



# Heritage Christian School

## Pandemic Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year

as of Summer 2020

(scroll down for updates)

As we all adjust to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, we at HCS are committed to taking every needed step to get our staff and students back into the classroom so that the school year can begin as safely and effectively as possible. The Harrison County School Board, under guidance from the state and county health departments, will release the plan that the public schools will be required to follow regarding re-entry into the schools for the academic year. As HCS is a private institution, we are able to develop our own plan and protocols while still respecting CDC guidelines.

As a school, we have accomplished a great deal to be proud of during the pandemic. Through the tireless efforts of staff, students, and parents we were able to continue the education process outside of the school. While this was obviously the safest approach for our health, the time has come to resume classroom activities with as much normalcy as possible. Safety will be paramount, and we will have to get used to new protocols to keep our HCS families healthy and our school open.

We intend to open with a full 5-day school week beginning with the 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades on Tuesday, September 8. Our new health protocols will enable us to prevent a viral outbreak in our school and help us to control the spread not only of COVID-19 but influenza and cold viruses as well. This plan will place additional responsibilities on our students, staff, and parents; however, working together as one HCS family will enable us to keep our school open and keep us all as healthy as possible.

***Keep in mind, this situation is continually evolving.*** If we have a mandate from the governor that requires us to close, then we will do so without question. In that case, we will resume remote learning as required. These rules and protocols are also subject to change as the HCS Board of Directors provides continual reassessment and adjustment for what best serves our school.

As a private school, entrusting HCS with your child's education also includes following the guidelines set forth by the school administration and HCS Board. Our goal is continuing in-school education while keeping us all as safe and healthy as possible.

## **MORNING ARRIVAL / ENTRY**

As students, parents, and staff enter the building, non-contact thermometers will be used to take a temperature on everyone. Anyone at 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will have to leave immediately. Any student with a fever who has been dropped off and now needs a ride will be isolated in the sick bay and have a mask placed while the parent is contacted. Obviously, it is within everyone's best interest for parents to keep any student with a fever or who does not feel well at home. Increased vigilance on the parent's part will keep the number of students who need to be sent home to a minimum.

The temperature assessment process will take some adjustment to be as efficient as possible. We want to minimize lining up and waiting. Being on time or even early is more important this year for this reason. Temperature checks will also be performed on those arriving for Before School Care.

## **DAILY ROUTINE**

- Parents who enter for drop-off will have a designated place to stand if they stay for devotions.
- Upon the start of the school year, it will be determined whether small group or classroom devotions may need to be implemented rather than the typical large group morning devotions. "Zoom" devotions may also be considered.
- Students will attend class in their normal classroom and we will space out as much as possible. Our rooms are small, but our class sizes are also small, which will help with distancing.
- Students will spend their day with their small cohort of classmates and not be intermingled with the rest of the student population where possible. Recess will be adjusted to account for this.
- Personal supplies will be required including hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes, and tissues at each desk to prevent cross-contamination.
- Upon entering and exiting the classroom each student will wipe their own desk and use their own hand sanitizer.
- While masks are welcome for those who wish to wear them, students will not be required to wear one. Parents, teachers, staff, and any adult who enters the building, are asked to wear a face covering except in the case of medical exemption. Teachers who are in their own classroom with their own students (their cohort), may teach from the front of the classroom (socially distanced) without a mask.
- Classes will be arranged so desks do not face each other.
- Water fountains will be turned off. Students will bring their own water bottles.

- Specials classes (art, music, computers, etc.) will be attended in the classrooms that are already designated for those activities. The 'specials' teachers will be given time between classes to sanitize desks, tabletops, and commonly used areas and supplies. Because of the volume and frequency of these cleanings, *we will need the help of volunteers* to keep our specials classes running smoothly and efficiently.

## **CAFETERIA**

- Students will be at a table with their classmates but spread out so that only every other seat is occupied.
- Lunch times may be adjusted to minimize cafeteria occupancy.
- Tables, trays, cups, and silverware will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- Condiments will not be shared.
- We will provide hot lunch.
- The hot lunch line will be spaced out to minimize gathering.

## **SANITIZATION**

- We will greatly increase our cleaning efforts to keep commonly touched surfaces sanitary. This will include multiple daily cleanings of door handles, stair railings, soap dispensers, etc. in effort to reduce cross-contamination. This cleaning of common areas will place an increased burden on our janitor and maintenance director. We appreciate volunteers to help with this task.
- It will be the responsibility of each teacher to perform classroom cleaning at the end of each day to include commonly touched surfaces such as light switches, pencil sharpeners, desks, dry-erase markers, etc.
- Any fabric surfaces will be removed from the classroom where possible. We will eliminate any use of bean bags, pillows and any supplies made of fabric at this time.

## **WELLNESS PLAN**

- Signs and symptoms of illness to watch for will be sent to parents as well as posted around the school.

- Any student who is not well will have to stay home. A student who arrives at school ill will need to be picked up immediately.
- For the 2020-2021 school year only, the number of excused absences will increase without penalty. Doctor's notes will be required.
- Any student with a medical condition that compromises their immunity will be given special consideration and have E-learning options made available. These situations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- If a student is absent due to illness, we must have a more conservative approach to allow him or her back into the school. The policy will be *3 days* of no fever, vomiting, or other symptoms before being allowed to return to campus.
- Students who are absent will have normal make-up work to do when they return.
- We must have increased vigilance for illness in our homes. If anyone at home is feeling ill, then students must be closely watched as they may need to be kept home for a day to make sure they are not ill.
- A self-reporting system will be implemented for parents to report to the school any illness in the household that may be of concern to the school.
- If we have large numbers of students out for illness, the HCS Board may choose to close the school and resume E-learning.
- If a student or family member tests positive for COVID-19, then that student will not be allowed back into the school for an amount of time determined on a case-by-case basis. Due to the serious ramifications of even a single positive case, the school might be closed for several days; therefore, a copy of test results will be required to verify the diagnosis.
- If a student is absent for an extended illness, then E-learning options will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

## **EVENTS**

- Events with crowds may have to be rescheduled or cancelled for everyone's safety.
- Events that are held, including sporting events, will be subject to the maximum gathering size set forth by the state.
- Sports practices and games will be controlled events subject to strict protocols.
- Sports practices will be held in small cohorts of practice teams with temperature assessment of players and coaches. Participation in these events will require parental signature of consent form that outlines the protocol.

- Field trips will be unlikely at the beginning of the year. We are looking into virtual field trip options.

## SUMMARY

As the pandemic continues to evolve, any of the above regulations may need adjustment. Also, this list is not comprehensive. As we begin the school year, new topics will be addressed as they arise. This can lead to some frustration amongst students, teachers, staff, and parents but please remember we must do what is best for the student body, our school, and the community as a whole. We ask for your patience and consideration.

Remember, if the State of WV mandates school closure, then we will have to close. However, it is within the best interest of the education of our children to remain in school. We feel that through the above measures we can make this work. We will each have increased responsibility this year and we must all work together for success!

*Exodus 23:25 (Jubilee 2000)*

*So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.*

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## Pandemic Plan Update February 10, 2021

We will continue to take measures to keep the spread of Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) at bay in our school. The Board commends those who have followed the guidelines with distancing, mask wearing, and travel precautions. We thank you for making the sacrifice to help end this pandemic! You truly belong in the hero column! Research is now showing that transmission amongst children in our country is much lower than that of adults and it is because of our efforts that this is the case. We cannot take the current decline of new cases for granted as new variants are emerging in populated areas that will eventually travel to our community. We must continue to keep our classrooms safe with cleaning, distancing, and mask wearing so that we may be triumphant in this health crisis with minimal sickness and minimal time away from school. In the past year, we have learned much about how we can conduct ourselves to stay

healthy and we will continue to learn until the pandemic resolves. We have updated our guidelines as below:

### **Daily Covid-19 Guidelines as of February 2021**

- We will continue masks and social distancing.
- We will keep classes from intermingling to prevent quarantine times due to classroom spread.
- Chapel will be held together as long as students are distanced and masked for MS/HS. Elementary chapel will be held in the gymnasium with each class on its own set of bleachers. Early Ed chapel will continue together as they have throughout the school year.
- Keep students with their class at lunch. Students are permitted to sit across the table from other students within their own class (elementary).
- Class parties may have 2 parents (at most) to help as long as the parents wear a mask.

### **Travel Guidelines :**

Parents who are vaccinated or families who have had Covid-19 within the last 6 months will not need to quarantine upon return.

Anyone who travels and is exposed to groups of people in a close environment with unknown status (and not vaccinated or haven't had Covid within the last 6 months) will still need to quarantine 5 days before returning to school.

If your family is only exposed to those you live with on your vacation (remote beach etc.), then that family will not need to quarantine.

### **Exposure Guidelines:**

Anyone who is directly exposed to a person who tests positive for Covid (within 6 feet for 15 mins) will have to quarantine for 10 days (longer if told by the Health Dept.) from that point of exposure before returning to school. Alternatively, the exposed individual can return with a negative test 5 days after exposure.

If you are living with someone who has COVID, you will need to quarantine the full 14 days.

Thank you for being patient with the administration of Heritage Christian School as we have had many decisions to make throughout the pandemic. Our goal is to do the most good for the most amount of people. At this point, everyone is feeling the heavy impact of these long, draining months and all are hoping that we are nearing the end of our worlds being turned upside down. Please pray for our land, our families, and our school. The best way to support each other at this time is to pray for each other. We don't know what each of our families have dealt with or are facing throughout the pandemic. But, we do know our God loves us and hears the prayers of His people.

*Ephesians 6:18* says "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."