



PLANNING FOR A SAFE RETURN TO ON-CAMPUS LEARNING



**Grace
Episcopal
Day
School
2020-2021**



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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Families,

As we continue to move forward in our development of a plan for the 2020-2021 school year, our goal is to create a safe and healthy environment that keeps the well-being of our students, staff, and families at the forefront. With the use of data driven information, gathered from the Florida Council of Independent Schools, the National Association of Episcopal Schools, the Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Florida Department of Health, we have made adjustments to policies and procedures for the start of the school year.

Keeping in mind these changes are intended to reduce, not eliminate risk, we will implement these practices at the start of school and continue through September 11th, reevaluating at that time based on the current spread of the virus. We acknowledge these are unprecedented and uncertain times and we are committed to remain flexible and adaptable throughout the school year. We are unwavering in our commitment to provide a personalized and challenging academic environment for our students. We are especially grateful for our small school environment, a campus with plenty of outdoor amenities, and a talented, loving and dedicated faculty.



Blessings,

Angela Bast

Angela Bast
Head of School

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Handwashing:

Handwashing is essential in the prevention of infection and the spread of germs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we will help students keep their hands clean through routine handwashing and the use of hand sanitizer. Signs are posted next to each sink, across the campus, with instructions on proper handwashing techniques and students will be prompted throughout the day to wash their hands. Bathrooms and classrooms sinks are available in every classroom throughout campus. Hand sanitizer stations with 60% alcohol or greater will be stationed in front of each cottage/building.

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/campaign.html>

Distancing:

"Physical distancing, sometimes referred to as social distancing, is simply the act of keeping people separated with the goal of limiting spread of contagion between individuals. It is fundamental to lowering the risk of spread of SARS-CoV-2, as the primary mode of transmission is through respiratory droplets by persons in close proximity," We recognize the challenges that distancing can present for children and although we cannot mitigate every situation where children come in close contact with each other, we will practice distancing as often as possible throughout the day. Classroom spaces have been evaluated with the goal of spreading student desks apart in the classroom. Space will be created in pews for chapel seating and rows will be skipped between classes.

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

Visitors on Campus:

Non-essential visitors to campus will be limited during the hours children and staff are at school. Any visitor to campus deemed necessary during regular school hours will complete a health screening questionnaire upon arrival. His/her temperature will also be recorded before entering campus.

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Cleaning and Disinfection:

We have contracted with City-Wide Maintenance Professional Cleaning Service to clean and sanitize each classroom daily. Teachers will be responsible for wiping down high touch surfaces during the school day, including desk tops, door knobs, light switches, etc. Each classroom is supplied with a virucide spray for cleaning.

Face Coverings:

"Cloth face coverings are recommended as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face covering coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. This is called source control. This recommendation is based on what we know about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, paired with emerging evidence from clinical and laboratory studies that shows cloth face coverings reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth. COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), so the use of cloth face coverings is particularly important in settings where people are close to each other or where social distancing is difficult to maintain." - CDC.gov

All adults, including employees, parents, and visitors, must wear a valveless face covering while on campus. At this point, when distancing is not an option (small group work, one on one instruction with a teacher, etc.), and when developmentally feasible and safe, students will be expected to use a face covering. Students should bring their own valveless face covering from home. Students will also be provided a labeled, reusable face mask to be kept at school, in case they forget theirs from home. If a family makes the decision their child should wear a face covering throughout the course of the school day, we will support the family's decision.

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SAFE TRAVEL, QUARANTINE, & RETURN TO SCHOOL



Safe Travel:

Keep in mind that while travel has resumed, the CDC reminds us that COVID-19 is no longer just an international travel risk. "COVID-19 cases and deaths have been reported in all 50 states, and the situation is constantly changing. Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick." – CDC.gov

With this in mind, we ask that if you do travel during the 4 weeks leading up to the start of school that you monitor the health of everyone in your household. If you travel the 2 weeks immediately prior to the start of school, please consider quarantining for 14 days upon your return, monitoring temperatures and any possible symptoms.

Social gatherings, such as family and neighborhood barbeques and parties, also increase your risk of exposure. We ask that as you prepare for returning to campus, and once school begins, to please follow the recommendations and/or guidelines at the county, state and federal levels; keeping physical distance from others (at least 6 ft.), engage in frequent and proper handwashing, and wearing a face covering in public places, especially when physical distancing is difficult. Our safe re-entry depends on the efforts of our collective community.

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DAILY PROCEDURES

Arrival:

Each morning, students will be greeted in the carpool line, by Grace staff members, who will conduct a brief health screening and temperature check. All students will be dropped off in the carpool line and we ask that parents remain in their car until their child has been cleared for safe entry to campus. Morning care will be available from 7:00-8:00 a.m. and carpool will run from 8:00-8:15 a.m. If a student is checking in after 8:15 a.m., parents are to call the front office upon arrival. A staff member will walk to the car, conduct a screening, and escort the student to class. While we typically welcome parents on campus, we are currently planning to limit all parents, nonessential visitors, and volunteers access to campus until community transmissions are significantly lowered.

Dismissal:

Dismissal will take place utilizing carpool. Students will wait in their classrooms until called to the carpool area. Parents are instructed to remain in their cars and children will be brought to your car. In the rare instance you need to check your child out from school early, please notify your child's teacher and/or the front office. Upon your arrival to campus, park in front of the office, call the front office, and remain in your car. Your child will be walked to your car by a staff member.

Movement across campus:

As we begin the school year, resource teachers are prepared to travel to classrooms and/or adequate time will be provided in the schedule to wipe down the space before a new group enters. Students will also participate in recess and/or PE daily at designated times.

Lunch:

All classes will eat outside whenever possible. In the case of inclement weather, students will eat in their classroom. Each cottage will have a designated dining area, separated from other grade levels. Tables will be wiped down after each class eats lunch. If your child orders lunch through our school lunch program, boxed or bagged lunches will be delivered to your child's classroom.

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Chapel:

Campus traditions such as chapel are an important part of who we are. Recognizing this, Chapel will continue to take place every Wednesday. For the beginning of the school year (through September 11th), we will hold three chapel services.

- 5th-8th grade Chapel on Wednesday mornings in the sanctuary at 8:30 AM
- PK3-K Chapel on Wednesday mornings in the historic chapel at 9:00 AM
- 1st-4th grade Chapel on Wednesday morning in the sanctuary at 9:30 AM

While we typically welcome parents at Chapel, we are currently planning to limit all parents and nonessential visitors at Chapel until community transmissions are significantly lowered. As always, homeroom teachers will continue to lead our students in daily prayer and age-appropriate devotions in the classroom.

Flag:

Students will continue to start their day reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and we will use the school intercom system for daily morning announcements and weekly recognitions in lieu of an all-school gathering on the basketball court. We will continue to use the weekly Eagle Extras as a place to highlight special activities and student recognitions throughout the school year. Our goal is to resume weekly flag when we can determine this activity to be low risk.

Playgrounds:

Physical activity and outdoor play are important for developing bodies and healthy minds. "Enforcing physical distancing in an outside playground is difficult and may not be the most effective method of risk mitigation. Emphasis should be placed on cohorting students and limiting the size of groups participating in playground time. Outdoor transmission of virus is known to be much lower than indoor transmission." -American Association of Pediatrics Guidance for School Re-entry

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MANAGEMENT OF POSSIBLE ILLNESS



Should a student become ill during the school day with COVID-like symptoms, a teacher will conduct a temperature check. If the child's temperature is above 99.9, the child will be escorted to the front office and parents will be notified immediately. Parents should be prepared to pick up a sick child and their siblings within 30 minutes, or have a plan in place for the child(ren) to be picked up within 30 minutes if unavailable.

All faculty and staff will have their temperature taken upon arrival, as well as, answer a series of health related questions before entering campus. Should a faculty or staff member become ill with COVID-like symptoms during the school day, they will leave campus immediately and a staff member will step into the classroom.

Should a person in our school community test positive for COVID-19, the school will immediately contact the Clay County Health Department. They will handle all aspects of the investigation, including tracing and, if necessary, the need to quarantine a group of individuals. Please note that Grace Episcopal Day School will keep all aspects of the investigation confidential, as it will be entirely executed by the Clay County Health Department.

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RESOURCES USED TO PREPARE THIS DOCUMENT

Our plan for safely returning to on-campus learning was compiled based on research and recommendations from the following sources:

- Center for Disease Control
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Department of Health
- Clay County Health Department
- Florida Council of Independent Schools
- National Association of Episcopal Schools
- National Association of Independent Schools
- Independent School Management

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Grace intends to resume On-Campus Learning for the 2020-2021 school year on Wednesday, August 12th. We have implemented new procedures and practices to reduce risk, however, we understand there may be circumstances where individual students are unable to physically attend school because of COVID-19 related concerns.

Grace will also offer a virtual learning option for all grade levels for families with COVID-19 related concerns. Online learning will take place in “real time” and students will be expected to virtually attend classes and submit assignments in a structured and timely manner.

Anyone electing to participate in virtual learning will make a commitment to remain off campus through Friday, September 11th. Families will need to notify the Head of School (abast@geds.net) no later than Friday, July 31st if they would like to take advantage of Grace's Virtual Learning option through September 11th. After September 11th, virtual learning will be a minimum of a two week commitment on the part of the family.

Virtual Learning:

- In all grades (PK3-8), daily schedules and assignments will be posted on Google Classroom.
- Schedules will include direct instruction lessons and resource class offerings via Google Meet.
- Students are expected to be logged in, on time, seated at a table or desk, and prepared to learn, for scheduled lessons.
- Students are expected to communicate with teachers when unable to meet deadlines or attend class via Google Meet.
- Students must submit work digitally, daily, just as if they were in the classroom.
- Students will not be allowed to participate in athletic and after-school activities during their time off campus.

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Face Coverings:

The CDC has indicated that wearing a face covering may inhibit the spread of COVID-19 from those that are infected, but have yet to show symptoms. As a result, face coverings must be worn on campus by all staff and students.

PK3 and PK4 students need to wear a face covering during morning drop off and dismissal. Due to their age, the face covering may be removed once a PK3/PK4 child has entered the classroom.

All other students, at this point in time, are expected to have a face covering on during the school day. We will schedule daily classroom recess/outdoor time for each class, in rotating playspaces. "Mask breaks" will also be provided during the school day when appropriate distance can be maintained. Exceptions to this include when a teacher or staff member is alone in his/her classroom/office, when anyone is eating, and during PE/recess time. If anyone has individual health problems that would prevent them from wearing a face covering, please email Mrs. Bast.

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From the Head of School:

Dear Parents,

We are so pleased with the successful start to our school year. We are halfway through the first quarter and we have 115 students on campus and 15 students who selected online access prior to the school year starting. We are proud of our staff and students for the ways they have navigated the changes to this school year. They have embraced new routines, making choices that keep others and their own safety in mind. We feel very fortunate to be able to say we have had zero positive cases of COVID-19 within our school community. Thank you partnering with us to keep our students, faculty and staff healthy.

As we shared in our Return to School Plan, we will be re-evaluating policies on a consistent basis to make sure we are doing what is best for all.

Beginning September 14th:

- We will maintain a closed campus to outside visitors.
- Students will remain in class cohorts and will begin visiting the resource classrooms. Students will "sanitize in, sanitize out" using the newly installed sanitizing stations located outside each cottage.
- Surfaces will be sanitized between classes.
- For 1st - 8th grades, classes will rotate participating in Chapel in the sanctuary. They will maintain social distance and wear face coverings. When a class is not in the sanctuary, they will view chapel online in their classroom.
- Chapel for PK3-Kindergarten will be on Wednesday mornings, in the church sanctuary, where students can maintain social distance and wear face coverings. This service will only be for PK3-Kindergarten students.
- We will continue temperature checks in morning carpool. Please keep any student home AND inform the office if they have had COVID symptoms, have taken fever-reducing medication, or have come in contact with anyone with COVID or quarantining for COVID. Afternoon dismissal will continue from homeroom classes.
- If a student is absent, for any reason, PLEASE communicate with the front office the day of the absence. If the student has any COVID symptoms, the student must see a doctor and obtain a medical release, prior to returning to campus.
- We will continue the use of face coverings for all adults. Kindergarten - 8th grade students will be expected to wear face coverings during drop off and pick up, and while inside their classrooms. PK3 and PK4 students will be expected to wear a face covering during drop off and pick up.
- We will reevaluate our safety precautions and communicate any changes prior to the weekend of October 9th.

Angela Bast
Head of School

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Additional Sanitizing Measures in Place:

- All classrooms have their own air conditioning units, which reduces the spread of germs between classrooms.
- Each classroom has also been outfitted with a MERV 13 air filter. These filters can reduce the risk of illness because they filter very small particles out of the air, even smaller than a single micron.
- Each cottage has a new hand sanitizing station outside on the front porch to enable students and staff to "sanitize in and sanitize out."
- We have purchased two electrostatic sprayers to use for sanitizing shared PE equipment and other needs around campus. The sprayers use a solution of hydrogen peroxide that is positively charged to help it bind to surfaces and eliminate germs.
- Teachers and staff also continue to wipe down high touch surfaces throughout the school day.
- The above measures are in place in addition to our regular daily cleaning service.

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