



## COVID-19 RETURN TO SCHOOL POLICY



COVID-19 is an infectious disease that has profoundly affected our world over the past several months, like no other disease in our lifetime. Thankfully, however, school-aged children have been minimally affected by this pandemic, with only 6.1% of Indiana cases and 0.1% of deaths being found in children ages 0-19 years old.

As a Christian school, we desire to proceed forward in faith and not fear. ("For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7) Our goal is to resume classes on campus on Monday, August 10, 2020. We plan to operate in as normal a fashion as possible, while also observing a few reasonable precautions. The following plan has been crafted through prayer and in consultation with many experts in the medical field, including local, state, and national healthcare organizations, the Indiana Department of Education, and others.

This plan reflects what we deem to be the most prudent course of action, given the current information available to us at this time. We will remain flexible, realizing that this plan may need to adapt in the future, in response to further updates from governing authorities. In such an event we will aim to communicate in a clear and timely manner about any changes. We thank you in advance for your understanding and support. We are thrilled and privileged to have you and your children as part of our Bethesda family, and we want to pull together as we continue to weather this unprecedented challenge. We love your children and want to offer them the most safe, healthy, fun, godly, stimulating learning environment that is possible. We are looking forward to a great school year!

The following policy applies to normal school days, Monday to Friday. Extraneous school-related events may require additional precautions/modifications, which we will determine on a weekly basis and communicate in a timely manner.

---

### OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19 WILL PRIMARILY FOCUS ON THREE AREAS:

- Keeping sick people off campus (whether they be staff, students, parents, or others)
- Maintaining cleanliness (frequently washing hands, regularly disinfecting commonly used surfaces/equipment, having hand sanitizer readily available, and maintaining an overall clean campus)
- Applying reasonable social distancing principles, such as assigned seating that spaces students at least 3 feet apart from one another in the classrooms. (Our campus will only be filled to half capacity, thus allowing for greater spacing of students.)

---

When students are socially distanced within their classrooms, the wearing of masks will not be required – though they will always be permitted by those who desire them. We encourage students to keep their own personal mask on hand at all times when at school, but complementary masks will be made available for each child who needs one. Students will be expected to wear masks whenever they are not socially distanced at least 3 feet from one another, such as when mingling with their classmates before and after school, during passing periods, and when standing in line to purchase a lunch. Students with asthma, diabetes, etc. (who are at higher risk) are encouraged to wear a mask for their own protection.

In order to effectively keep those who are sick from coming to school, we are asking that you please **screen your children daily** for any symptoms of COVID-19 before sending them to school each morning. **COVID-19 symptoms** can include coughing, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fever over 100 degrees F, fatigue, chills, muscle/body aches, headaches, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of taste/smell. Any students displaying such symptoms should remain at home and be evaluated. We are asking our teachers and staff to do the same.

---

Any students discovered to be showing such symptoms at school will be evaluated (including temperature checks) and possibly sent home, if concern is warranted. Please be prepared to pick up your child within one hour if the school contacts you for this purpose. Until a sick child is able to be picked up, he/she will wear a mask while waiting in an "isolation area" of the office.

Students who display COVID-19 symptoms are to be isolated at home for 10 days after symptoms begin, AND for 72 hours after being fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication (unless evaluated by a physician and diagnosed with a non-COVID illness and/or tested negative for COVID), AND be symptom-free for three days before returning to school.

If anyone tests positive for COVID, then all close contacts of that person must isolate at home for 14 days. The phrase "close contacts" includes all family members, as well as anyone who spent longer than 15 minutes within 6 feet of the infected person, regardless of whether or not a mask was worn.

Further specific protocols will be as follows:

**ARRIVAL** – Students, staff, and any visitors will undergo a quick temperature check upon entering the building upon arrival. Hand sanitizer will be available at each entrance to the building.

**CLEAN HANDS** – Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer multiple times throughout the school day, including before and after lunch.

**LUNCH** – School lunches will continue to be served as usual. Those serving lunch will wear face masks and gloves. Students will eat at assigned tables with their same classmates each day. Lunch tables will be cleaned between staggered shifts of students.

**CHAPEL** – Students will sit in groups with their classmates during chapel assemblies.

**ATTENDANCE** – Student absences will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in light of each student's health and particular situation. No perfect attendance awards will be issued at the end of the school year. Students will be expected to make up all missed work except in extenuating circumstances. Distance "e-learning" via online lessons will not be utilized as our normal medium of education but may be resorted to on occasion as a means of assisting students in completing schoolwork if they are quarantined at home for a period of time.

**CLASSROOMS** – Classrooms will be arranged to allow for as much social distancing as is reasonably feasible. Desks, doorknobs, and other commonly used surfaces will be cleaned frequently throughout each day.

**TRANSITIONS BETWEEN CLASS PERIODS** – Students will be encouraged to wear masks, wash their hands, and/or use hand sanitizer between classes. Wherever possible, alternating lockers will be assigned to students to allow for additional distance between students in hallways.

**PE** – We will limit physical contact among students as much as possible during activities in physical education classes (including when changing clothes before/after class).

**ATHLETICS** – We will thoroughly clean/disinfect any commonly handled equipment between uses, we will encourage the frequent washing of hands, and we will require that students use separate water bottles and not share them.

**RECESS** – Students will be allowed to play on the outdoor playground at recess. Classes of students will be assigned to specific playground "zones" each day to limit cross-pollination with other classes of students.

**WATER FOUNTAINS & VENDING MACHINES** – All water fountains and vending machines on campus will be disabled. However, large water dispensers will be available throughout the campus for the purpose of refilling students' water bottles.

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES** – We will encourage students to not share school supplies, and we will thoroughly clean/disinfect any commonly handled supplies/equipment between uses.