



August 9, 2021

Dear Yellowstone Families,

August Greetings from Yellowstone! We sent a letter in late July and now have some important updates and changes to share with you. We are including all of the original information with the updates so that everything is in one spot for you as we prepare to start the school year.

### **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL MOVED TO AUGUST 23**

**We have had to move the first day of the school year to August 23.** Our doors will open at 7:15 and the late bell will ring at 7:45. You will be given your child's teacher assignments and class schedules that day. For this first day of school, parents will be welcome in the building until 7:45 to help us ensure a smooth start to the year. Dismissal will begin at 3:30 for our early childhood students; we will then dismiss the rest of the grade levels in five-minute increments, with our buses departing Yellowstone by 4:00. Please be patient with our dismissal procedures over the first few weeks of school, as everyone will be adjusting.

### **Parent Orientation on August 19 (NEW DATE!)**

Given the new start date, Parent Orientation has been moved to August 19. We are offering the same program at two different times:

Grades PK3-5th (Yellowstone Academy): 12:30 to 1:30 *or* 4:30 to 5:30

Grades 6-8 (Yellowstone College Prep): 1:30 to 2:30 *or* 5:30 to 6:30

The orientation sessions will all take place in the gym and will include more information about first-day procedures, uniforms, school schedules/calendars, and related registration items. Look for additional information as we get closer to the date.

### **Staying Up to Date with Important Communication**

Remind 101 is one of the many tools we use to communicate with families. We often use it to send out notifications on school closures, family newsletters, and school programs. If you have not already done so, please use the following steps to download Remind 101 to your mobile device.

1. Send a text to **81010**
2. Text this message: **@yacademy20**
3. Enjoy receiving up to date information from Yellowstone!

### **Student Supplies**

Each grade level has compiled a list of school supplies to be purchased by families for their individual students' use, and in some cases for the class to collectively share. Student supply lists can be found [here](#). The supply list will be sent out as it is updated. Yellowstone Academy receives supply donations which can supplement any supply needs a family may have. If school supply assistance is needed, reach out to your child's homeroom teacher.

### **Student Uniforms**

Each student will receive two logo embroidered polo-style tops, a spirit shirt, and a pullover sweatshirt from Yellowstone Academy. Uniform vouchers will be available at Parent Orientation or during the first week of school from your child's homeroom teacher. Additional shirts may be ordered directly through our vendor at the location below. Any appropriate plain color, polo-style shirt can be taken to The Needle to be embroidered for a small fee. Contact The Needle for more information:

The Needle  
 5909 Scott Street, Suite B.  
 Houston, Texas 77021  
 needlestores@yahoo.com  
 (713) 256-7642

**Tops**

					
Light Blue	Navy Blue	Goldenrod Yellow	Spirit shirt (Friday only)	College shirt (Friday only)	Plain Navy Sweatshirt

**Bottoms**

				
Khaki or Navy Uniform Pants	Khaki or Navy Uniform Shorts	Khaki or Navy Uniform Skirt	Khaki or Navy Uniform Jumper	Blue Jeans (Friday only)

**Shoes**

- ✓ Must be closed toe and closed heel.
- ✗ Heelys, crocks, heels higher than one inch, slides, house shoes, slippers, flip flops, and similar footwear are unsafe and not allowed.

**Outerwear (in class)**

- ✓ Solid navy sweatshirt or jacket, free of writing or designs.
- ✓ Yellowstone sweatshirt.

**Accessories**

- ✓ Religious scarves and headbands may be worn.
- ✓ Headbands and hairbands of little distraction.
- ✗ Bandanas, wave caps, and bonnets may not be worn.
- ✗ Body piercings other than earrings are not allowed.

**X** Hairstyles and accessories which are distracting to students may not be worn.

### **Student Enrollment**

If you are having issues uploading documents into Skyward to complete enrollment, email [enrollment@yellowstoneschools.org](mailto:enrollment@yellowstoneschools.org).

### **Health and Safety Updates**

We know that you have many questions about how we are handling the ongoing issues surrounding COVID-19 and wanted to provide this update in anticipation of our school re-opening. We continue to follow guidance from the CDC, our local health authorities, and the Texas Education Agency. Here is how we plan on starting this school year, and we will continue to update our policies throughout the year based on their ongoing guidance:

#### **On-Campus Learning**

We will not be offering at-home learning this year. We know that the best way for your child to learn is to be on campus every day and engage with their teachers and fellow classmates. We have relaunched our bus service and are doing everything we can to support your child's return to school. To ensure a safe environment and help your child grow, where possible, we have made our class sizes smaller this year. Our school day program has also been designed to provide more educational support, tutoring, and intervention to help your child catch up and get ahead after the last 18 months of disruption.

#### **Vaccination**

The **best way** to stop the spread of COVID-19 and to end this crisis is for you, and anyone in your household who is eligible, to be vaccinated. Over 97% of reported COVID-19 hospital cases in our country right now are happening to those who are unvaccinated. Vaccination will help prevent you from getting COVID, and if you still do get COVID, it will significantly reduce your symptoms and the chances of severe complications from the disease. We plan on hosting another vaccine clinic on campus at the beginning of the school year and closely monitoring when the vaccine will be available to children under age 12. As part of our enrollment process, we will be gathering data to track who has been vaccinated so that we can ensure that we follow the appropriate protocols in the event of exposure to COVID-19.

#### **Face Masks: Updated Policy requires all PK3-5th Grade Students to be Masked**

Since, students under age 12 cannot be vaccinated, mask-wearing will be required for all students in PK3-5<sup>th</sup> grade. We will provide masks to any student or adult in the building who would like one to wear one while on campus. Students, regardless of grade level, will be required to wear a mask at all times when they are using our bus service. For staff and students in grades 6-8, we **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** mask wearing and will also make masks available on a daily basis. In accordance with health guidance, it will not be necessary to wear a mask in outdoor settings. As the year progresses, Yellowstone will review this policy and make changes based on guidance from local and state health authorities.

#### **On-Campus Protocols**

We are continuing to encourage social distancing, frequent handwashing, and daily sanitization on campus. We will also be closely monitoring activities where larger groups of students may gather together in the hallway, cafeteria, or other spaces. We will no longer require temperature checks or the daily health screening before entering the building. As a point of reference, last year our temperature checks only yielded one case where a student may have ended up with a positive COVID test. We know that the best way to prevent the spread of this virus is for you to continue to monitor your child's health every day. Please have your child stay home if they are sick. If you are unsure or have any questions about sending your child to school, please contact our nurse so that we can provide further guidance.

#### **COVID-19 Exposure and Protocols**

We will still offer free COVID testing for any student who has been exposed to someone with COVID or who is displaying symptoms. If your child tests positive for COVID, they must quarantine for 10 days and be at least 24 hours symptom-free before returning to campus. Our nurse will coordinate re-entry with your family if this becomes necessary. If your child has been vaccinated and is exposed to the virus, they do not need to quarantine, and as long

as they remain symptom free, they can continue to come to school every day. We will continue to communicate updates and potential exposures/cases as needed.

We will share more about our re-entry plans at our Parent Orientation sessions. We will also be updating our website with a more comprehensive COVID-19 response guide that will have additional information about our policies. Please reach out to our school nurse, Ms. Walker, at 713-741-8000 with any other questions you have about our procedures for this year. It is critical that we partner together to create as safe an environment as possible for your child and for our staff. Thank you for working with us this year and entrusting your child to our care. We look forward to seeing you at our Parent Orientation on August 19 and welcoming your child back to campus on August 23!

Sincerely,

Ryan Dolibois  
Executive Director

Candice Lapid  
Principal, Yellowstone Academy

Mesha White  
Principal, Yellowstone College Prep