

Friendship Academy FAQs for the 2020-2021 School Year

We know that parents/guardians/students are being bombarded with so much information at this time that it is often hard to keep track of everything. We created this Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) page to help you keep information about your biggest concerns, at your fingertips.

- **What will school look like this year for my child?**

There will be many changes for Friendship Academy students and families this school year. Our school year will start on **August 26th with REMOTE LEARNING ONLY** though a free online program called “Microsoft TEAMS”.

We will start our **BLENDED SCHOOL SCHEDULE on September 28th** if COVID cases in Allegheny County have stabilized. For the Blended Schedule, your child will either be assigned to the “A group” or the “B group”. “**A group**” students will attend school at Friendship Academy on Mondays and Tuesdays and do online learning on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. “**B group**” students will attend school on Thursdays and Fridays and do online learning on Monday, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. **As we move closer to having students attend school live on the blended schedule we will send out a schedule for child.** If this plan changes we will let you know.

- **How does my child access the online learning from Friendship Academy?**

Laptops or other electronic devices should have been provided to you by the school district where you live. Friendship Academy is not able to provide computers to our students because our students are still a part of their “home school districts.”

In the packet that was mailed to you we included a helpful guide to help your child get online and open a Microsoft TEAMS account which your child will use to attend classes from home. You can also access this guide on our Friendship Academy website.

The user name for your child should be their first name and the first letter of their last name followed by “@thewatsoninstitute-fa.org” (An example would be josephj@thewatsoninstitute-fa.org)

Your child’s password will be the same password they used to access their online account at Friendship Academy. If your child cannot remember their Friendship Academy network password his/her teacher will have a list of student passwords.

Once your child is able to log into TEAMS they can access their classes.

- **How will the school take attendance if my child is learning from home?**

Student attendance will be critical for recovering any learning that may have been lost during the COVID shut down and to continue mental health treatment. **When attending online learning students can only be marked as “Present” if they either log in to their TEAMS account OR make a phone call to their teacher (using the teacher’s**

GOOGLE VOICE phone number) by the student's scheduled lunch time. If your student does not log in or call by their scheduled lunch time they will be marked as "Unexcused" and you will receive an E2CAMPUS text, call, and email.

- **How will my child get to school?**

Your home school district will still provide bus transportation and have been provided with the Friendship Academy "A/B Schedule" so they will know which children to pick up on which days. There will be new rules on school buses this year. Students will be required to wear face masks at all times and will have to sit in their own seats on the bus.

- **What does my child need to bring to school?**

All school students in Pennsylvania are required to wear face coverings in school to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. When the Blended Schedule begins, please make sure that your child wears a face covering to school. If your child does not have a face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided to them for the day. Pens, pencils, crayons, markers, and other school supplies are not to be shared. Your child will have a "supply bin" assigned to them at school. Their pens/pencils, etc. will be handed out to them at the beginning of the school day and will be collected and stored in their bin at the end of the school day so that other children are not using your child's supplies. As usual, students will be searched and scanned in the mornings and their personal belongings will be locked up until the end of the school day. **No outside food/candy or toys are permitted in the building due to a risk of contagion.**

- **Will my child still get breakfast and lunch at school?**

Breakfast and lunch will be served during the **BLENDED SCHEDULE ONLY** on the days when your child is in school. Students will be served breakfast and lunch in "take out" containers in their classrooms and will eat at their desks which will be six feet from the desks of other students.

- **What CDC recommendations are Friendship Academy following to decrease the spread of COVID-19?**

Friendship Academy is making the best effort to follow all CDC recommendations for decreasing the spread of COVID-19. Below is a list of precautions that we have put in place for this school year:

- All students and staff must wear face masks
- Friendship Academy will be thoroughly cleaned every evening and at intervals during the school day, with deep cleaning occurring on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Students will have regularly scheduled times for hand washing throughout the day
- No outside visitors will be permitted in the building during the school day
- All students and staff will have their temperatures taken prior to entering the school
- Students have been split into an "A/B Schedule" to decrease the number of students in the building at a time and to ensure social distancing

- No students will be able to access the gym or the cafeteria
 - Library books will be with in the form of e-books or will be distributed using a library cart at school to minimize students touching the books
 - There will be no intramural sports
 - Staff who are ill will not be permitted to come to work. Staff who become ill at work will be asked to leave the building immediately
 - Students who are ill are not permitted to come to school. Students who become ill during the school day will need to have a parent or authorized adult take them home from school ASAP.
- **Will I still be asked to attend meetings at Friendship this year?**
Friendship Academy meetings will only happen online or over the phone. There will be no meetings in the building.
 - **Will my child still receive therapy and medications?**
Children will continue to receive Partial Hospitalization and Outpatient services like individual, group, and family therapies and medication checks this school year. Many of these services will take place online but students may also have live therapy on the days they are in the school. Please discuss any questions about treatment with your Social Worker.
 - **What if there is a COVID-19 outbreak at Friendship Academy?**
Should either a staff or a student at Friendship Academy develop a confirmed case of COVID-19 we will follow the Pennsylvania Department of Education/CDC guidelines for prohibiting the individual from entering the building, shutting down and sanitizing the area where the individual was located, contact tracing, and notifying anyone with whom the infected individual had direct contact. We will make decisions about closing Friendship Academy based on the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in our school and in Allegheny County. Information about a school closure will be sent through our E2CAMPUS communication system and you will receive a phone call, text, and an email.