



Headwaters[™]
SCHOOL

Each journey begins at the source

Version 1.0

June 19, 2020

Planning for the 2020-2021 School Year



Health &
Safety



Calendar &
Operations



Teaching &
Learning



Tuition &
Finances



Dear Headwaters Community,

Since Headwaters' inception in 2001 and 2002 as The Khabele School and Primavera Montessori, we have been resourceful and agile. We have “done school” in homes, trailers, yards, parks, at picnic tables, on rugs, on camping trips, and, of course, in a van or a bus. We do this because we know learning can and does happen anywhere. Our kids and guides know that, too.

Like other schools and learning communities, we will be challenged in the coming school year to be sure every student is cared for, challenged, and connected to us in ways that ensure social & emotional growth, academic & intellectual growth, and growth as learners. We remember, during this time, the importance of our foundational language – the world needs a school that cultivates identity formation, fosters empathy, and embraces diversity to bring more peace to the world. The world needs Peacemakers, Advocates, Creators and Thinkers. Those ideas have kept us committed to the very challenging but crucial work of preparing for an unknown future.

This document is a **work in progress**, and it presents our current plans for the 2020-2021 school year. As August approaches, we know there will be adaptations to this plan, and we will keep you informed every step of the way.

Sincerely,



Ted Graf
Head of School



Priorities for Reopening

In order to reopen campuses, Headwaters School is assessing information, acting decisively, and developing guidelines and procedures in service of our community. Part of our planning for the 2020-2021 school year is the work of the Scenarios Planning Group. This group is composed of board members and senior administrators who provide counsel and guidance on overarching aspects of our planning for the coming year, including decisions to open or close our campuses, extending the school year, and ensuring our long-term financial sustainability. These members include Jerry Aubin, Jim Rudden, Jessica Rio, Heather Vickers, Amy Nylund, Alex Penry, Paul Cronin, and Ted Graf.

This group is supported by several working task forces made up of teachers and administrators, who are focusing on three key areas: health and safety, teaching and learning, and calendar and operations.

- 1 **If we are permitted to be open and can be on campus, we will be on campus.**
Our decision-making will be informed by local authorities, state authorities, and the CDC.
- 2 We are taking a **long view** of the virus and making plans that can be **sustained** for more than a few weeks or months.
- 3 Each program requires a **customized approach** that is responsive to the students' developmental needs. For our younger students, that means meeting in person as much as possible.
- 4 If we must shift to periods of Headwaters at Home, we will prioritize **small group teaching sessions** for more meaningful interactions, age-appropriate and consistent **accountability**, and streamlined and consistent use of **technology**.
- 5 **We are committed to taking full advantage of this opportunity to emphasize our belief and value in students becoming self-directed learners.**
- 6 We are committed to **regular communication** with our parents, students, and guides to provide clarity and confidence.
- 7 We will continue to invest in personal protective equipment (PPE) and other COVID-related supplies to be ready to carry out daily **safety protocols** on each campus.

Health & Safety

Informing our thinking and planning ▶



We are developing procedures to reduce risk wherever possible as we plan to return to our campuses. Headwaters will complete a deep clean of all spaces before employees and students return, and will increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting once we return, with a particular focus on high-touch and high-traffic areas. Signage will be posted in common areas reminding individuals of health protocols (hand-washing, covering your cough, etc.). Increased access to hand sanitizer and hand-washing stations will be available throughout the campuses. All individuals will be expected to engage in social distancing whenever possible.

TEMPERATURE CHECKS

All students will have their temperatures checked by a trained staff member upon arrival at school. If your child is sick, including exhibiting symptoms such as fever, cough, aches, diarrhea, etc. please keep them home. Any student who has a temperature of 99.6° or higher will not be permitted to attend school. We will share campus-specific procedures for this process later in the summer. Additional health screening questions may be asked of each person upon arrival to campus. Students who experience regular recurring allergy symptoms like runny nose and cough will be permitted to attend school with a doctor's note outlining their symptoms.

FACE MASKS

We view the use of cloth face coverings as an important way that we, as a community, can slow/stop the spread of the virus and protect each other.

While indoors or in school vehicles, cloth face coverings will be required for adults who do not have health restrictions. TEA does not recommend mask-wearing for students under the age of 5, so we will not require them for those students. Students ages 5 and older will be required to bring a cloth face covering to school every day (we will have extras in case a child loses or misplaces their mask). Use of the covering will be determined based on physical distancing. Any concerns or questions about this requirement for your individual child can be brought to your campus manager. Headwaters will maintain a stock of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for those who need it.

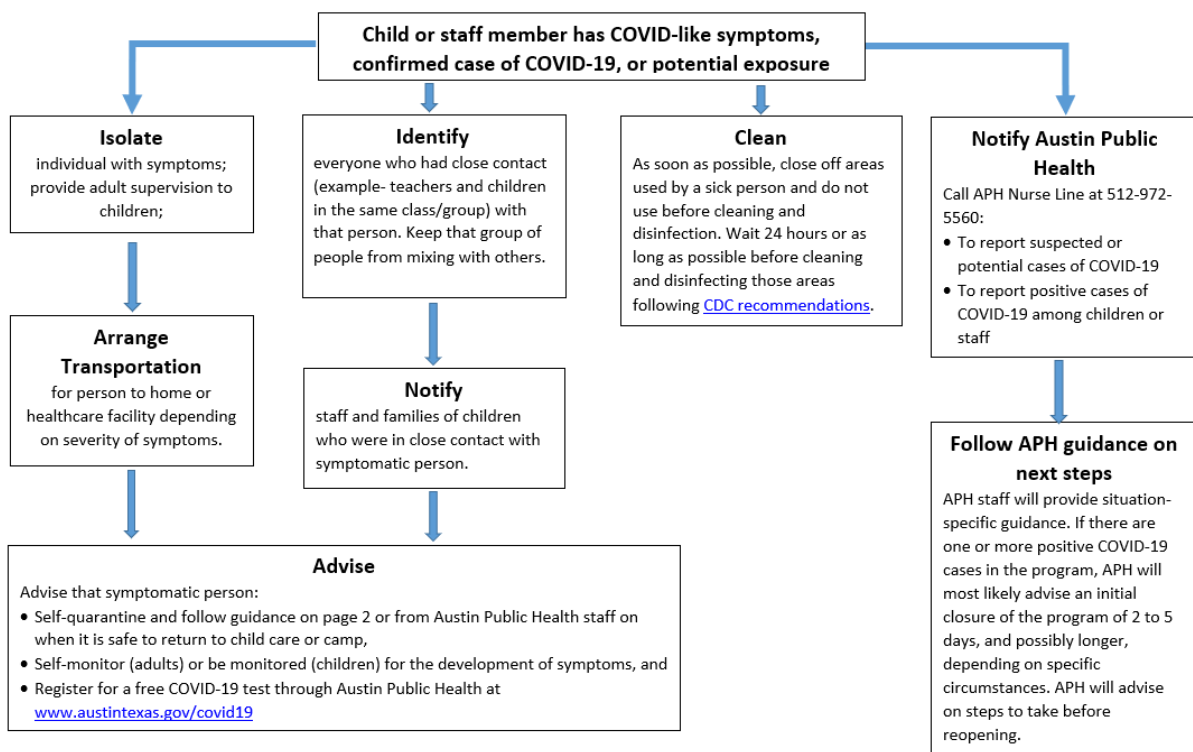
VISITORS TO CAMPUS

Each visitor to campus will be screened for temperature and symptoms and will be required to wear a mask. Visitors will be limited to individuals providing services to students, emergency and governmental personnel, and parents on a limited basis.

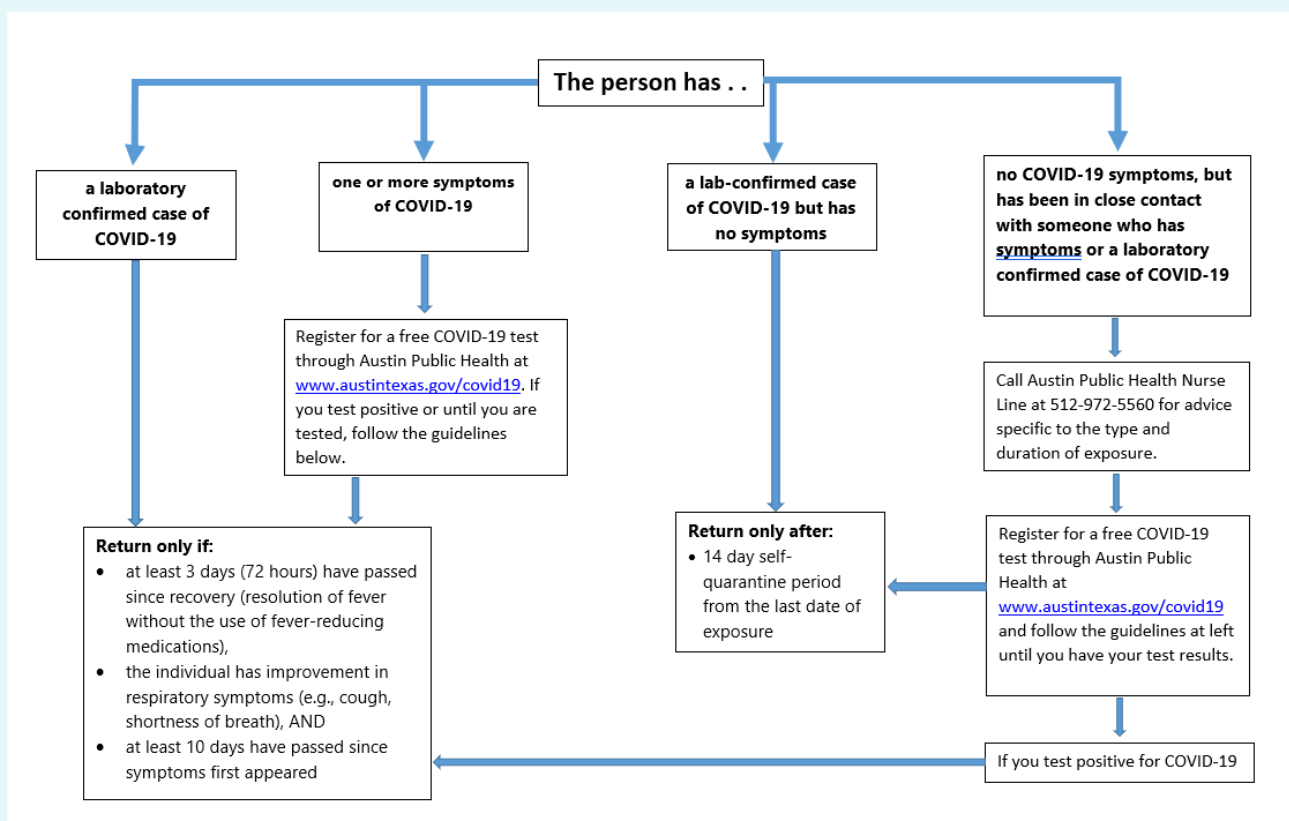
Health & Safety (continued)

CONTAINMENT OF ILLNESS

We have protocols in place for containment of illness. We will follow this flowchart, provided by Austin Public Health, if a community member has symptoms, a confirmed COVID-19 case, or potential exposure.



We will follow this flowchart to determine when someone who exhibited symptoms is permitted to return to campus.



Health & Safety (continued)

- ✓ Any person exhibiting signs of illness, including symptoms such as fever, cough, aches, diarrhea, etc. will be sent home immediately.
- ✓ As appropriate, individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to seek testing and report the findings as soon as possible.
- ✓ Isolation rooms have been determined on each campus for students waiting to be picked up.
- ✓ Enhanced PPE will be provided for any employee who is directly caring for a student waiting to be picked up.
- ✓ There will be enhanced cleaning and sanitization of the isolation rooms after use.
- ✓ In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, Headwaters will follow recommended protocols, including notifying health authorities and our community about the incident while keeping names confidential.
- ✓ Any spaces visited by a person who tests positive for COVID-19 will be additionally disinfected.
- ✓ Employees will be trained in contact tracing, as necessary.

We will communicate frequently regarding updates to these policies. Other restrictions may be put into place based on guidance, including limiting items brought from home, meal preparation and consumption, etc.



Calendar & Operations

OPENING DATE

The 2020-2021 school year will begin as planned on Tuesday, August 25. If permitted to open our campuses, we will begin school face-to-face at that time. Springs Campus students will begin their phase-in schedule on this day – stay tuned for your child's individual schedule.

IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR SPRINGS STUDENTS

During any campus closures related to COVID-19, we will not offer virtual learning for YCC and Primary students. School will be **paused**, and we will implement a flexible calendar – we will add days in during the school year up through July 30, 2021 in order to make up missed days. We will do this by utilizing any available days that were previously scheduled to be professional development days or select holidays. (See Flexible Calendar Holidays section below for more details). We will track these days on a quarterly basis and communicate any upcoming calendar changes.

VIRTUAL LEARNING WITH LIMITS FOR CREEK STUDENTS

During any necessary campus health closures that occur over the course of the year, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade will only transition to virtual learning (Headwaters at Home) for short periods of time (2-4 weeks depending on the age of the child). For longer closures, school will be paused, and we will implement a flexible calendar – we will add days in during the school year up through July 30, 2021 in order to make up missed days. We will do this by utilizing any available days that were previously scheduled to be professional development days or select holidays. (See Flexible Calendar Holidays section below for more details). We will track these days on a quarterly basis and communicate any upcoming calendar changes. See Page 7 to learn about our enhanced virtual learning plans with increased structure, accountability, and connection and an emphasis on small group and individual meetings with Guides.

VIRTUAL LEARNING AS NEEDED FOR RIVER STUDENTS

During any necessary health closures that may occur over the course of the year, students in middle and high school will transition to all virtual learning (Headwaters at Home). See Page 8 for more details. This campus will not use a flexible calendar at this time.

ORIENTATIONS AND TRAINING

Stay tuned for information on back-to-school events, including orientations for students and parents. We want to offer our students and families as much support as we can in navigating the start to a new school year.

FLEXIBLE CALENDAR HOLIDAYS FOR SPRINGS AND CREEK

If we must implement a flexible calendar through July 30, 2021 for the Springs and Creek Campuses, all weekdays (including previously scheduled holidays and professional development days) could become instructional days except for the following:

- November 26-27, 2020
- December 24, 2020-January 1, 2021
- January 18, 2021
- July 5, 2021

Teaching & Learning SPRINGS CAMPUS



CLASSROOM CAPACITY

The classroom capacity based on current TEA and Child Care Licensing guidance is 45 sq. ft. per child, with no more than 22 people in a room, including teachers. Based on these guidelines, we are able to accommodate all students who are currently enrolled. Children will stay within their individual cohorts throughout the day.

While these capacity limitations remain in place, on Wednesdays, the school day will end at 12:00 p.m. This will provide guides time to ensure consistency, alignment, and coordination across the classes. Guides need collaboration time to communicate with their co-guides as well as their program team on curricular planning, and to also communicate with parents as needed. The capacity limits will mean that guides will be teaching smaller groups on their own during school days instead of the usual team-teaching model. By supporting collaborative time for guides on Wednesdays, we can ensure the needs of each student will be addressed.

IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR SPRINGS STUDENTS

During any campus closures related to COVID-19, we will not offer virtual learning for YCC and Primary students. School will be paused, and we will implement a flexible calendar – we will add days in during the school year up through July 30, 2021 in order to make up missed days. We will do this by utilizing any available days that were previously scheduled to be professional development days or select holidays. We will track these days on a quarterly basis and communicate any upcoming calendar changes.

PLAYGROUND/OUTDOOR SPACES

Primary classes will rotate areas – track and garden, playscapes, swing and yard space. All equipment will be regularly cleaned, and each group will have a set of equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc.) that is disinfected regularly and not shared with other groups.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:45 a.m.: Early Arrival begins in each classroom (no crossing over of groups)

8:15-8:45 a.m.: Drop Off

Temperature & Well Checks in Carpool Line

Designated entryways per classroom

Primary students will have the opportunity for Rest Time within their classrooms

2:30-2:45 p.m.: Pick Up*

Creativity Club available until 5:30 p.m. within separate classroom cohort groups

** Except on Wednesdays, when the school day ends at 12:00 p.m.*

We will do our best to coordinate siblings schedules within and across campuses.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

We will work to deliver these important programs that follow small group guidelines and social distancing. Unlike last year, these programs will not mix classrooms. Instead, your child will remain in their small classroom cohort with a guide.

If you have not yet signed up, please do so as soon as possible [at this link](#). If we are not able to offer CC, all deposits will be refunded.

PARENT RESOURCES

We will stay in close contact with parents through direct calls as well as regular communication via the Nest. We request your collaboration and open communication with us about any symptoms that may appear at home for any of your family members.

We will offer Parent Education Pitsos (meetings) and resources during the year, and we welcome your ideas and suggestions for topics for these sessions. Based on suggestions from the end-of-year survey, these will include social-emotional learning support, anti-racism resources, and Montessori curriculum education.

As we did during Spring 2020, we will continue to run focus groups and surveys for parents to get your feedback on your school experience.

Teaching & Learning CREEK CAMPUS



CLASSROOM CAPACITY

The classroom capacity based on current TEA guidance is 45 sq. ft. per child, with no more than 22 people in a room, including teachers. Based on these guidelines, we are working on a plan to accommodate all students who are currently enrolled. Children will stay within their individual cohorts throughout the day.

While these capacity limitations remain in place, on Wednesdays, the school day will end at 12:15 p.m. This will provide guides time to ensure consistency, alignment, and coordination across the classes. Guides need collaboration time to communicate with their co-guides as well as their program team on curricular planning, and to also communicate with parents as needed. The capacity limits will mean that guides will be teaching smaller groups on their own during school days instead of the usual team-teaching model. By supporting collaborative time for guides on Wednesdays, we can ensure the needs of each student will be addressed.

If we are required to reduce capacities, we have a plan to accommodate that as well, with smaller alternating groups rotating on campus for two days each per week, with one deep cleaning day in between. During the other days of the week we have a plan for supported virtual learning (see below).

VIRTUAL LEARNING WITH LIMITS/FLEXIBLE CALENDAR

During any necessary campus health closures that occur over the course of the year, students in Kindergarten through 5th grades will only transition to virtual learning (Headwaters at Home) for short periods of time (2-4 weeks depending on the age of the child). For longer closures, school will be paused, and we will implement a flexible calendar – we will add days in during the school year up through July 30, 2021 in order to make up missed days. We will do this by utilizing any available days that were previously scheduled to be professional development days or select holidays. We will track these days on a quarterly basis and communicate any upcoming calendar changes.

PARENT RESOURCES

We will stay in close contact with parents through direct calls as well as regular communication via the Nest. We request your collaboration and open communication with us about any symptoms that may appear at home for any of your family members.

Parents will be provided with guidelines for establishing an at-home learning environment to support their students. We will offer Parent Education Pitsos (meetings) and resources during the year, and we welcome your ideas and suggestions for topics for these sessions. Based on suggestions from the end-of-year survey, these will include anti-racism resources, Montessori curriculum education, online safety, and mindfulness.

As we did during Spring 2020, we will continue to run focus groups and surveys for parents to get your feedback on your school experience.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:45 a.m.: Early Arrival begins in individual classrooms

8:00-8:45 a.m.: Staggered arrival; school day begins; Temperature & Well Checks in Carpool Line

3:00 p.m.: School day ends; staggered dismissal begins*

** Except on Wednesdays when the school day ends at 12:15 p.m.*

We are exploring the ability to offer Creativity Club within classroom cohort groups. We are also exploring the option to offer CC on Wednesday afternoons after early dismissal. Ability to staff CC will be dependent on enrollment. If you have not yet signed up, please do so as soon as possible [at this link](#). If we are not able to offer CC, all deposits will be refunded.

We will do our best to coordinate siblings schedules within and across campuses.

DURING ANY REQUIRED VIRTUAL LEARNING

- Children will engage in an age-appropriate amount of virtual learning each day (staggered by program)
- Learning packets and Montessori materials will be sent home as needed
- Small group Zoom lessons
- Pre-recorded lessons will be available
- Open Zoom work periods (guide available for help and work support)
- Guides will collaborate across classes to offer expanded asynchronous options
- Guides help facilitate collaborative projects (connect kids with each other across groups to Zoom and work)
- Provide student accountability
 - Weekly student check-ins
 - Individualized check-ins
 - Work plans are created and checked
 - Work turned in
 - Children presenting work or projects

For families with limited access to technology or internet, please reach out to us at it@headwaters.org and we will do our best to support you.

PLAYGROUND/OUTDOOR SPACES

Cohorts will each have access to outdoor areas and materials on a set rotation. Play structures will be cleaned between groups, and each group will have a set of equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc.) that is disinfected regularly and not shared with other groups.

Teaching & Learning

RIVER CAMPUS



CAPACITY ROTATION

We will be creating a rotating on-campus/off-campus schedule for each grade based on the current 45 sq. ft. per student guideline. Your child will come to campus every other week for some days of dedicated hands-on instruction and Social-Emotional Learning activities. We hope to schedule additional face-to-face time on campus for our sixth grade students, as well as for our IB students. Later in the summer we will share a specific schedule for your student.

DAILY SCHEDULE

For our virtual learning weeks, we will follow the 45-minute, A/B-Day block schedule as established this spring: A-Day classes on Mondays and Thursdays, B-Day classes on Tuesdays and Fridays, with a Wednesday Flex Day. For on-campus learning weeks, we will follow a modified schedule of shortened periods with different days and times for the different grade levels. While we are considering alternative times, we are currently planning for our standard 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. start and finish.

OUTDOOR CONSIDERATIONS/ PACTIVITY/ATHLETICS

We will follow local guidelines for athletics and off-campus activities. We are committed to engaging students in movement and reinforcing Social-Emotional Learning competencies.

PEDAGOGY & ACCOUNTABILITY

We will continue to offer a blend of face-to-face and asynchronous learning. Using best practices, we are prepared for virtual learning while valuing in-person methods.

We will continue to offer a variety of assessments. We will lean toward project-based, asynchronous, and student-driven assessment. Student agency in how and when they are assessed will be primary.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

Using best practices, we will deliver Headwaters at Home on rotation, and we are confident in our ability to deliver rich curriculum and experiences virtually. Coursework will be available asynchronously.

For parents who don't want their student to return in person yet and would prefer an all-online option:

With our developing expertise around virtual learning, we are exploring our teachers' ability to support those students who cannot attend classes in person. Please reach out to Paul Cronin (p.cronin@headwaters.org) if you are interested in this option. We will be in touch later this summer with more information.

For families with limited access to technology or internet, please reach out to us at it@headwaters.org and we will do our best to support you.

PARENT RESOURCES

We will stay in close contact with parents through regular communication via the Nest. We request your collaboration and open communication with us about any symptoms that may appear at home for any of your family members.

Parents will be provided with guidelines for establishing an at-home learning environment to support their students. Parents are encouraged to check in with Advisors and individual guides as needed.

We will offer Parent Education Pitsos (meetings) and resources during the year, and we welcome your ideas and suggestions for topics for these sessions. Based on suggestions from the end-of-year survey, these will include anti-racism resources, online safety and social media, a parent "how to" on using the Nest, mental health for teens, and education about the IB program.

Tuition & Finances

In these challenging and uncertain times, we remain committed to supporting our families, faculty, and staff. We hope you see this planning document as evidence of that commitment. We will continue to pursue balanced solutions in this shifting landscape.

While we know the year may include some temporary campus closures, it is important that we maintain our physical campuses for our return. In addition to regular maintenance, many costs associated with running our programs will increase, including:

- Expanded janitorial services to ensure spaces are cleaned and disinfected more thoroughly
- Purchasing of PPE for faculty and students
- Additional cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer for daily use
- Additional technology for families and staff
- Increased financial aid budget

For those reasons, our tuition schedule for 2020-2021 remains the same. By employing a flexible calendar and/or virtual learning, we intend to provide a full educational experience to each child.

For families who are experiencing financial losses, we have increased our financial aid budget significantly. Please email Alex Penry (a.penry@headwaters.org) to learn about financial options available to families.



We can't wait to see you!

We missed having everyone on our campuses and we are really looking forward to the start of the new school year. Please be sure to monitor school communications this summer for updates and additional information.

If you have any questions, please contact
planning@headwaters.org

“...Up in the headwaters, a river isn't a point where you stand. In the beginnings of the river, you teeter on the edge of a hundred tiny watersheds where one drop of water is always tipping the balance from one stream to another. History changes with each tiny event, shaping an outcome that we can only fully grasp in hindsight. And that view changes as we move farther downstream.”

– Lynn Culbreath Noel



Headwaters™
SCHOOL

Each journey begins at the source