



HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

School Reopening Plans, 2020/2021

Consultation with HCS Staff and Parents:

HCS faculty and staff have been offered positions to return to campus with a clear understanding of the health and safety protocols that have been implemented to promote a safe and healthy environment for everyone. Whenever feasible, employees with concerns about returning to work on campus have been offered work arrangements that include working remotely and/or with adjusted or abbreviated hours. The employees working on campus have been trained in new procedures and have expressed, through their acceptance of the position, a confidence in the systems in place designed to promote health and safety for faculty, staff, and students.

HCS Parents were surveyed in early June and asked about their preference for their child's education; in-person on campus or virtual/distance learning. A majority opted for on-campus instruction, while about 30% preferred a remote learning option. They were also surveyed about specific concerns they had pertaining to returning to campus, and which mitigation strategies were most important to them. Based on survey results, along with feedback from faculty, staff, and administration, two tracks were developed. HCS families can choose between in-person on campus instruction or virtual/distance learning. For those opting for on campus instruction, a significant number of procedure and protocols have been implemented to promote health and safety on campus. So much so, that multiple families that had registered for distance learning opted to switch to on-campus instruction after visiting the campus and seeing the new procedures in place.

Cleaning and Disinfection: How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how use of shared items will be minimized.

High frequency touch surfaces in school offices and classrooms (door knobs, light switches, desks, partitions, countertops, copy machines, computer keyboards and mouse) will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day by staff, and each evening by our janitorial service. High touch surface areas of play equipment and lunch tables will be sanitized throughout the day. Enhanced cleaning protocols will include:

- ✓ *Procedures have been implemented to frequently clean all touched surfaces, as well as disinfecting learning manipulatives and toys (PS) multiple times throughout the day, with limited sharing.*
- ✓ *Drinking fountains/hydration stations will not be used until further notice.*
- ✓ *Daily disinfect classroom furniture and high traffic areas within the school.*
- ✓ *When feasible, classroom doors and/or windows will be kept open to allow airflow and ventilation.*
- ✓ *Cleaning of school facilities by janitorial services five days per week.*
- ✓ *Carpet cleaning on a regular basis.*
- ✓ *Visibly dirty surfaces are cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection.*
- ✓ *Use of EPA-approved disinfectants that are appropriate and effective for coronaviruses.*
- ✓ *Adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene habits and to clean and disinfect throughout the day will be provided in classrooms, school offices and throughout the school campuses.*
- ✓ *Training videos are used to model proper cleaning procedures, as well as to reinforce safe protocols for the use of cleaning supplies and protective gear.*

All students will have their own devices, textbooks and learning materials and will be instructed not to share with others. There will be limited sharing of objects, learning materials and equipment, such as toys, games, and art supplies, to the extent that is feasible. When allowed/deemed necessary, items will be cleaned and disinfected between uses. Each student's items should be individually labeled and stored in cubbies, preschool bedding bags, or other designated areas.

- **Cohorting:** How students will be kept in small, stable, groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (e.g., instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.

On campus, students will be assigned to a cohort group during the school day. HCS will make every effort to keep student and staff groupings as static as possible, restricting mixing between groups, when feasible. Smaller class sizes and an overall reduced population on campus, coupled with established cohort groups minimize the number of students that interact throughout the school day. Cohort groups will share lunch and recess schedules, and will not interact with other cohort groups, except in the case of an emergency. Students desks/workspaces and outside lunch tables have been outfitted with acrylic partitions that further promote separation and minimize physical interaction between students in the same cohort groups when working in class and/or eating outside.

- **Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School:** How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts.

Staggered schedules and multiple locations (where feasible) for drop off, pick-up, recess, and lunch breaks have been established. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school as close to the start of school as possible, and for those with students in TK-8th grade, parents are asked to use the carline for drop off and pick up whenever possible (unless using before and after school daycare). Parents are not allowed on campus unless they have specific business in the School Office, in which case, they are invited into the office one person at a time and reminded to remain socially distanced while they wait. PS parents are required to walk their children to class; but asked not to linger on campus.

- **Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear:** How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced.

STAFF: *Based on current guidelines and mandates from health officials, face coverings will be required for all HCS faculty and staff, except where exempted by a medical professional for specific health reasons.*

STUDENTS: *Students in 3rd-8th grades must wear a face covering while on campus, except where exempted by a medical professional for specific health reasons. Students between the ages of 2 years old and 2nd grade are encouraged by the CDPH (not required) to wear a face covering if they are able to do so properly, especially in situations where distancing is difficult. HCS will provide custom gaiters for students to use a face covering while on campus. It is not recommended that children under 2 wear a face covering.*

- **Health Screenings for Students and Staff:** How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately.

Temperatures of all persons will be checked prior to entering the campus. HCS will also conduct visual wellness checks of all children upon arrival and ask health questions when concerned. Parents are reminded to keep children home when they are sick! Students who have been ill should be fever-free

for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication before returning to school. A fever is defined as having a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above.

Updated Sick Policies will be distributed and strictly enforced on all HCS campuses. These updated policies apply to all HCS faculty, staff, and students/families.

Students will be monitored throughout the day for signs of possible illness. **If a student exhibits signs of illness**, the student will be isolated from the general room population and a parent will be called to immediately pick up the child. In cases when parents may not be immediately available, it is important to add emergency contacts that will also be authorized to pick up a sick child ASAP. Parents are required to immediately notify the school should your child become ill at home.

In the event that a staff member exhibits signs of illness/presents with COVID-19 symptoms on campus, the school will send the staff member home. If a staff member is tested for COVID-19 and receives a negative test result, they can return to school once they are fever-free without the use of a fever reducing medicine for 24 hours. A doctor's note will be required.

□ Healthy Hygiene Practices: The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines.

HCS will teach, model, and reinforce healthy habits and social skills including hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes among staff and all students.

- ✓ In TK-8 settings, handwashing or hand sanitizers will be used each time students enter the classroom. CCL guidelines preclude preschool students from having personal hand sanitizers or sprays.
- ✓ Portable sinks/hand washing stations will be added on campus, as needed, to minimize movement and congregation in restrooms to the extent feasible.
- ✓ Signs are posted in restrooms and near sinks, conveying proper handwashing techniques.
- ✓ Reminders and signs will be displayed throughout the school (classrooms, hallways, restrooms, administrative offices) on physical distancing, proper and frequent handwashing, and how to stop the spread of germs.
- ✓ Adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene habits and to clean and disinfect throughout the day will be provided in classrooms, school offices and throughout the school campuses.
- ✓ Training videos are used to model proper handwashing procedures, maintaining physical distancing, putting on and off the face covering, and other healthy habits.

□ Identification and Tracing of Contacts: Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school(s) have designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19.

At each HCS campus, the site administrator (Principal or Director) will be the designated person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19. If there is a confirmed case on campus, the site administrator should immediately notify the HCS Superintendent. HCS will initiate contact tracing as soon as possible after a person with potential exposure/a positive case is identified.

- ✓ An interview with the person with potential exposure/positive case will be conducted. Included in the interview will be a discussion about confidentiality and verification of demographics (age and race). Identify those on campus who have been in contact with the interviewee over the prior 48 hours. Provide the interviewee with guidelines on isolation to prevent spreading COVID-19 to

others. All information collected is confidential and protected by privacy laws. The name of the potential exposure/positive case will not be revealed to those the person may have exposed, even if they ask.

- ✓ Locate and notify contacts who may have been exposed to COVID-19, informing them of their contact status and what that means. Assess for the presence of symptoms and provide contacts with guidelines on quarantine to prevent potential spread of infection.
- ✓ Monitor contacts by following up with within the next several days to make sure they are following the quarantine instructions, and to track the development of any potential COVID-19 symptoms.

□ **Physical Distancing:** How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff.

Teachers have been instructed to maintain 6 feet physical distancing from students whenever possible. The teacher's desk should be 6' feet from student desks.

Furniture in classrooms is being intentionally minimized to allow as much space as possible for desks and student seating areas to be spread out a minimum of 3-6' apart as often as possible and have students facing the same direction when feasible. When these physical distancing steps are not feasible, HCS will use other mitigation strategies which may include acrylic partitions installed on students' desks/workspaces and outside lunch tables, staggered schedules, cohort groups, and traffic patterns, as appropriate.

Use of outdoor spaces are promoted whenever appropriate.

The teachers' lounge and other locations that invite a gathering of adults and/or students from a variety of cohorts have been closed and/or are disinfected between uses.

Large group/whole school gatherings on campus (e.g. Awards Assemblies) have been paused until it is deemed safe for larger groups of staff and students to congregate together. Common/Shared Areas/ Gathering Places (Library, Tech Lab, Auxiliary Classrooms, PE Changing Rooms, etc.) where distancing is not feasible and/or where multiple groups typically gather together throughout the school day will not be used until it is deemed safe.

Signs and floor decals throughout the campus remind everyone of social distancing requirements.

□ **Staff Training and Family Education:** How staff will be trained, and families will be educated on the application and enforcement of the plan.

- ✓ **Written communication** (via emails, flyer, signage, and published guidelines including the HCS Safety Guidelines and Practices, the HCS Safety Guidelines and Practices for the Workplace, and the HCS Crisis Response Guidelines) has been provided for families, faculty and staff on procedures and expectations; these guidelines are updated frequently in response to guidance, mandates and other relevant data.

*All parents must sign a **Waiver of Liability and Health Screening Agreement** prior to the first day of school. The waiver serves two purpose: it reiterates and creates an agreement between the school and the parent(s) on expectations, and releases HCS of any liability in regard to COVID-19; parents agree not to send a child or enter the campus themselves if they are exhibiting flu-like symptoms.*

- ✓ *Training videos* have been produced and are used to inform parents of health and safety procedures on campus, to train/model proper cleaning procedures, as well as to reinforce safe protocols for the use of cleaning supplies and protective gear for staff, and to train/model for students healthy habits, proper hand washing technique, physical distancing and other healthy habits.
- ✓ **In-services and Staff Meetings** for faculty and staff routinely include training on and a review of policies and procedures implemented to promote healthy lifestyles and a healthy environment on campus.

- **Testing of Students and Staff:** How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections.

In the event that a student/staff is diagnosed with COVID-19, parents/employees must notify the School Office/Administrator immediately.

In order for a student/staff who has tested positive to return to campus, they must be able to answer YES to the following questions:

- ✓ *Has it been at least 10 days since the individual first had symptoms?*
- ✓ *Has it been at least 3 days since the individual had a fever (without using fever-reducing medicine)?*
- ✓ *Has it been at least 3 days since the individual's symptoms have improved including cough and/or shortness of breath?*

HCS is following the above-mentioned procedures pertaining to our response to symptoms. In accordance with current guidelines from the CDC, HCS is not requiring asymptomatic people, including those who may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, to seek testing.

- **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning:** The criteria the superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school and prohibit in-person instruction.

In the event of a required, temporary school closure due to COVID-19 illness on campus, COVID-19 outbreak in a community, and community mandated closure(s), HCS will work with local health officials to determine the appropriate response. HCS responses may include a multi-day closure for campus-wide deep cleaning and disinfecting (with no school/childcare available) to an extended closure in which distance learning and/or emergency childcare will be provided. In these instances, HCS will immediately notify school families of the occurrence and HCS' response will be communicated to the school families/community and local health officials.

- ✓ *In consultation with the local public health department and HCS Superintendent, the School Administrator should ensure cleaning and quarantine of exposed persons and whether any additional intervention is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.*
- ✓ *Close off the classroom or office where the patient was based and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait for at least two hours and as long as possible.*
- ✓ *Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be cleaned and disinfected.*

- ✓ *Implement communication plans for exposure at school and potential school closures to include outreach to students, parents, teachers, staff, and the community.*
- ✓ *Include information for staff regarding labor laws, information regarding Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave and Unemployment Insurance, as applicable to schools.*
- ✓ *Provide guidance to parents, teachers and staff reminding them of the importance of community physical distancing measures while a school is closed, including discouraging students or staff from gathering elsewhere.*
- ✓ *Implement the HCS Distance Learning Plan in TK-8 for continuity of education.*
- ✓ *Maintain regular communications with the local public health department.*

- **Communication Plans:** How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

HCS parents and employees are asked to promptly notify the School Office/Administrator when an HCS student experiences symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Updates from the child's/employee's physician and COVID-19 test results are requested for our records. HCS will maintain records of all employees and families that self-report COVID-19 symptoms and confirmation of illness. HCS will maintain confidentiality of staff and family names and give prompt notification of confirmed exposures and school closures to the HCS school community and local health officials.

- **School Website URL** where reopening plan and waiver are posted.

The HCS Crisis Response Plan is located on the website at [HeightsChristianSchools.org](https://www.heightschristianschools.org), along with the [HCS Reopening Plans for School Campuses](#).