah*.

- ACA will always put the safety of our stakeholders above all; however, we still believe that the best option for education, especially the younger grades lies in in-person education with full implementation of CDC guidelines. We will limit the size of the classroom to the safe number dictated by those guidelines
- This manual outlines the process of reopening ACA for in person and for digital learning
- To help parents make the best decision for their students we are extending the early bird tuition discount till Wednesday, July 8 as a final extension.

So please, read this manual carefully as the details are very important and the stakes of your decision are very high

We hold this to be true: Quality Education is an Islamic mandate

Thank you for trusting ACA with your children's education. We are working hand in hand to brighten their future insha'Allah

AssalamuAlaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh

Arizona Cultural Academy Board

Introduction

The American Academy of Pediatrics states clearly that “the AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020.”

ACA is following a process to evaluate and prioritize our supports and expectations as a parallel exercise to the work that students and teachers completed in the 2019-2020 school year to narrow and focus educational delivery for the 2020-2021 school year. The following is an articulation of our commitments for 2020-2021.

ACA is committed to supporting learning environments that protect student and staff health and safety. To do this, ACA will partner with the Department of Health, the Office of the Governor, and the Centers for Disease and Control and will communicate any changing requirements for reopening schools. ACA recognizes that schools will continue working in partnership with local health authorities. ACA may be required to close based on decisions by a health authority.

ACA is committed to providing choices that provide high quality educational options for our community. To do this, ACA has looked at the specific needs of our students and assessed the risks for each instructional model that is presented.

ACA is committed to supporting the Social and Emotional needs of our students, employees and community. To do this, ACA will create a schedule that allows for the Counselor to be readily available for in class and in office appointments.

ACA is committed to ensuring the success of all students and that every student is able to deliver on our mission and vision.

The planning process for reopening is ongoing and will continue throughout the summer. Our plans are still being finalized and details will become clearer as we approach the beginning of the school year. We will keep the parents/guardians up to date on our planning.

We are actively monitoring federal and state public health guidelines and networking with other schools to better understand what their reopening plans are as they too navigate the new challenges in student safety and risk management. Rest assured that we are working diligently to ensure that we deliver on the mission and vision of ACA and we are confident that the way we responded to this crisis to date has given our parents/guardians confidence in our capacity and expertise as a school board and administration.

ACA Mission, Vision and Motto

Mission

- To promote moral values based on the authentic teachings of mainstream Islam and create a nurturing and learning environment for the faculty and students.
- To promote high standards of education as measured by national achievement tests.
- To offer students challenging curriculums, to prepare them for college success.
- To integrate the best Islamic, Arabic, curriculums with leading national academic standards of North Central Association – AdvancED organization, in a comprehensive curriculum.
- To promote a culture of responsibility and self-reliance.
- To teach interfaith tolerance, respect, harmony and reject violence as means of promoting the faith or advancing Muslims interest.
- To provide positive reinforcement for the youth through healthy sports, entertainment and social activities.

Vision

Arizona Cultural Academy is an Islamic private prek-12 school and college prep, with leadership that aspires to build a dream educational and cultural institution. We hold the following truth to be self-evident: “Quality education is an Islamic mandate”

We envision ACA to be:

- A leader among Islamic schools in the country
- Home for the best and brightest students, each of whom will mature into upright, tolerant and law-abiding citizen, who will aspire a unique, grand purpose of life, and play a leadership role in society
- A model for a fast track academic education
- A model for learning, working and thriving in an Islamic environment for the community at large
- A model for steady institutional growth in size, stature and performance
- A model for fully integrated, diverse community
- The recipient of major support from the community in general, and philanthropists in particular, who will provide ACA with long term financial stability
- The preferred Muslim employer in the region, with capacity to recruit and retain highly qualified, and effective faculty
- A major center for youth activity, promoting positive friendship, offering a variety of programs in education, sports and entertainment for the local community

Our Motto

“We are ACA. We empower our community with knowledge, spirit and service.

“My Lord, increase me in knowledge”

"وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا"



Health and Safety

The health and safety of students and staff is the top priority when making the decision to physically reopen ACA’s campus for use by students, staff, and others. ACA is working in collaboration with their local health officials in making the decision to safely reopen.

Screening

When considering the ability to screen students and employees upon arrival to school for symptoms and history of exposure, ACA is implementing a plan which includes staff and students not coming to school when ill. Through clearly communicating symptoms, which when evident, indicate that staff and students should stay home, ACA can screen for illness before students enter the school building.

Continuum of Screening:

<div style="text-align: center;">  Home </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  School </div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Temperature checks- Above 100 stay at home. Students must remain at home until symptom free w/o medication for 72 hours. ● Check for symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fever or chills ○ Cough ○ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ○ Fatigue ○ Muscle or body aches ○ Headache ○ New loss of taste or smell ○ Sore throat ○ Congestion or runny nose ○ Nausea or vomiting ○ Diarrhea <p>**Students and Parents with these symptoms may have COVID-19 and should stay home. **Students must remain at home until symptom free w/o medication for 72 hours. **If there are confirmed cases of COVID in a household, students will be required to stay home for 14-days and take online classes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Temperature checks before allowed onto campus- Above 100 will be sent home. ● Students and parents will be asked a series of questions to determine if they pose a risk being on campus. ● Students will be assigned a specific gate to enter and exit school (similar to the plan implemented in 2019-2020). ● Staff conducting the screen checks will be wearing PPE in consideration of the risk posed by personal contact.

HOME SCREENING

Take Temperature at Home

Parents/guardians are highly encouraged to take their child's temperature on a daily basis before coming to school. ACA will require all parents/guardians to keep their child home when they are sick. Staff will also be required to stay home when they feel sick.

Pre-screening Exposure Survey

Parents/Guardians will be required to complete a pre-screening exposure survey on a weekly basis prior to their child's scheduled classes Monday morning. This weekly pre-screening exposure survey will provide information about if the child or any of the child's household members have been exposed to COVID-19 or considered to be at-risk prior to returning to school at the beginning of the week.

This will allow the staff to track this data and to be notified instantly prior to the start of the school day. This process will help in identifying students who should not be attending school. However, the school will still equip itself to measure temperatures for any student or staff member prior to entering the school facility.

Physical Distancing

Limiting the physical interactions of students is one way to mitigate exposure to infectious disease. ACA has considered our ability to physically distance students to the extent possible (6ft apart). The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings in settings where physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. ACA is requiring that students and staff wear a face shield and/or cloth masks (6-12) while in classrooms and when social distancing is not feasible.

Modified Layouts

Based on the CDC's recommendation on social distancing ACA's student desks will be spaced 6 feet apart to allow for physical distancing in the classroom. Students will be assigned their seats and desks/seats will face the same direction or only on one side of the table spread apart.

Physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least six feet apart (i.e., reception desks, teacher desks). Physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times (i.e., guides for creating "one way routes" in hallways).

Smaller Class Sizes

Class sizes will be reduced in order to allow for more physical space and to meet the CDC and AZ Health Dept. requirements. ACA will also be limiting mixing between groups by arranging for students to eat lunch in their classrooms. Each class/grade level will also be scheduled for a specific recess time with only their classmates.

Communal Spaces

Common spaces will have limited access to more than one class at a time. The masjid will remain closed to prayer and instead the gym will be used. Students need to bring their own prayer rugs to use for daily prayer. Physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens, will be installed between bathroom sinks to ensure student safety when they cannot be at least six feet apart.

Food Service

ACA will serve individually plated or home-packed meals in classrooms instead of in a communal dining hall or cafeteria, while ensuring the safety of children with food allergies. 1-12 grade students will go with their classes to the cafeteria to pick up their food and then will take their trays back to the classroom to eat. Students will be required to bring their own water bottles which can be filled at various water bottle filling stations throughout the campus.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

ACA staff will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff. Hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) stations will be placed in every classroom and around campus for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer. Staff and students should cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues need to be thrown in the trash, and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or hand sanitizer will be used.

Cloth Face Coverings/ Face Shields/ Physical Barriers

ACA staff will teach and reinforce the proper use of cloth face coverings/ face shields. Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school but the face shield will be required all-day. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students), as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult (walking in hallways). Individuals should not touch the face covering and wash their hands frequently. Information will be provided to staff, students, and students' families on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings/ face shields](#). Note: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than two years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance
- Students with certain disabilities or health conditions

[Physical barriers](#) will be placed on each student desk to aid in social distancing from teachers and also to provide a protective and sanitary barrier between other class members.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school will be cleaned at least daily or between use as much as possible.

Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) will be limited when possible, or cleaned between use. ACA staff has created a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection. Cleaning and disinfecting products will be safely stored away from children and meet EPA disinfection criteria.

Shared Objects

Students will keep their school supplies in individually labeled containers that will be stored on their assigned desk or cubby. Any school supplies or objects that are used by multiple students will be frequently disinfected. Any items that are difficult to clean or disinfect will be used only if absolutely necessary.

Gatherings, Visitors, and Field Trips

Virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings will be utilized when possible. Essential group events, gatherings, or meetings will promote social distancing of at least 6 feet between people with a limited group size. Any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and/or activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited and approved on a case by case basis. Virtual activities and events will be pursued in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible.



Social-Emotional Learning and Support

The entire education community has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The community has experienced high levels of stress from the disruption of daily lives and worries about the physical health of oneself and others, and many have been under financial strains. For many, especially children, living with these strains in the household and community, the stress and trauma threaten to have long-lasting negative impacts on the body and brain.

ACA will provide professional development for Staff to address SEL which will include coping strategies to help reduce anxiety for themselves and students. Staff will also discuss ways to identify those students struggling with anxiety and depression. ACA will provide Staff, Parents and Students with contact information for community mental health resources.

In addition to the above our Counselor will be available Monday through Thursday after school for 30 minutes for scheduled meetings. Any questions, concerns regarding your child can be discussed, academic and/or mental health. ACA's Counseling Program will continue to support the social/emotional, academic and mental health of each student by providing classroom, individual and small group lessons and activities. Additional information and resources available on ACA website.

Instructional Models Overview

 <p>In-Person Learning</p>	 <p>ACA Digital Academy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daycare – Grade 12 ● 5 Full days per week ● Preventive safety measures ● Reduced class sizes ● ACA teachers and curriculum ● Instruction in core content ● Social-emotional support ● Sacred Sciences and electives ● Accommodations and support services provided ● Recess breaks ● Lunch in class ● Modified extracurricular activities and events ● Modified Athletic Schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grade 6 –Grade 12 ● 5 Full days per week ● Enrolled in ACA Digital Academy ● Internet connection required ● School device provided ● Live teacher-led instruction and asynchronous learning ● Class meetings, small groups, and 1-to-1 support ● ACA teachers and curriculum ● Social-emotional support ● Accommodations and support services provided ● Sacred Sciences and electives ● Online extracurricular activities and events

In-Person Learning

Instruction

Classroom instruction will resume as normal with the listed preventative measures in place. Students will be taught their core subjects (Math, ELA, Science and Social Studies), Sacred Science classes (Arabic, Quran, Islamic Studies), as well as Electives (Art, PE, Computers). We will provide students with Social Emotional support via lessons and sessions conducted by the school Counselor. Students will be required to report directly to class when arriving on campus. Students will wait in their classrooms to be called to their designated pick up locations when their ride arrives.

Preventative Measures

- **Social Distancing-** Social distancing protocols will be used outside of the classroom along with limited use of common areas when feasible. In the classroom desks and tables will be spaced apart the CDC recommended 6 feet. Desks and tables will be facing the same direction when feasible. Students will use a desktop Micro protective barrier to provide an extra protective and sanitary barrier between classmates.
- **Hand Washing-** Hand washing procedures will be implemented upon arrival and throughout the day. Younger students will be instructed on the proper hand washing process. Hand-sanitizer stations will also be located in classrooms and around campus for students, staff and guests.
- **Temperature Checks-** Parents will be expected to pre-screen students at home daily. Staff will pre-screen and self report daily. Temperature checks will be done at school entrances prior to allowing students, staff, or approved visitors on campus. Temperature checks will also be conducted in the health office if necessary for students. Staff will have access to thermometers in the teacher's lounge.
- **Face Coverings-** Student face masks are optional in the classroom. Staff will wear protective face shields while in the classroom. Everyone is required to wear either a face mask or face shield in common areas or when social distancing is not feasible.
- **Lunch-** Students will not have access to microwaves in the classroom which means that any lunch from home should be a cold lunch. If students are ordering lunch from the school it will be delivered to their classroom.
- **Cleaning Protocols-** Increased disinfecting and cleaning protocols for all school buildings will take place. In addition to the nightly cleaning classrooms and common areas will be cleaned and disinfected various times throughout the day based on the

cleaning schedule and need. Teachers will also have access to cleaning supplies that they can use in their classrooms when they feel it is necessary.

- **Class Groupings-** Class sizes will be reduced to accommodate the CDC and AZ Dept of Education's social distancing recommendations.
 - K-5 students will be grouped into classes and there will be no mixing of classes to confine any possible exposure. Sacred Science and Special Area teachers (except PE) will travel to the classrooms to limit the amount of movement around campus.
 - 6-12 students will be grouped by grade level with the exception of leveled math and Quran classes to limit the amount of possible exposure but still meet the specific instructional needs of the students.
- **Visitors-** There will be a limit to the number and type of visitors that are allowed on campus. Volunteers on campus during instructional hours will be postponed until further notice. This includes on campus PSP. If teachers have projects that they need assistance with that can be sent home then arrangements can be made.
- **Student Materials-** Students will have their own instructional materials to limit student sharing of items when feasible. Classroom materials packages are available for purchase on the school website.
- **School Events-** No scheduling of large events, school-wide assemblies or field trips through Oct 31st. This will be evaluated on a regular basis to determine date events may resume. ACA may host virtual events such as online read alouds, coffee chats, broadcast assemblies during the school day. (*Information about Meet the Teacher, Curriculum Night and Conferences will be shared as it becomes available*).
- **Extra-Curricular Activities-** Student clubs and organizations will be held virtually until school events resume.
- **Athletics-** Fall seasons will have a delayed start to competitions. Practice will be held on a volunteer basis for the fall. This will be evaluated on a regular basis to determine if feasible. *More information about Athletics will be shared as it becomes available.*

Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures

Drop-off procedures will begin at 7:30am to allow ample time for the screening of all students and staff members. All students and staff must enter the school facility through the assigned entrances. Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the school so that students and staff can clean their hands before they enter.

Early Childhood: Entrance in Back Staff Parking Lot

K-5 Students and Older (6-12) Siblings: Main School Entrance

6-12 Students: Soccer Field Entrance

LIMITED ACCESS

Parents/guardians or designated persons for drop-off will not be permitted to enter the school during drop-off times. Parents/guardians or designated persons for drop-off must drop-off their child in the drive-thru lane. Students must form lines outside of the school standing six feet apart until they are allowed to enter the school facility. However, family members that commute to school in the same vehicle can stand together in clusters.

In-person visits will be limited to only those essential to school operations. Parents/guardians are highly encouraged to contact the school by phone or email. However, those parents/guardians that are permitted to visit the school for official business must follow the preventive measures and safety requirements of the school.

Screening Children Upon Arrival

Staff members on duty will greet students outside the school facility as they arrive. These staff members will make a visual inspection of the students for any signs of illness. These staff members will usher the students into the school facility for temperature screening. Social distancing will be observed during temperature screenings to eliminate or minimize exposure due to close contact to a child who has symptoms during screening.

Designated staff members will conduct temperature screening of each student while wearing the proper Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Non-contact thermometers will be used to check the temperature of each student. Any student who has a fever of 100.4 degrees (38.0 degrees Celsius) or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the school facility.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal pick-up procedures will be staggered to limit direct contact and to observe social distancing protocols. All students will remain in their last period classrooms until their names are called for dismissal. Parents/guardians or designated persons for pick-up will not be permitted to enter the school during pick-up times. Parents/guardians or designated persons for pick-up must pick-up their child in the drive-thru lane.

ACA Digital Academy

Students in grades 6-12 may enroll full time in the distance learning school: ACA Digital Academy. Participation in ACA Digital Academy requires a connection to the internet and a dedicated device to access course content and instruction. Students are able to check out school devices on a first come first serve basis.

****While digital (online) learning is not highly recommended for K-5 students, ACA will allow students in the K-5 department to enroll in ACA Digital Academy on a case by case basis.**

Instruction

Classroom instruction will be provided by ACA staff members in both live and asynchronous formats. All instruction will follow the same format and curricula as the on campus learning. Students will be provided a daily schedule and expected to adhere to the start and finish times for each class session. Students will be taught their core subjects (Math, ELA, Science and Social Studies) as well as Sacred Science classes (Arabic, Quran, Islamic Studies). Teachers will utilize the Google Classroom for posting students assignments and grades.

Class Meetings

Lessons can be accessed live with the teacher as well as through recorded lessons for review or asynchronous viewing. Classes will be conducted using Google Meet and Hangouts. Students will be expected to show up to class with their cameras on dressed appropriately for school (See dress code and conduct below). Failure to turn on your camera will result in a deduction of 5 participation points for the class session. Students that arrive 5 minutes after the start of class time will be marked as tardy. A total of 6 tardies is equivalent to 1-day unexcused absence. Tardies will result in a deduction of 5 attendance points for the class session.

Social Emotional Support

Students in the Digital Academy will have the same opportunities for receiving social-emotional support from the school Counselor. Students will be able to sign up for meeting with the Counselor as well as attending the weekly Social-Emotional Class.

Dress Code

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child (children) is properly dressed for their online classes. Students are expected to be neat in their personal grooming, observe the standards of Islamic clothing, moderation, and good taste. Neatness, cleanliness, and modesty in dress are essential in our Islamic school environment. Students' clothing must be clean and in accordance with our uniform code.

Girls

- No Nail polish or color should be used on nails.
- No excessive makeup including but not limited to foundation, eye color, lipstick, mascara, and eyeliner.

- No exaggerated jewelry including but not limited to large chains, rings, bracelets, and hijab or hair accessories.
- No body-art or piercings temporary or otherwise.
- Girls' are to be wearing their hijab at all times.

Boys

- Boys' hair should be neat, clean, natural in color, and moderately cut (above the collar in the back and above the eyebrows in front and above the middle of the earlobes on the sides).
- No use of excessive gels and hairsprays. Hair must be neat and clean.
- No exaggerated hairstyles or extensions.
- No goatees, exaggerated or inappropriate beards or sideburn styles.
- Boys are not to wear hats, caps, headgear, makeup or jewelry of any kind.
- Jackets with hoodies need to be worn with the hood down at all times.

Code of Conduct

All excused absences shall not exceed ten days. If your student is going to miss their scheduled online class you must still call into the ACA attendance line and report the absence. Doctors notes can be forwarded via email to aca.registrar@azacademy.org.

All other absences than the above mentioned excused absences are unexcused. Unexcused absence must not exceed five days. It will be reported to the proper authority when the limit is reached.

Prayer attendance: Athan is called daily around 12:45 PM and all students are expected to respect and obey prayer, masjid, and school rules. Students will login via a provided link to attend prayer virtually with their fellow classmates that are on ACA's physical campus.

On-Campus Support for Online Students

- Students in the Digital Academy have the opportunity to sign up for on-campus support with faculty in the cafeteria.

Advantages of ACA Digital Learning vs. Other Online Schools

-Take AP/Dual Enrollment classes through a joint relationship with Dysart Unified School District with qualified staff.

Intermittent Distance Learning

ACA will implement distance learning when and if the need arises for classroom or school-wide closure(s) due to COVID-19. Classroom teachers will provide teacher led instruction using blended learning resources (digital and print). Decisions regarding classroom or school-wide closure will be made in collaboration with the CDC, AZ Health Department and other necessary officials.

Should the school's physical campus be closed classroom instruction will shift to an online format until it is deemed safe to return to campus. Students will be provided a schedule that will be the same or as similar to the oncampus schedule that they were following as possible.

Resources and Safety Supplies



Face Shields:

Student Masks:

<https://schoolmaskpack.com/products/crayola-kids-reusable-cloth-face-mask-set-cool-colors>