



# Back-to-School Plan for 2020-2021

Updated 08/26/2020

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## Approach

The Harvest Preparatory School COVID-19 Task Force and the administrative team have been engaged in research, consultation, and discussion with various officials, experts, and other agencies on the question of how to reopen the school. These groups have included government and public health authorities, medical professionals, and published research and data. As you can imagine, there is no consensus on many details.

Yet, we do believe that a reasonable and safe approach is contained in this plan that will allow for us to begin school on September 8 with students engaged in the learning model that best fits their individualized educational, health and family needs whether that be on our campus or virtual. Our academic calendar has been modified to take into consideration the additional preparation, planning, and training that is necessary for our staff.

Our plan has taken into account the best interest of our students while balancing that with the best interest of the broader community, including their families and our faculty and staff.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has recently published guidance for the reopening of schools. Their recommendations and key ideas include:

- “The AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with the goal of having students physically present in school. No child should be excluded from school unless required to adhere to public health mandates or because of unique medical needs.”
- “School policies must be flexible and nimble. They should be practical, feasible, and appropriate for a child and adolescent’s developmental stage.”
- “Although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. Also, children may be less likely to become infected

and spread infection. Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.”

- “There is a conflict between optimal academic and social/emotional learning in schools and strict adherence to current physical distancing guidelines.”

In addition, the pediatric hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto (UT), has issued the following guidance:

- “Strict physical distancing should not be emphasized to children in the school setting as it is not practical and could cause significant psychological harm. Close interaction, such as playing and socializing, is central to child development and should not be discouraged.”
- “When children in the classroom, to the extent possible, efforts should be made to arrange the classroom furniture to leave as much space as possible between students. However, the daily school routine should not be disrupted...”

We know that students are not a high-risk demographic if they are exposed to the coronavirus. However, about 25% of our faculty and staff are at high risk or have an immediate family member who is at high risk. It is our responsibility to provide a safe work environment for them. We suspect that a similar percentage holds for the families of our students.

With these principles in mind, the following plan represents the mitigation strategies that Harvest Preparatory School will have in place beginning September 8 when students return to school. **This plan is not exhaustive and does not address every aspect of the school day. Additionally, this plan may change as we evaluate positive or negative changes to the outbreak.** While the school will be extremely vigilant on enforcement and ask for the cooperation of all students and families, there can be no guarantees that complete mitigation of risk will take place. The virus is not going away any time soon, so this is Harvest Preparatory School’s plan to continue the vital work of private Christian education in an environment that recognizes the real need for precautions.

## **Waiver**

A signed copy of our ***Pledge to Follow Safety Guidelines, Acknowledgement of COVID Risk with Return to School, and Waiver of Liability and Release of Claims*** is required to be signed by all parents/guardians of students who will be participating in either the Hybrid Learning Model (Upper School) or the Traditional Learning Model (Lower School). The school administration will distribute this document to all parents/guardians before the start of school. The document will also be located on the Back-to-School page on our website.

## **Screening**

**All students, faculty, and staff will have their temperature checked upon entry to the building.** (All parties are encouraged to self-screen before leaving home each day and should make appropriate plans should their body temperature be elevated.)

A person shall not come to school under any circumstances if he/she displays one of the following:

- A body temperature of 100° or higher any time in the previous 24 hours
- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Chills
- Loss of taste or smell

Or, any two of the following:

- Body ache
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or congestions

Any person determined by a staff person to meet these criteria during the school day will be immediately sent home or placed in a designated isolation area at school until they are picked up by a parent/guardian. It is required that parents make immediate arrangements for the pick-up of a child presenting any of these symptoms. **Parents/Guardians should pick up their child(ren) within one hour of receiving the information from the school.**

In order to protect all members of the Harvest Preparatory School community, we're requiring the student to be clear of symptoms for 48 consecutive hours and have written documentation provided to the application school office by the parent/guardian. While this is a best practice at all times, it is especially vital during this coronavirus outbreak.

A student should be clear of symptoms for 48 hours and written documentation from the parent/guardian is required to be submitted to the applicable school office. In order to protect all members of the Harvest Preparatory School community, this communication is a requirement. While this is a best practice at all times, it is especially vital during this coronavirus outbreak.

## **Physical Distancing**

All classrooms will follow these guidelines:

- Following the AAP guidelines, student seating will be placed up to 6' apart but no less than 3' apart. Because we have plans to hire additional full-time faculty members for our Lower School, we will be able to fully comply with this guideline. Our Upper School students will have the option of participating in a hybrid model, which will allow for only

half of our student body to be present each day, which creates the distancing needed for compliance.

- All desks will face the same direction. Seating will not be arranged to form tables in which students face each other.
- When possible, the sharing of supplies among students will be avoided. When supplies are shared, they will be disinfected between uses.
- Six feet of distancing between adults will be maintained when at all possible. The nature of the teacher to student relationship makes absolute adherence to this impractical, and perhaps undesirable. However, teachers will use common sense when applying distancing practices between themselves and their students.
- Students will be encouraged to maintain distancing at appropriate times. However, the recommendations from the APP and the UT indicate that this is not only impractical to maintain at all times but also undesirable since it affects important social interactions for students.
- Hallways will be one-directional when possible.

## **Hand Hygiene**

Regular hand washing and sanitizing are among the most effective ways to control viral spread. Students will have regular access to soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

- All classrooms and common spaces will have hand sanitizer dispensers available to students and staff. Students will be encouraged to use regularly.
- Classrooms without sinks will have easy access to restroom sinks.
- Students will be expected to wash their hands before and after lunch, before and after recess, and after using the restroom.
- Instruction and reminders on handwashing will be provided by staff. Signs, announcements, and other methods will be used to reinforce the importance of hand hygiene.

## **Face Coverings**

The following is our official face covering policy and will be implemented in accordance with our intention to balance the best possible educational environment with the safest working environment:

### **STUDENTS**

Students in Grades PK-12 are required to wear a face covering while in the school building. This includes all classroom instruction, small group settings, tutoring, study-tables, and extended care. It is expected that students will wear their face covering during arrival and dismissal. Students are not required to wear a face covering during lunch or recess, as long as they practice social distancing of 6' or more.

Students will be provided with periodic mask breaks throughout the school day in the classroom, per teacher direction.

The school will adhere to all face covering requirements established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association for after-school athletic practices and contests.

The option is available for students to wear a cloth mask or a disposable medical mask. Cloth masks should be cleaned nightly. Students should also have an extra mask in their book-bag in the event that it is needed during the school day. A limited supply of disposable medical masks will be made available for students, if needed.

If the parent/guardian preference is that their child shouldn't wear a mask while in the school building, they will be required to enroll their children into the Distance Learning Model (Grades K-12) or the Warrior Digital Academy (Grades 7-12).

Special accommodations will be taken into consideration at the request of the parent/guardian.

### **STAFF**

All staff members are required to wear a cloth face mask when in the presence of students, parents/guardians, and colleagues. The only exception to this policy is when a teacher or staff member is working alone in their classroom or office space.

Staff members wishing to wear a plastic face shield are also required to also wear a cloth face mask.

Social distancing requirements for students and staff will be strictly enforced on campus.

*\*Plans may be modified as health conditionals from federal, state and local officials continue to change.*

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing Practices**

Although the primary method of coronavirus transmission is through respiratory means, clean surfaces and environments play an important role also.

- Daily cleaning and sanitizing by the school's facilities staff will take place with safe disinfectants labeled for use against SARS-CoV-2, paying particular attention to high touch surfaces like door handles, desks, and shared materials.
- All classrooms and common spaces will have access to cleaning supplies. Classrooms will be disinfected at mid-day, end of day and throughout the day as needed.
- Interior doors will be propped open during class changes, and whenever else it is practical to avoid significant touching by multiple people.
- The Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems in our building is brand new and recycles fresh air into many parts of our building every seven minutes.
- Electro-static disinfection will be completed nightly in our building.

## **Symptoms, Exposure, and Positive Test Protocol for Return to School**

- A student or staff person who is sent home or stays home with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be symptom-free for 48 hours and present evidence to the school nurse of clearance from a doctor before returning to the school.
- A student or staff person who tests positive for COVID-19 must do the following before returning to school:
  - Remain out of school for at least 14 calendar days from the onset of symptoms, and
  - Remain fever-free for 48 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications, and
  - Demonstrate improved respiratory function, and
  - Receive clearance to return to school from his/her doctor.
- A student or staff person exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must remain out of school for 14 calendar days from the date of exposure and cleared by a doctor or the health department before returning to school. Clearance does not necessarily require a visit to the doctor, but the student will need to present evidence of clearance to the school health office. "Exposure" is defined as being within 6' of an infected person for more than 15 minutes. Under this definition, while an entire classroom may not be considered exposed to an infected person, it may be possible. Exposure may be limited only to those in immediate proximity of an infected person.
- The school nurse and school administration have the authority to determine whether a student or staff person has been exposed while at school.

- If more than one person in a family tests positive, everyone in the family must quarantine for 14 days from the date of the most recent positive test.

Harvest Preparatory School will communicate with the Franklin County Health Department when a student or staff person has tested positive for COVID-19 and will fully cooperate with their guidance. In addition, the doctor or the test site may inform the Franklin County Health Department on their own.

### **Instructional Provisions for those Out of School**

Parents/guardians will have the option to select their desired learning model for their child(ren). Due to physical space availability and other safety precautions, the model options vary for Upper School and Lower School.

If a student has been quarantined, the student will automatically be moved into the Distance Learning Model, which allows for the student to work from home and receive virtual instruction from their teacher(s), while still engaging with lessons and activities through Google Classroom.

### **Ohio Public Health Advisory System**

Our COVID-19 Task Force and school administration will continue to monitor the Ohio Public Health Advisory System which provides color-coded alert levels by county and make changes to our plan and procedures as necessary for the safety and wellness of our student body and staff. Any changes that are made to the student learning models will be communicated to parents/guardians through RenWeb email as timely as possible. We understand that our vast student body resides in numerous central Ohio counties and our desire is to be as flexible and understanding with making changes to student learning models in order to ensure compliance with each county alert level.

### **Water Fountains**

Students and staff will not be permitted access to using the drinking fountain stations in the school hallways. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school each day. Water bottles will also be made available by our food services team.

### **Food Service and Cafeteria**

Harvest Preparatory School will continue to provide food service to students daily. The food service staff will follow all recommended safety precautions regarding food preparation and service offered by the local health department.

- Students in grades PK-6 will eat breakfast in the B-Wing Chapel and lunch in the cafeteria.
- Students in grades 7-12 will eat breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria.

Plexiglass dividers will be used in the cafeteria to allow each student to remove their face covering and eat their meals while still maintaining appropriate physical distancing requirements.

### **Transportation**

- Local school districts will dictate policies for transporting students to and from school.
- On transportation provided by Harvest Preparatory School, students will sit one per seat. Students may converse with the student on the other side of the aisle.
- The bus capacity may be limited for away athletics contests. Parents will be encouraged to transport their child(ren) to and from away athletic contents.
- Buses will be cleaned and sanitized daily.

### **Pick-up and Drop-off of Students**

Our standard operating hours will be strictly enforced. For Upper School, the earliest students can enter the building is 7:15 AM. For Lower School, the earliest students can enter the building is 7:20 AM. We are requesting that parents limit the amount of time their child arrives before the start of school as much as possible. As our handbook policy states, students are required to either be in a supervised area or off of the physical campus by 2:30PM each school day.

### **Extended Care**

We will continue to operate our Extended Care Program for students in PK-Grade 6 before and after school. All of the same guidelines and requirements that are established for the standard school day will remain in effect during the hours of the Extended Care Program.

### **Visitors**

Visitors will not be permitted access to the school building during the school day unless they have a previously scheduled appointment with a teacher or staff member. All scheduled and approved visitors are required to wear a face covering and have their temperature taken upon entry to the building.

All of our parent/guardian communication will be communicated through email. This includes daily communication, weekly e-mail blasts, report cards, interim reports, etc.

### **Athletics**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) has provided general guidelines that all fall contact sports will be played. We are working diligently to ensure we are in full compliance with established policies and expectations. Limited spectator access to games will be strictly enforced,



per the OHSAA based on a 15% capacity rule for our athletic facilities. The administration and athletic department will communicate directly with the parents/guardians of our student-athletes first in regards to spectator expectations. If seats are opened to the general public, an announcement will then be made on our social media platforms.

As of this posting, the following will be required for spectators, per OHSAA and/or the Mid-State League:

- Temperature required at the ticket gate/table for all sports.
- A set limit of tickets will be made available per sport. Only family members are permitted to attend and the family should comply with social distancing expectations in the stands.
- Only the family members included on the approved game day list will be permitted into the contest.
- No congregating of any kind before or after each contest is permitted.
- Limited concessions will be made available.

Additional information will be announced to families as it becomes available.

### **Lockers**

No hallway lockers will not be available for student use in Grades 7-12. Students will be permitted to carry their book-bags with them during the school day. This includes lockers used for physical education. Teachers will modify in-class activities to comply with social distancing requirements, while taking into consideration the student dress code.

### **Lower School Recess**

Play is an essential component of a child's development. We also know that the risk of viral spread is significantly lower outside. Therefore, recess will be taken with as little intervention as possible.

- Recess will be outdoors whenever the weather allows for it.
- Distancing requirements will be enforced. No mask is required for students who follow the social distancing requirement of 6' or more. Masks will be required for students who are less than 6' of each other.
- Students will be required to wash/sanitize hands before and after recess.

### **Chapels/Assemblies**

- Lower School chapels will be held in the sanctuary in two separate cohorts (Kindergarten - Grade 2 & Grades 3-6). Cohorts will have separate chapel periods and meet weekly to allow for appropriate spacing.

- Upper School chapels will be held virtually and in-person, while students have the opportunity to watch live from their classrooms or home, depending on their selected learning model.
- Other large group assemblies will be limited or be done through virtual technology.

### **Choir/Band**

Music and drama education is an essential component of Harvest Preparatory School's curriculum. We will make every effort to provide performing arts instruction, and, eventually, performances. Our music department will remain in full compliance with the Ohio Music Education Association guidelines.

In order to reduce the potential for contact with shared equipment and spaces, Lower School art and music classes will be taught in each classroom rather than in the art and music rooms.

### **Library and Media**

School library resources and technology/devices will be available for checking out. However, materials will undergo a 72-hour quarantine prior to being made available for student use again.

### **Field Trips**

All field trips and large-group student events will be postponed for the first semester. Teachers will be encouraged to integrate virtual field trip opportunities in their classes.

### **Prep Shop**

The on-campus Prep Shop location is closed for the school year. All uniform items are now located online at [store.harvestprep.org](https://store.harvestprep.org). During the check-out process, parents/guardians should select which Friday pick-up date they would like to come to the school to pick up their purchased items.