



i3 Academy announces innovative plan in the face of COVID-19

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (July 6, 2020) - i3 Academy today announced the i3 Safe for Me: COVID-19 Plan for the fall of 2020. The innovative and family-centered plan will include three options for students—in-person, hybrid, and remote—amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Every four weeks families will have the opportunity to change learning formats based on their needs.

“The team at i3 Academy is committed to providing an unprecedented emphasis on innovation in a safe learning environment,” said Dr. Martin Nalls, head of school.

The i3 Safe for Me: COVID-19 plan includes safety and prevention guidelines from the CDC, Jefferson County Department of Health, and Alabama State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey. The health component of the plan will be managed by the i3 Wellness Coordinator. i3 administrators will consult with experts from UAB and local public health officials in order to make data-driven decisions.

“Feedback from the i3 community enabled us to design a flexible, effective plan that will meet the dynamic needs of our stakeholders while sustaining the highest level of instruction across all three formats,” said Bo Garrett, i3 assistant principal of student affairs.

i3 Academy is targeting possible barriers to learning such as technology and meal access. They will implement a 1:1 device program, meaning every student will be assigned a personal Apple iPad to use on campus and at home. The technology team will troubleshoot Wifi issues with families. A meal program will also be in place for any family who requires assistance. This program will be managed by the i3 community liaison and social worker.

The in-person learning option will provide a traditional school experience with the addition of social distancing parameters in place. Students in this learning format will attend school Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.. The students will remain in cohorts for classes and meals. When appropriate precautions are followed, this option is favored by the American Academy of Pediatrics in accordance with the article [“COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry”](#).

The remote learning option is best suited for families who feel unsure about returning to school in person or who have an at-risk person in their home. Students will use their school-provided device to participate in classes and collaborative projects with other students.

Developmentally-appropriate reading materials and manipulatives will be provided to use at

home. Before classes begin, i3 Academy will offer virtual tutorials for parents on how to use platforms such as Google Classroom and Seesaw. A help desk feature will also be available through the i3 technology team.

The hybrid learning option will be a combination of in person and remote learning. Students will attend classes on campus for two days a week. All other lessons and schoolwork will be completed at home. The hybrid option will give students the opportunity to interact with teachers and peers on a limited basis while completing the majority of school work from home.

All learning formats will be facilitated by a highly-qualified teacher who will utilize best practices for their designated learning format. The Alabama College and Career Readiness Standards will be followed, and students with special needs will be accommodated accordingly.

“Choices. In a world where, oftentimes, choices are only for the privileged, i3 Academy is stepping up again. The institution that was created to give parents a public school choice where children are educated did not shy away from the challenge to provide fluid and functional options for children to learn during this pandemic. With safety and the overall well-being of our children in mind, the administration and staff of i3 Academy listened to our concerns. Innovative in their thinking and not settling for the status quo, we were provided with three learning platforms: remote, hybrid, and in person. As a parent whose only child is going to “big kid’s school,” knowing that our school choice is giving us a choice means the world to my family. i3 is resilient. i3 is for me,” said Selena Rodgers Dickerson, i3 board member and parent.

To learn more about the i3 Safe For Me: COVID-19 Plan, see this [document](#).

i3 Academy is a tuition-free, public charter school, serving students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The mission of i3 is to empower learners to become agents of change who solve the problems they see in their world. The completely renovated campus is located in the Woodlawn community of Birmingham, Alabama. It will open in the fall of 2020. To learn more about i3 Academy, visit i3Academy.org.

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