

Forward in Faith



RETURNING TO CAMPUS:

A GUIDE FOR CHRIST EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

2020/21



From the Headmaster

**“It is a mistake to try to look too far ahead.
The chain of destiny can only be grasped one link at a time.”**

– Winston Churchill

We began preparing for the 2020-21 school year well before the last school year ended rather unceremoniously on May 22. Churchill’s quote certainly rang true to me as we began this process and needed some inspiration. We were facing the unknown; we were seeking answers; and we were looking too far ahead as we tried to create a model for our return to campus. We were trying to grasp at every link that was visible in our chain of destiny.

Then, in early June, we adopted a theme for the upcoming year: **Forward in Faith**. I personally needed the reminder that we cannot predict the future, certainly not in this utterly unpredictable season. The only approach that made sense was to, as always, do our very best, trust in the process, and believe that God’s hand is still guiding us. Saint Paul put it this way in his letter to the Hebrews: **“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”** Paul’s timely message seems to be directed at all of us in 2020. So now we move forward with a firm conviction – if not an assurance – that better times are ahead. **We will be together for the upcoming school year**, and we built this Returning to Campus guide with that belief firmly in mind.

In this guide you will learn how we see the 2020-2021 school year unfolding, based on current information and circumstances. **We will start classes together on August 13 with significant changes to our operations**, changes that are, in part, driven by the recommendations of the Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Department of Health in their Strong Start 2020 School Reopening Guidelines & Resources published on June 25. In addition, much of what is contained in this CES guide represents the work of our administration and faculty as we considered the recommendations of our parents and students at the end of the school year, particularly with regard to distance learning and instructional technology. Of course, our work in preparation for the academic year is far from over. I’m sure we will be so engaged until August 12 and even beyond!

Our guide appropriately ends with a FAQ section, and, while I hope that the entire volume answers most of your questions, I’m sure there will be more. We realize that we still have much planning ahead and we are committed to starting the year with protocols and procedures well established as we welcome our students and families back.



One final observation: In each of the numerous emails that I have received from parents regarding our return to campus, the phrase **“We love CES”** was found. This was the case even if the content of the email was not completely favorable. I believe that provided perspective to the message, and I understood it to mean that, even amidst the concerns and questions about this year, our families have an abiding love for this school. My pledge to all of our parents is that we will do all that we can to live up to your continued trust and confidence in us. There is no doubt that the 2020-21 school year will be uniquely challenging for all of us. Let’s walk together through the journey as we move Forward in Faith.

Sincerely,

John Morvant
Headmaster

Preparation

Our efforts to prepare for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year began in earnest in May and will continue until classes start on August 13. In addressing the countless issues related to providing a safe environment for our students, families, faculty, and staff while continuing to provide a quality academic program, we took the following course of action:

- 1** We solicited feedback and advice from our parents and students in each division regarding the efficacy of our distance learning program. We wanted to know what worked well and what didn't, and we received an abundance of useful information that created a foundation for the next step in the process.
- 2** Division faculty meetings (primarily Zoom) allowed for review of the recommendations from parents and provided an agenda for preparations for August. Teachers, of course, were also asked what worked and what didn't, and their input solidified our areas of focus.
- 3** The administrative team met with Technology Director Mr. Bob Krieger for discussions about our concerns and suggestions for the distance learning program. Mr. Krieger outlined for us his own recommendations for schoolwide technology improvements and introduced us to a few instructional platforms appropriate for students in each division.
- 4** Administrators met via Zoom conferences with other ISAS and SAES administrators to compare notes and to share re-opening strategies. These organizations also provided a number of additional seminars on legal issues and other considerations related to the pandemic and the ever-changing educational landscape in the United States.
- 5** We created two task forces to help address the growing agenda. The School Procedures and Distance Learning Task Force is still at work, addressing both divisional protocols and practices and revised distance learning strategies. The COVID Operation Committee is addressing on-campus issues related to the health and wellness of students, such as temperature-taking procedures, hand-sanitizing stations, necessary protective equipment, etc.
- 6** Our Creation Sensation summer camp program provided a preview of what is to come, as that program operated under the guidelines issued for summer camps by St. Tammany Parish. We learned a great deal from the camp experience as many of the same practices will be employed in August with the larger CES student body.
- 7** The administrative team continued to formulate action plans throughout the month of June and we began writing this guide. We set the publication date of July 3 to be sure we would have the state guidelines in hand before we finalized the guide.
- 8** On June 25, we received the long-awaited re-opening guidelines from the Louisiana Department of Education, and those recommendations influenced our guidelines, as have a number of other resources, including the Louisiana Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. We are still waiting for the St. Tammany Parish guidelines, which could also impact some practices on campus.

School Calendar *key dates*

August 12 Book Day/New Student Orientation (CBC)
August 13 First Day of School (CBC)
August 13 Meet the Teacher (ECC)
August 28 Founders Day (half-day)
September 7 Labor Day Holiday
October 2 Parish Fair Holiday
November 23-27 Thanksgiving Holiday
December 21-January 4 Christmas Break

January 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 12 Faculty In-Service Day (no school)
February 15-19 Mardi Gras Holiday
April 2 Good Friday Holiday
April 5-9 Easter Break
May 19 Last Day of School (ECC)
May 25 Last Day of School (CBC)

Back on Campus

- Students will physically return to class on August 13, when they will be oriented to our new procedures and protocols.
- Parents may drop off their children no earlier than 7:40 a.m. at the Christwood Boulevard Campus (CBC) and 7:45 a.m. at the Early Childhood Center (ECC). A temperature reading of each student will be taken upon arrival and before exiting the vehicle.
- Vehicular traffic patterns for student drop off and pick-up at the ECC will remain the same as last year, but look slightly different at the CBC, with drop off happening by school division. Specific route diagrams will be sent to all parents prior to the start of the school year.
- To minimize contact, pedestrian traffic patterns for all areas of campus, including inside each building, will be well defined. Signage throughout campus will provide directions.
- Class schedules will be built around the concept of minimizing contact and interactions. This structure will allow for *only* members of an immediate group to possibly be separated from school for a quarantine period in the event an individual tests positive for COVID-19.
- Every attempt will be made to space desks in classrooms in adherence to recommended distancing recommendations. Extraneous furniture will be removed from classrooms to provide more space. There will be assigned seating in all classrooms.
- Class scheduling will be designed to minimize student movement throughout campus. For example, Junior High and High School classes will follow a block schedule featuring four 90-minute periods each day. In the Lower School and ECC, enrichment classes will be held in the homeroom classrooms.
- In general, students in classes such as art, in which materials were commonly shared in the past, will now have their own materials. Details on these previously shared materials will be communicated to students and parents by division heads or teachers.



- Bus and shuttle operations will run at 50% capacity, and may increase to 75% when the state moves to Phase 3 of re-opening. Bus and shuttle spots will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Following the Louisiana Department of Education guidelines, faculty and staff members will wear masks throughout the school day. Face coverings should be worn by students in the 3rd grade and above to the maximum extent possible, particularly during arrival, dismissal, transitions within school buildings, and small group work. Each of these students should have a mask at the start of each school day. Individuals with breathing difficulties should not wear face coverings.
- Recess and lunch will be held in appropriately sized groups.
- Hand-washing and/or sanitizing will take place upon arrival at school and throughout the school day, including prior to lunch. Students at the CBC should have hand sanitizer in their backpacks.

What About...

ATHLETICS

The Athletic Department will follow the guidelines issued by the LHSAA and NIAL, our two athletic governing bodies. Basketball, volleyball, and cross country summer workouts have begun, and we have implemented the following precautions as we prepare to return to school:

- All athletic staff and coaches have been educated on return-to-play guidelines recommended by the LDH, Ochsner Health, and the LHSAA.
- Social distancing is taking place at all practices. When not participating in vigorous activity and where practical, athletes and coaches are encouraged to wear face coverings.

AFTERCARE/ ENRICHMENTS

Aftercare and our Creative Learning After-School Sessions (CLASS) auxiliary enrichment program for Lower School and ECC students, will be offered this fall.

- Aftercare will be offered on both campuses. Details will be forthcoming.
- CLASS offerings will be dependent upon instructor availability and will be designed to meet social distancing guidelines.
- It is important to note that, while students will be limited to the same small groups during the school day, voluntary participation in aftercare and/or CLASS will introduce students to secondary small groups of students and instructors.

VOLUNTEERS/ CAMPUS VISITORS

CES depends upon a dedicated corps of volunteers, as well as substitute teachers and tutors, but interactions between students and visitors will be significantly limited.

- Unannounced visits to campus are discouraged; however, if you must deliver an item to a student, there will be a designated, contact-free drop-off spot at each campus.
- If you are attending a meeting on campus, you must check in at the appropriate office to have your temperature checked.
- If you are signing your child out before the end of the school day, practice social distancing while inside school buildings and please wear a mask.

LARGE GATHERINGS

Large gatherings, such as assemblies, pep rallies, special events, and school dances, will not resume until guidelines indicate it is safe to do so.

- Students will interact in small groups only, including for recess, P.E., enrichments, chapel, and lunch.
- Recess and lunch will be held in appropriately sized groups.
- Class schedules will be built around the concept of minimizing contact and interactions.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We remain firmly committed to our Episcopal identity and serving the whole child: mind, body, and spirit.

- As we consider divisional chapel services and Godly Play instruction, options may include outdoor, in-classroom, live-streamed, or video engagement, or a combination thereof.
- We are formulating ways to safely preserve our service learning initiatives so our students can continue to help the most vulnerable and isolated in our community.

FINE ARTS

Our fine arts program introduces our students to visual, musical, and theatrical arts, and this valued instruction will continue when we return to campus.

- Instead of sharing materials in visual arts classes, students will have their own paints, brushes, crayons, etc.
- In some cases, fine arts instructors may travel to homerooms to teach in an effort to minimize student movement throughout campus.
- Music and theater class curricula are being altered to minimize the likelihood of virus transmission.

Health & Wellness

These are the measures that are being put into place to best ensure the healthiest school experience possible for your children, your family, and our faculty and staff.

We're All in This Together!

AT HOME



Practice and teach proper hygiene; maintain, explain, and encourage personal preventative practices, such as social distancing and wearing face coverings when in public; provide emotional security to children as they prepare to return to school; monitor for illness symptoms.



Prior to returning to campus, all parents, faculty, and staff will be asked to sign the CES Health and Wellness pledge, a new addition to the school's online forms. This will be returned to school by July 31.

AT SCHOOL



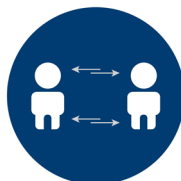
Following Louisiana Department of Education guidelines, faculty and staff members will wear masks throughout the school day. Face coverings should be worn by students in the 3rd grade and above to the maximum extent possible, particularly during arrival, dismissal, transitions within school buildings, and small group work. Each of these students should have a mask with them at the start of each school day. Individuals with breathing difficulties should not wear face coverings.



All students and faculty and staff will have their temperatures checked at the beginning of each school day. Student temperatures will be taken upon arrival and prior to exiting their vehicles. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4° or higher will not be allowed to stay at school.



Students and faculty and staff will be required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon entering campus. They will also make frequent visits to sanitation stations (hand sanitizer stands and/or sinks) throughout the day, including stops prior to lunch and prior to leaving school each day. Students at the CBC should have hand sanitizer in their backpack each day.



Social distancing measures will be implemented to the fullest extent possible. Students will interact in appropriately sized groups only, including for recess, P.E., enrichments, chapel, and lunch. Classrooms will be arranged to reflect social distancing. Large gatherings, such as assemblies, pep rallies, special events, and school dances, will not resume until it is safe to do so.



Cleaning procedures are being substantially increased with enhanced disinfection techniques. Professional cleaning companies will be contracted for specialized cleaning as needed (for both routine measures and special circumstances), and high-touch surfaces in classrooms and restrooms will be cleaned multiple times throughout the day.

Health & Wellness *continued*



We are partnering with local health systems that are providing guidance in making critical decisions related to health screening and training. The healthcare professionals within these systems are also guiding us as we continue to refine our procedures related to illness on campus. We are also relying on this expertise as we create specific healthcare stations on each of our campuses, areas that, among other functions, will allow for isolation if a student becomes ill.



Students should not come to school if they have a temperature of 100.4° or higher or if they are exhibiting any illness symptoms. If a student develops illness symptoms and/or a temperature of 100.4 or higher at any time during the school day, the parent will be immediately notified and the student will be isolated with our staff healthcare professional until the parent arrives to pick up the student. Parents will be expected to pick up ill children immediately. These guidelines also apply to all faculty and staff members.



Please practice self-monitoring. In addition to watching for fever and/or illness symptoms, please contact your division head if a household member tests positive for COVID-19 or your child has recently been in close contact with anyone else who has tested positive for COVID-19. Guidance on subsequent self-quarantine requirements will then come from healthcare professionals.



If You Are Sick

The Louisiana Department of Health, in its Reopening Guidelines for Louisiana Public and Nonpublic Schools, suggests that schools should expect that there will be students who get COVID-19 and that those students will possibly expose other students and/or faculty and staff members in the school setting. As such, the LDH recommends the following:



Students or faculty/staff members who are sick, regardless of illness type, should stay home.



Students or faculty/staff members who have COVID-19 should stay home and remain isolated until they have recovered and have been determined by their doctor to no longer be infectious.

If CES Has a COVID-19 Case



Parents of the students in the affected class or contact group will be notified by the school. Individuals who were in close contact of a student or faculty/staff member who has COVID-19 may also be identified and contacted as part of the Office of Public Health (OPH) contact tracing process.



Close contacts of a student or faculty/staff member who has COVID-19 will be asked to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days.



Not every student or faculty/staff member in a school will need to stay home for 14 days, just those who are identified as close contacts to a case.



A single positive case of COVID-19 does not necessarily warrant classroom or school closure. However, if it is determined that the school was the focus of COVID-19 infection, school leaders, in consultation with the Office of Public Health, will determine if the school should remain open or close for a period of time.

Distance Learning

What happens if a small segment of the school population must stay home or the entire school is forced to close?

While we will start the year on August 13 with in-person instruction and we have high hopes this will continue throughout the school year, please know that CES administrators and faculty have made great strides and purposeful plans to conscientiously shape the construct of remote learning for each and every member of our school community in the event we are forced to shift to distance learning at any point, be it for a small segment of our school population or schoolwide.

We take our duty to offer an outstanding education to our students seriously, while also remaining committed to creating an appropriate social-emotional setting for them to learn within. Our priority extends beyond simply providing a relevant and meaningful academic experience. We feel it is incumbent upon us to maintain the crucial personal connections between teachers and students that truly define the CES education.

In an effort to accomplish this feat, we have resolved upon the following:

Learning Platforms

Each division has selected an age appropriate learning platform to be employed universally by all teachers as uniformly as possible for both in-person and remote instruction.

- The ECC will use YouTube in conjunction with SeeSaw (see info below).
- Grades 1 and 2 will use SeeSaw, a platform for students to document their learning through a variety of creative tools, thereby creating a digital, online portfolio. It promotes student engagement, as well as connections and communication between school and families.
- Grades 3-8 will work with Google Classroom.
- Grades 9-12 will utilize Canvas, a platform similar to Google Classroom but with a few more details that better suit the nature of high school coursework.

All teachers will receive training on the appropriate platforms in mid-July, and students will begin working with them as part of our in-person school procedures in the earliest days of the school year. Parent training will also be offered to ease and enhance the school-home connection.

Teachers will utilize these online platforms effectively in order to continue to provide a CES level of education even if we are required to learn from home at any point during the school year. Both synchronous learning opportunities and the use of screencast videos will allow teachers to remain visible and present in the educational lives of their students while also providing time to build and tighten community bonds.

Distance Learning *continued*

Remote Instruction

In the event that we are mandated to employ distance learning, a schedule will be created for each division that is mindful of both the amount of screen time students are logging and the need to create consistent, meaningful learning opportunities. Routine is critical for students and their families to know what is expected of them and to know that they have the skills, materials, and guidance to accomplish the tasks ahead. As such:

- Our teachers in all divisions will begin working on the first day of school to intentionally embed classroom routines and expectations that will easily translate between in-class and at-home learning.
- Protocols and procedures for appropriate online “classroom behavior,” how to let a teacher/the school know when a child will be “absent,” and more will be stipulated in our comprehensive “Distance Learning Guide” to be published by the end of July.
- We will be intentional about accommodating our students with educational evaluations to the best of our ability, as we know the online classroom presents its own set of unique challenges.
- College counseling will continue during distance learning, as will our guidance counseling program.

Scheduling

ECC: Our focus is on the whole child and, as such, our remote learning plan seeks to harmoniously bind academic instruction with social-emotional well-being. ECC teachers are preparing a meaningful and age-appropriate learning schedule that will allow for continued instruction and learning, as well as continued interaction with their teachers and peers.

There will be an intentional focus on regular math and reading instruction, enrichment classes will continue to meet weekly, and time will be crafted for small group reading and math work.

Lower School: We are crafting a remote learning schedule that incorporates the same type of meaningful instruction that would typically occur in the classroom.

There is a focus to ensure daily math and ELA instruction while staggering science and social studies classes throughout the week, and enrichment classes will be held when they are normally scheduled. We will ensure that there is time for small group reading and math instruction and time for individual conferencing meetings.

Junior High and High School: The shift to a four-period-per-day block schedule that alternates between A Day (periods 1-4) and B Day (periods 5-8) will serve us well while on campus (fewer transitions throughout each day) and if we must switch to distance learning.

Teachers will hold office hours after school on a designated schedule and have been asked to consider meaningful assessment tools that will allow students time to work away from their screens during the day in addition to assignments that are more screen-centered.

The Work Continues

We have created two task forces to help address the growing agenda.

The School Procedures and Distance Learning Task Force is still at work, addressing both divisional protocols and practices and enhanced distance learning strategies (see page 9-10).

The COVID Operation Committee is addressing on-campus issues related to the health and wellness of students, such as temperature-taking procedures, hand-sanitizing stations, and necessary protective equipment. This group is also working on everything from campus signage and retrofitting water fountains to bottle-filling stations to best cleaning practices and storage of extraneous campus furnishings.

These committees will continue to meet on a regular basis even once school has begun, as we know situations – and therefore our needs and strategies – may change as the school year progresses.

FAQ

Will masks be mandatory?

Following Louisiana Department of Education guidelines, face coverings should be worn by students in the 3rd grade and above to the maximum extent possible, particularly during arrival, dismissal, small group work, and during transitions within school buildings. Adults, including parents and faculty and staff members, will wear masks in all areas of the school.

What if a student in my child's class is diagnosed with COVID-19?

All parents from the class will be notified, and the ill student will not be allowed to return to school for the LDH-prescribed period (see page 8 for more details). Instruction will continue for all students, whether at school or at home.

What circumstances would cause the school to close?

A decision to close school would be made by school leaders in consultation with the Office of Public Health. One circumstance that might prompt a temporary school closure would be if it was determined that the school was a source of ongoing COVID-19 cases.

Will CES offer simultaneous in-class and virtual learning environments?

In-class learning is our planned mode of instruction. However, if the school were to close for an extended number of days, teachers are prepared for distance learning. Individuals or small numbers of students kept away from school because of illness or exposure will be provided continued instruction.

Will students be gathering in large groups?

No, not during Phase 2. Daily activities such as recess, lunch, and P.E. will all still take place, but utilizing outdoor settings, appropriately sized groups, and/or social distancing measures. All-school assemblies and special events are on hold.

How will CES communicate with families about COVID-19-related issues?

Watch for emails from the headmaster, division heads, and teachers, who will communicate any COVID-19-specific information with families as necessary. If you have class- or student-specific questions, please contact your division head.

I have questions about enrolling my children. And what about tuition?

Please consult with Director of Admission Pam Perry about your enrollment plans. Questions about tuition should be directed to the Business Office.

We Can't Wait to See You!

It has been a long few months since we have all been on our campuses, and we are so looking forward to being together again in a safe and responsible way as we begin the new school year!

As is always the case, the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is our top priority. We will continue to monitor all appropriate guidelines to ensure that we remain in compliance with best practices for a healthy school environment. We believe that we are uniquely poised to meet the challenges that have been put before us. Our two sprawling, beautiful campuses

boast significant outdoor spaces and each campus has multiple buildings, both factors that lend themselves to success in this time of social distancing. Now, more than ever, we are thankful for these advantages.

The Christ Episcopal School faculty and staff are working throughout the summer to fine tune all aspects of our return to campus. Please watch for more detailed information to come from our division heads as the start of the 2020-2021 school year approaches.

See you in August!



Resources

Louisiana Dept. of Education Strong Start 2020

Louisiana Department of Health

State of Louisiana

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Ochsner Health

St. Tammany Health System

American Academy of Pediatrics

Louisiana High School Athletic Association

Returning to Campus: A Guide for Christ Episcopal School was published on Friday, July 3, 2020, and reflects planning and procedures based on information available at that time. All guidelines are subject to modification based on movement into a different phase of the state's reopening plan and/or new announcements from parish, state, or federal entities that relate to school operations, or upon advice from our healthcare partners.



**CHRIST
EPISCOPAL
SCHOOL**

80 Christwood Boulevard
Covington, LA 70433
985.892.9156 Early Childhood Campus (ECC)
985.871.9902 Christwood Boulevard Campus (CBC)
www.christepiscopalschool.org
Facebook: facebook.com/christepiscopalschool
Instagram: CESWildcats84