



Dear Members of the RTC Community:

Over the past several months, Richport Technical College has been working to prepare for the return to campus. Our goal is to bring our community back to campus safely, providing as many of the in-person learning, social, and professional development opportunities that define the RTC experience, while abiding by safe practices and government guidelines. At the same time, we are committed to providing equally rich opportunities for the members of our community who for health or other reasons related to the coronavirus pandemic are unable to attend in-person activities.

Toward these ends, our administration with input from the Advisory Committee, have developed a detailed, phased plan that will gradually and cautiously allow RTC to welcome those students and faculty ready to return to in-person classes the opportunity to do so, as scheduled, on November 4, 2020.

This plan, summarized below, is a living document. As we have seen, circumstances are evolving rapidly. The plan, as it is written today, is subject to change in response to Louisiana State guidance revisions, technological or pedagogical considerations, or a shift in the public health situation facing our state or region. Any changes will be communicated to our community quickly.

Of course, safety concerns, government guidelines, and a general sense of caution require that we implement safety protocols and contingency plans that will change much of how we operate in this final quarter.

In deciding on our plan, we considered hundreds of questions and dozens of possible academic options. We consulted experts in pedagogy, online learning, medicine, public health, and safety. In the end, the Administration has adopted a Return to Campus Plan that is, in our view, the best, most flexible option for our community and continued academic excellence given the many challenges we face as a result of the global pandemic.



## **The Return to Campus Plan,**

**includes the following key components:**

1. A phased reopening of the RTC Campus and gradual return to extracurricular activities and events.
2. Fully remote options for students and faculty, who, for reasons related to COVID-19, elect to participate remotely. Individuals who know now that they will elect a remote option for fall 2020 are asked to notify the school by October 28, 2020. (More information to come.)
3. A November 4<sup>th</sup> start for all on-campus classes.
4. Strict safety protocols, including physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene, and cleaning procedures.
5. Strict limitations on visitors to campus.
6. Contingency considerations for decreasing, even shutting down, on-campus operations, and the flexibility to move to remote teaching, as necessary to protect the health and safety of our community.
7. A commitment by all students, faculty, and staff physically present on campus to share responsibility for protecting each other's health and safety.



### **Investment in teaching technology and pedagogy:**

RTC has invested in intentionally designed classrooms, laptops will be required; processes are in place for students to apply for emergency funding or financial aid to help bridge any potential technology gaps.

### **Alterations to and repurposing of physical space:**

RTC school has reconfigured its physical space to limit the number of people and reduce density in all common spaces, including classrooms, the clinic, hallways, and the breakroom. Doing so has limited our ability to schedule larger classes.

### **Acquisition and widespread distribution of PPE, cleaning, disinfectant, and hygiene materials:**

RTC has acquired large supplies of face coverings, hand sanitizer, disinfectant, and other cleaning materials. Face coverings will be distributed to individuals. Cleaning and hygiene supplies are readily available throughout the buildings.

### **Investment in health screening tools:**

All students, staff, and faculty will be required to conduct a daily health screening for symptoms and exposure to the coronavirus before entering campus. To facilitate this effort, RTC has invested in digital screening tools that will be for use by all faculty, staff, and students.

### **Anticipated timeline for phased opening:**

To help community members plan, RTC has adopted an anticipated timeline. While the timeline could change depending on the status of the pandemic, government regulations, and public health and safety concerns, it represents our current plan.

The full Return to Campus Plan is detailed and multifaceted. It includes sections setting forth protocols and policies for health and safety, academics, student life, infrastructure, and communications. We will hold separate orientations for students, faculty, and staff in the coming weeks

With careful thought, and the commitment of our community to follow the protocols to protect one another, the plan presents the best option for RTC to come together as one community, with flexibility for all members, as we navigate the global pandemic.