

## SciCore Academy's Response to COVID-19 Pandemic and Plans for Fall 2020 School Opening

SciCore Academy has responded to the pandemic with foresight and effectiveness. The academy was closed several days prior to the mandate by the State of New Jersey that all schools must close by March 17. Students were sent home with books and teaching materials that would be used during the shutdown. The normally scheduled Spring Break was moved from mid-April to the last two weeks of March and this time was used to develop distance learning techniques and train teachers and parents in use of the system. Online schooling commenced on March 31 and continued until June 10. Classes were held using Google Meet throughout the entire day (8:30 - 3:00) in online sessions. Lectures, class discussion, and homework were conducted just as though students were physically present; courses were given in math, science, English, history, physical education, music, art, Spanish, and Chinese. Attendance was mandatory and there was 100 % compliance by students. This all-day program enabled teachers to complete the entire normal curriculum by the end of the school year. Parents were extremely pleased with the results of our virtual program and several commented that our school was the only one they knew which provided a complete 6-hour 5-day education.

**For Fall, 2020, SciCore will offer the option of in-person or online education.** Using appropriate technology, in-person and online classes will be run simultaneously. The environment will be interactive so that both in-person and online groups can freely communicate and benefit from lectures, Q & A sessions, and activities. Creative use of kits, individual supplies, and learning modules, sent home or given to students in class, will enable all students to receive the same rich and hands-on education provided over the years by SciCore Academy. Students will scan homework or complete fillable problem sets and submit to the teacher by uploading to Google Classroom. Tests and quizzes will be given at normal frequency; online students will take tests with their camera feed on for teacher observation. Grading will be given on a conventional 0- 100 percent scale and report cards will be issued quarterly. Semester finals for grades 5 – 12 will be conducted in-person and online.

In-person classes will be conducted with utmost attention to student and staff safety. At a minimum, the following measures will be taken: daily cleaning of surfaces before student arrival; temperature checks before students and adults enter the building or bus; student assigned seating and separation; social distancing control in open areas and bathrooms; masks to be worn by staff and students (perhaps excluding pre-K and K students, depending on American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations); open windows and fans to maintain good air circulation (minimizing aerosol contamination); water-container refill dispensers in lieu of water fountains; hand sanitizer and sanitary wipe dispensers; non-contact physical fitness and games; online chess; modification of music activities in lieu of singing (distanced hand chimes & percussion, reading music, music appreciation); outdoor classes when feasible; individualized laboratory experiments (no partners); social distancing during aftercare and before-care; and, strict compliance to keep students home if they feel sick or have a fever. During the first week of classes, students will be instructed on how to follow these safety guidelines. As part of the student supply list we are requesting personal-sized hand sanitizer and Clorox wipes.