



Dear Parents,

As you are aware, the pandemic has caused necessary changes to the way we typically run our school. Last spring, CCS underwent a forced transition to Virtual Learning. I was very proud of the way our staff, students, and families responded. We made the most of a difficult situation and were able to keep our students progressing.

However, evidence nationwide would show that there is no substitute for being in the classroom with a teacher and classmates. It is our desire to have our students here on site to do as much of traditional education as possible, but it is also very important that we make some adjustments to try to keep students and staff as safe as possible. We understand that some people want extreme steps taken and others just want to get back to normal. We have tried to think through the various issues to establish a reasonable, balanced approach.

Due to the size of many public schools, their leaders are required to deal with COVID in unique ways, such as rotating days of on-site and virtual learning. Since we are a private school with enrollment numbers approximately a quarter of the enrollment in public school, many of those constraints do not impact us.

As we worked through our plan to open school, we had to consider not only the typical academic school day, but also all of the special activities and events that occur, such as field trips, retreats, sports, etc. While it is our desire to go about life as usual, our main goal is to open school and do everything we can to keep everyone healthy so that we are permitted to remain open. Therefore, if a school activity presents even the slightest risk of a participant contracting COVID, then we are choosing either to cancel the activity or postpone it. We understand that some of you are not as concerned and do not consider some of the activities a risk. We would love to proceed as usual and hold every event. However, in this case, we must err on the side of safety to ensure that school remains open for on-site learning. We are taking a balanced approach to CDC and Health Department guidelines. Please understand that those guidelines are continually changing. This is the current plan, but we must be flexible and make necessary adjustments as the guidelines change:

Here are some of the areas that are impacted:

Back to School Night:

With the COVID pandemic guidelines this year it is essential that at least one parent from each household plans to attend/view Back to School Night.

In order to keep numbers at an acceptable level to effectively social distance, we are going to hold two separate Back to School sessions: (1) On-site for new students, and (2) Video link for returning families.

Back-to-School Night for new students will take place on August 13 at 6pm starting with a meeting in the Auditorium followed by a time for parents and students to visit classrooms and teachers. We ask that everyone attending please wear masks.

Back-to-School Night for returning students will likely take place via a video link. Each teacher will email out their course syllabus on August 13.

Health Policies for COVID: Please be sure to also read over the Health Room Policies, which are found in a separate link in the Connect message as well as on our website's Info tab.

We are going to be very firm on these guidelines this year. It is essential that a student who has *any* symptoms of illness not be in school. Failing to do so puts others at risk and puts the school at risk of having to shut down.

1. **Temperature Checks:** It is essential each morning that parents take the temperature of each of child before he or she leaves the house. This is the responsibility of the parent. A student who has a fever cannot, under any circumstances, be sent to school. The temperature should be checked without any medication. If the student is given Tylenol, Advil, or other fever-reducing medication because they have not felt well, then they must stay home. The temperature **MUST** be under 100 degrees without any medication. We may be completing random temperature checks.
2. **Symptoms of Illness:** If symptoms of illness (example: persistent or productive cough) are present, but there is no fever, the student must still remain home. Basically, if they are not feeling well do **NOT** send them to school! If someone has a hacking cough, they will not be allowed attend school, and a doctor's note must give them clearance to return to school. If it is a chronic cough, then we will request that the student wear a mask at all times.
3. **Quarantine:** If a student, or anyone in their household, has a fever or symptoms of illness, then all students in the home must quarantine for 3 days after the fever has broken with no medication used. If anyone in the home tests positive for COVID, the quarantine must be for 14 days.
4. **Notice of Absence, Early Dismissal, etc.:** When a student is going to be out sick, is running late, etc., please send an email to freisberg@carrollchristian.com **on the morning of the absence by 8:30 AM**. Please be as detailed and specific as possible so that we are aware of what we are dealing with and can take proper steps.

Please **do not send emails to the teachers** for any type of medical or absence notice. The teachers do not keep official record of absences, and therefore, the information is not properly recorded unless notification is sent to the office. The office will ensure that teachers and all appropriate staff members are notified. When a student returns to school after an illness, he or she must bring a doctor's note.

If a student is going to miss school (early dismissal or absence) for another (pre-excused) reason other than being sick, please complete the *Pre-Excused Absence Request* form that is located on the Info tab of the school's website (www.carrollchristian.com) and submit it to the office (freisberg@carrollchristian.com) at least a week ahead of time so that it can be processed and evaluated for approval. Completing the form does not make the absence excused but is a request for approval. Parents should not just call in or show up and request the student be dismissed. In the case of doctor's appointments, please notify us ahead of time. There is, of course, the rare exception in life where there is an emergency that you were unable to predict, and we understand that. If not an emergency and the office is not given advance notice, the absence will likely be counted as unexcused. Please note that our Handbook states that if a student is unexcused, he or she receives a zero for missed work. Communication is very important.

5. **Doctor's Notes:** A doctor's note must be turned in to the school nurse upon return to school following any absence unless it is pre-excused. The student will not be permitted to return without it. It is essential that the notes be thorough and clear. We cannot accept notes that are vague or unclear as to exactly why the student was absent. It needs to clearly state that the doctor gives permission for return to school.
6. **Vacations:** Please be aware that vacations during the school year are not only disruptive but are especially a concern given our current situation. Therefore, they may not receive approval as excused absences. A Pre-Excused Absence Request form must be submitted at least a week prior to the requested absence, or it will automatically result in the missed days being counted as unexcused, resulting in zeros for missed work. Depending on the location of a trip, a 14-day quarantine may be required prior to returning to school. If approved for a vacation, the student would be required to catch up on any missed work in a timely manner.
7. **Early Dismissal for Illness:** Students who are not feeling well will be sent to the nurse. If they have a fever or symptoms, then the nurse will send them home. Arrangements must be made to pick a sick student up immediately.
8. **Separate Zones of the School:** We are going to try to keep groups of students segregated into separate areas of our school buildings. The zones are as follows:
 - **Pre School Zone**
 - **Elementary Zone**
 - **Secondary Zone (top 2 floors)**

The goal will be to allow only students and staff from a particular zone into that physical area. In other words, only Preschool students and staff will be permitted into the area designated for the Preschool Zone. Preschool parents will be met at the door and will not be entering the building. Neither will siblings or other visitors be permitted to enter. We hope to contain each zone and not affect students and staff in other zones. If someone in a zone tests positive for the virus, we would have to deal with it in that zone. However, we would not have to close down

the other zones or the entire school. Let's say, for example, that an elementary student tests positive for COVID. The Elementary Zone would be closed for a thorough cleaning, and the students and staff in that zone would go to virtual learning for 2-5 days (depending on the situation). Those in direct contact with the individual who tested positive would be notified by the office and would have to quarantine for 14 days.

9. **Parental Participation/entry**: Although we normally welcome and encourage parental involvement, for at least the start of this school year, parental entry to the buildings will be limited. Unfortunately, that means that until it is safe to do so, parents will not be permitted to come in to eat lunch with the students or bring items for their child's birthday. Siblings from other zones will also not be permitted to bring younger students to classes in the mornings as we used to allow. During indoor elementary dismissal, students will be brought out to parents, so parents should not enter the building.
10. **Handwashing**: We will be encouraging and ask you to also encourage your students to be faithful with proper hand washing. Hand sanitizer stations will be set up, and students will be encouraged to use them.
11. **Borrowing**: Students must make sure that they have the supplies that are needed. We are not going to allow students to share items.
12. **Health Instructions from the Nurse**: During the first weeks of school, the school nurse will be meeting with the classes to discuss safety measures and precautions and will do the same with staff before school starts. The staff will be aware of, and adhering to, the proper guidelines.

General School Day:

1. **Lunch**: At least for the beginning of the school year, the cafeteria will not be providing lunches, so **students must bring a bagged lunch from home each day**. The seniors will still offer their occasional fundraiser lunch, such as Chick-Fil-A, for pre-order. **Lunches will be eaten in the classrooms** to limit exposure to other students. For this reason, please keep in mind that there will be no microwaves for use to heat food until we are able to safely return to the Cafeteria. Students will wipe down and clean their desks at the end of lunch, so the area is ready for the next class.
2. **Elementary Specials**: Due to trying to keep classmates together and yet separated from other classes, our specials classes are being affected:

Music - Since CDC guidelines do not allow for singing and wind instruments, we will not have Music or Choir classes until it is safe to do so.

Art, Spanish, & Library - We are planning to have Art and Spanish teachers visit each classroom. We will still have Library time.

PE & Recess - Weather permitting, we will try to have PE and recess outside but will only permit one class at a time in the gym for recess if it is raining or cold.

Computers - We will still have Computer class and will sanitize each computer before the next use.

3. **Secondary Electives:** To limit travel between buildings and keep students within their own school zones, electives will be affected. Due to CDC guidelines stating that singing and wind instruments are not permitted, all Music classes are on hold until it is safe to have them. For at least the beginning of the year, elective classes will be restructured. For example, students who intend to have Music classes will need to be in a Study Hall until it is safe to resume Music. PE will be outdoors whenever possible.
4. **Masks:** We understand the need for masks, but we also know that it is very difficult to focus on learning while wearing a mask. We are requiring that students wear masks as they enter the building, when they are up and moving about out of their seats, or when they are changing classes. Once they are seated in a classroom and ready for learning, the teacher will allow those who wish to remove masks to do so. If the students prefer to keep them on, they may do that. Masks must be worn when students are up and moving around out of their seats.

Elementary – Masks will be worn when entering building to class each morning. Masks will be worn when leaving the classroom, such as going to the bathroom, office, chapel, library, or recess. Parents must supply a Ziplock bag with the student's name marked on it. This will be used for students to put their masks in when not wearing them so we can try to keep them germ-free. (For instance, when going to recess and gym, teachers will need to collect them.)

Secondary- Masks will be worn when entering school building each morning, in the hallways going to classes, and when going to the restroom, office, or chapel. They will only take them off when they are all seated for class and instructed to do so.

Distancing and Room Set Up: The CDC and the National Association of Pediatrics both state the importance of getting students back into the classrooms and recommend distancing the best that a school can. Some classes may move to larger rooms. We are limiting the numbers allowed to enter a particular grade. We will set up classrooms so that the students are as far apart as possible. It may not be 6 feet, but we will space them out as best we can, and desks will all face the same direction. We will be removing some non-essential furniture to allow for more distancing in rooms wherever possible. Again, the CDC and the National Association of Pediatrics both put a greater emphasis on the returning to school than on the actual distances.

5. **Elementary Dividers:** We have purchased dividers to be placed around each student's desk in the elementary classrooms. These dividers will be set up on their desks as an extra barrier to protect each student. The teacher will help the students to personalize their own dividers, which will also be taken with them to computer class.

6. **Water**: For everyone's safety, the water fountains have been turned off.

Elementary - Students must bring water in a leak proof container of any color. There is a water bottle refill station in the elementary building.

Secondary - Students must bring water in clear plastic bottles that can be used throughout the day. We may also have water bottles for purchase. We are in the process of exploring safe options for refilling bottles.

7. **Cleaning and Disinfecting**: Cleaning and disinfecting will be ongoing. High contact areas will be disinfected throughout the day.
8. **Wipes**: As always, disinfecting wipes are listed on our school supply list. We understand that they are hard to find and are trying to obtain a supply. We are obviously going to be using a lot of them this year. If you do find them, please send them in. If not, we may be making requests for donations as they become available.
9. **Elementary Lines**: To practice safe distancing, students will be spread out further than usual when walking in line.
10. **Elementary Early Stay**: For the start of the school year we will be restructuring Elementary Early Stay. Instead of all of the students coming into Baker Auditorium 7:20-7:50, they will enter the building and go straight to their regular classroom. Each teacher will be in their classroom starting at 7:20. This will help us to keep the students with only their classmates all the time. Should things improve with the virus, we will let you know when we are returning to the typical early stay. Masks must be worn until students are seated and ready to learn.

Secondary Early Stay: Students will still come into the gym 7:20-7:50. We will have a section reserved on the bleachers for each grade. Students will spread out on the bleachers in the section for their grade. Masks must be worn.
11. **Late stay**: Students will be spread out to achieve social distancing during Late Stay. Parents will not enter the building to pick the students up. Elementary parents should pull along the side of the building by Baker and knock on the door. Secondary parents will need to pull around to the back of the cafeteria and ring the doorbell. Masks must be worn.

Activities:

1. **For the safety of all, and due to CDC guidelines, the following activities are CANCELED until further notice:**
 - Alumni games and CCS family picnic
 - Tailgate Breakfast
 - Field Trips
 - Elementary Retreat

- Grandparents Day and Book Fair (possibly rescheduled in April)
- Teacher's Convention (in-house staff development instead)

2. The following activities will be MODIFIED:

Secondary Retreat: Adjustments will be made to our secondary retreat since we are not able to have an overnight stay. Details will be shared as they become available.

Walk-a-thon: We will still have our annual Walk-a-thon, but unfortunately, it will need to be structured differently. There is no way to safely have inflatables and the other fun activities as in the past without risk of spreading COVID. This year, the only activity we will be able to have is the race. We will set up the track and have designated times for students to run in smaller groups. We will still have the letters available for you to send out to get sponsors and help with tuition.

Chapel: Chapel will still be held as regularly scheduled (Elementary on Mondays and Secondary on Thursdays). Until it is safe to do so, we will not be singing or playing games that go against social distancing policies. Students will not be sitting in their regular sections but will instead be spread out and distanced throughout the Auditorium. Students will wear masks to and from chapel and will keep them on until the service officially starts and will put them back on when the service concludes.

Fall Sports: At this point, we are still hoping to have outdoor sports (boys' soccer) in the fall. However, based on the current guidelines, we are not planning on doing indoor sports (girls' volleyball) this fall. We have requested that the MACSAC (our athletic conference) consider changing volleyball from fall to spring and switch girls' soccer from spring to fall. We will let you know if this happens. If not, we will be unable to have a volleyball season this year. We will also be limiting our game schedule. This is subject to change as we continue to monitor the guidelines and wait for MACSAC's decision.

3. The following activities are yet **TO BE DETERMINED**, depending on whether they are safe to have and depending on when music classes are able to resume in order to prepare:
- Veterans Day
 - Christmas Program

We will evaluate other events and the activities that are starting in January as the time gets closer and we know more.

Alternative/Distance Learning:

We are offering an alternative education called Distance Learning for the following special cases:

- Students who have existing health issues that parents are worried about.
- Students who have at-risk family members and there is a concern that a student may carry COVID home to them.
- Students who may need to stay home for 14 days because they have the virus (or some other illness) or they were exposed to it.

- Students who will need to stay home when they or a family member have symptoms (fever, cough, etc.).

We encourage students to be at school when they are well and to work from home when they are not well so that we can keep everyone safe. Sick students often come to school because they do not want to “fall behind”. They will now be able to stay home without falling behind if they are not feeling well.

Distance Learning is not only hard for the students and parents, it is hard and time consuming for the staff. Our staff cannot possibly be expected to do their regular teaching load and also do a regular load of distance learning as it was done in the spring. Therefore, this distance learning will not be quite the same as we had last year.

For our Kindergarten through 12th grade students, we are going to attempt to video or audio record each class and upload it to a central, accessible location. This will not only keep the teacher from having to do a completely separate lecture but will also make it so the student can blend right back into class easily. It will be the responsibility of the student to watch the videos or listen to the audio recording and follow along. The teachers may give certain requirements to ensure that the video is watched. For example, they may ask the student to take a picture of their notes and send them as soon as the video is completed or otherwise monitor that the video has been watched. If the teachers are going to do their part, then it is the responsibility of the student to do their part and watch the video.

Elementary class assignments will be available for pick up at the office. Homework will be posted on Renew. Arrangements can be made with the teacher for drop-off and pick-up and must be made in a timely appropriate manner. For example, assignments could possibly be picked up and dropped off every Monday.

Secondary class assignments will be emailed and homework posted on RenWeb. The assignments must be emailed to the teacher when they are due. If there is a project that is due, arrangements must be made with the teacher and the project brought to the office when it is due. If a student is out because of sickness or quarantine, they need to communicate that with the teacher and arrangements must be made to get the project to the teacher when the student is well and it is safe for everyone involved for them to bring it in.

With a full class load, the teachers will not have time to continually follow up about missed assignments. If you need the Distance Learning option, then it is your responsibility to keep up with it. You will receive RenWeb notifications about the missed assignments. This is not saying that the teachers are not there to try to help a student who is Distance Learning, but in the spring, there were students who did not keep up with their work, and the teachers sent multiple emails trying to get parents to get their students to do the work. We are simply saying that it is the responsibility of the parents and students who are Distance Learning to keep up with having the work in on time since the teachers' workload is too heavy to constantly try to track down undone or late assignments.

Tests for those students who need Distance Learning: To ensure proper learning, we will be doing Secondary student testing on-site. When a test is assigned, the student will need to make arrangements with the teacher to come to the CCS Library to take the test. This will keep them separated from other students. The teacher may also have the student come in for quizzes. Students who are out because they are sick will just make up the tests or quizzes when they are cleared for return. Elementary

teachers may also want the student to come in to take tests, or they may make other arrangements with the parent.

Distance Learning Tuition: To offer the Distance Learning option actually puts extra burden on our staff. While some may be inclined to ask for a discount because the student is at home, we should actually be charging more for it since it creates additional work for our staff. For this reason, tuition will be the same for a student using Distance Learning as it is for an on-site student.

We hope to make this new Distance Learning option work for those who need it. However, it is difficult to foresee how this will affect all involved, students, and staff. It may become necessary at some point to discontinue Distance Learning if we find it is not working well. Our goal would be to continue the option as long as possible. We will consistently evaluate guidelines, which could also affect Distance Learning. For example: Let's say that at the end of December, the CDC reports that things are returning to normal, the Governor says that restrictions are lifted, and CCS is not experiencing issues with COVID, then it is possible that CCS would have all students return to normal on-site attendance.

The goal of the Distance Learning Program is to have the students in the program be right on pace with the students who are in the classroom, creating a smooth transition for Distance Learning students, if and when things can return to normal.

Distance Learning Attendance:

The CDC guidelines for schools require schools to have a way of keeping daily attendance for Distance Learning. For students who are distance learning on any given day due to not feeling well, quarantine, etc., the parents need to send an email to jday@carrollchristian.com by 8:30 to notify the school of the absence.

Those students who will be doing Distance Learning due to an existing health concern need to send an email to mreisberg@carrollchristian.com by August 10 so the teachers know how to prepare. If, at any point, it becomes better for the student to return to regular on-site instruction, they need to send an email to mreisberg@carrollchristian.com in advance of their return to ensure that the teachers are prepared for their return. The parents of students who are doing everyday Distance Learning need to send an email to jday@carrollchristian.com by 8:30 AM each day to notify the office of attendance for that day.

I know this is lengthy, but I wanted to include as much as I could about our plans for the fall so that you can be prepared. We ask for your patience and understanding as we do our best to welcome our students back to school in the safest manner possible. We are thrilled that this is even a possibility and look forward to seeing you all soon. Please join us in praying for a smooth transition back to school.

In Christ,

Matthew A. Reisberg

Matthew A. Reisberg
CCS Administrator