

Casas Christian School: Maintaining a Whole Child Focus in a Brand New World.

The needs and overall physical, emotional and spiritual well being of our school community continue to stay at the forefront for me as Principal.

Famed Psychologist Abraham Mazlow's *Hierarchy of Needs* clearly articulates the foundations that must be present for children to be primed for growth. Students must feel and truly experience safety as their first steps to being able to thrive. At CCS, we understand the beauty and the complexity of how God created each of us and the specific social, emotional and physical needs that He crafted into each one.

In this "new normal", the tendency may be to over emphasize the physical procedures that may halt the spread of disease (all CDC recommendations), without regard for the potential negative impact to a child's spiritual, social and emotional well-being. While we take the health and safety of our faculty, staff and students very seriously, particularly as confirmed cases in our state continue to climb, we feel that we have developed a reentry plan that creates an environment in which the social-emotional, physical and spiritual aspects of each student are addressed. Health and safety begin at home, so please partner with us to educate your child on the importance of overall health and wellness as we do our part here this school year.

CCS will fall into "Scenario One: All Students in Physical Buildings from the Start of the School Year" from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (ADE's RoadMap to Reopening Schools- June 2020). Schools may opt in to "Scenario One" if there are none to minimal local/community cases of COVID-19, if their governing board has an approved contingency plan, they have a comprehensive communication plan, they have clearly communicated screening expectations for staff and families, and if they have a plan for medically fragile staff and families. All of these items are addressed in this document.

The 2020/2021 school year will absolutely include additional health and safety measures and those are outlined in detail below. I believe these enhanced processes provide a reasonable, and much needed, response to the COVID-19 outbreak, but will also provide a heightened response to multiple other infectious diseases.

We know how crucial it is for students to be WITH their classmates in community - connecting, socializing and engaging face-to-face in order to grow. We believe these "whole child" focuses cannot only work together as part of school life, but can also be used by God to make CCS a stronger, more effective program than we even were before.

Our specific COVID-19 response processes and rationale are included below and are the result of prayerful collaboration between church, school staff and school board personnel. You will notice our emphasis on the "whole child" as you read, and that is certainly intentional. Though this is the plan we believe in strongly, we will continue to monitor everything closely, and will make the appropriate adjustments to any new or

unforeseen variables. We commit to communicating those changes to you, our CCS families, immediately.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like more clarity as to why we took this approach.

Josh Kempf
Casas Christian School
Principal/Minister

Changes for the Coming Year:

The following points of clarity are in no way fully inclusive of what may be placed into the operating procedure once the 2020/2021 school year commences, but will at minimum reflect the areas of CCS life that will be adjusted for health and physical safety as we return to a physical school setting.

Seating and Social Distancing: What will that look like?

- Prior seating only allowed for an average of 8 inches between each student sitting shoulder to shoulder. With this new modified seating structure (pictured below), community and relationships are kept intact while still providing an average of 33 inches between each child all without negatively affecting our instructional model or our teacher's effectiveness. Although classrooms may have alternate desks/chairs than pictured, the amount of space between each child will remain comparable to what is represented here.



Previous CCS Seating example (Older Grades)



New CCS Seating example (Older Grades)



Previous CCS Seating example (Younger Grades)



New CCS Seating example (Younger Grades)

Our goal will be to provide social distancing with minimal impact to the overall program, as long as much needed social interaction is not eliminated or negatively affected. For example, room set up in weekly chapels can be easily modified to allow more space between each student with no negative impact on the event being held. Also, seats can be made available on the bus for most trips ensuring that shoulder to shoulder contact does not need to occur.

Digital Platform (Moodle):

- We have continued our Moodle subscription through the summer of 2021. Doing so allows us to be readily available to implement the same quality, online experience that we accessed so successfully this past fourth quarter if needed. If a further outbreak or resurgence intensifies this need, we will be prepared if/when that need becomes apparent. As much as we would desire at some point to have both in person and online instructional CCS experiences available, we do not currently have the capacity to have a dual option for families this coming school year.

Specials/Discovery Classes:

- Each specialist and/or discovery teacher will personally disinfect the student area (desks/chairs/knobs) with disinfectant wipes at the conclusion of every class. This ensures that sanitization occurs in all shared spaces.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case:

- In the event that a student or staff has a confirmed case of COVID-19, that individual will remain off school grounds for a quarantine period of fourteen days and will need a doctor's note clearing them to return. Communication will occur from the school office in that event so that families can make individual testing and treatment arrangements as they deem necessary. **In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, in person classes will move to Zoom for 48 hours to allow for the campus to be professionally disinfected.** No Extended Care programming will be available during this forty eight hour period as all areas of the campus will be thoroughly disinfected. For families who choose to precautionarily self quarantine their student in the event that a positive COVID-19 case is reported on campus, absence work for at home instruction will be provided.

Volunteers:

- We love and value our volunteers, and hope you continue to support your Warrior, however volunteering on campus will be suspended for the first semester of the 2020/2021 school year and will be reevaluated for the second semester over Christmas break. This means that all non-staff will not have access to frequently accessed student areas, including classrooms, hallways, the lunchroom and playgrounds. We ask that parents support our disinfecting processes by maintaining these boundaries for the first semester. With the exception of rainy day procedure, we will adhere to this process until the third quarter.

Middle School Schedule:

- Our 6th-8th graders will still rotate through their daily schedule. Community/shared supplies will no longer be available, and instead students will utilize their own individual supplies throughout the day.

Wearing Masks:

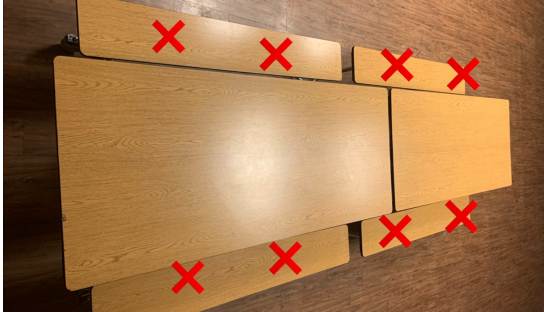
- Although likely required in public areas by the town of Oro Valley, the wearing of masks will be optional for all CCS families, staff and students while within school grounds. We acknowledge the benefits of utilizing masks to prevent the spread of disease, and any family/student is welcomed to maximize this safety precaution if they desire to do so. Requiring them at all times, however, would limit the social-emotional impact of being physically at school, therefore CCS will not make them required. Our first orientation of the school year will include education for our students on socially appropriate conversation starters about masks. Our desire is to be an environment where *all* can truly be part of this community, embraced through the love of Christ, regardless of outer appearance. This emphasis we have already established as a school culture, will align with this new aspect of school life quite fluidly for those who choose to daily wear masks.

Drinking Stations:

- Over the summer, CCS is partnering with our Church leadership to have all water fountains replaced with water bottle filling stations. This sensible change is long overdue, and will greatly reduce the potential spread of any infectious illness. Students will now be required to bring a refillable water bottle to school daily. If a student does not have a water bottle, they will be provided with a disposable bottle and your account will be charged \$.50.

Lunch Room:

- Seating during lunch will no longer be in rows, and additional cafeteria seating has been purchased to allow for increased space during our K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 lunch periods. Alternate doors for entrance and exits will also now minimize lines and crowded areas. Again, unfortunately, parent volunteering and attending lunch with your Warrior will not be allowed for the first semester of the school year.



(The red "X" generally identifies student seating)

Shared Class Resources:

- Historically, some classrooms have had communal class resources that they would access as needed throughout any given instructional period. We feel that another simple solution with minimal overall impact to the CCS experience is to remove this process from our classrooms. Instead, supplies will become individually owned, as opposed to multiple children accessing the same cluster of supplies, thus limiting the potential spread of viruses.

Mid Day Sanitization:

- Along with increased overall sanitization, we will also add an unobtrusive, mid-day cleaning to our daily schedule. Our facility team will focus on light switches, all handles, restrooms and other frequently touched areas within each K-8 classroom space.

Extended Care:

- Extended Care staff will personally disinfect all common areas before and during use. To allow for smaller group sizes, K-2nd grade will be located in 209, with 3rd-8th now in NE 210.

Technology:

- Each iPad or Chromebook, and all other hand held devices used to aid instruction, will be disinfected after each use.

Hand Sanitizing Stations:

The most effective means of combating the spread of illness is to keep our hands clean. Not only will teachers ensure that proper handwashing occurs throughout the school day, but CCS will now have multiple, hand sanitizing stations all around campus. Any area that our students frequent will have hand sanitizer available.

Daily Temperature Checks and "Waiting Area":

- Home is the first point of screening. All CCS families should be familiar with any symptoms that may be present in their child(ren) and when in doubt, keep them home! If any student has a fever, that child should remain away from school for at least forty eight hours and notify our office. Beginning in the Fall of 2020 and continuing until further notice, a new part to the core teacher welcoming process will include a touch-free temperature check for each child prior to entering the classroom. **This at school screening should be viewed by parents as the second**

screening for wellness, not the first. We are aware that asymptomatic carriers show no signs of illness and thus are outside of our control, but as always, we encourage our families to keep any sick children away from school grounds if they have any reason to believe the child may be unwell. If a child is feverish (anything above 100.0 F) they will be taken to our new “waiting area” in our school office. This area, separate from the health office, will be warm and welcoming in its environment, but will be utilized exclusively for students with a fever. Students will remain in this waiting room staff supervision until an authorized adult can retrieve them. This waiting area allows for an easy rear-exit to the west parking lot (KCCP side) for quick, minimal contact retrieval. Our desire is that this process can isolate potential viruses as quickly as possible, while not isolating the child.

Drop off and Pick Up:

- Each student will have their second screening upon entering the CCS campus, either at the playground entrance (if applicable) or prior to entering their classroom. This will be a touch-free temperature check.
- End of day pick-up will be as normal with the exception of our Kindergarten program. Kindergarten students will now be picked-up at the car playground located between the SE and NE buildings.

Recess:

- The freedom to move, run and play, especially outdoors, has a tremendous impact on children's abilities to focus and control themselves throughout the day. Research has shown positive links between people who exercise regularly and their cognitive abilities. Recess also gives more opportunity for socialization, teamwork and practice with conflict-resolution skills. *Outdoor* recess also gives the benefit of experiencing fresh air and sunshine, both noted for increasing overall health and mood. Sunlight is also a key source of vitamin D, which increases learning and productivity. The physical activity children participate in during recess can also reduce stress levels and allow children to feel more relaxed. Recess periods are already limited to small groups and this practice will continue as we move forward. Students will still enjoy their regularly scheduled recess times, but with increased hand sanitizing once each recess concludes.

Lost and Found:

- This year, it will be incredibly important for all school items, including jackets and other items of clothing, to be **labeled with first and last name** as our traditional lost and found (located in bins on the playground) will no longer be handled in the same manner. All lost items will now make their way into our front office where they will be sanitized and held for only one week. An email will be sent weekly of the lost items, and after one week from that notification, they will be donated to the *Gospel Rescue Mission*.

After School Clubs/Sports:

- As stated in detail above, the same sanitation, cleanliness, and social distancing processes implemented in other aspects of campus life, will also occur in our after school activities by the coaches and course leaders. When transportation is needed, students will sit in every other seat on the CCS school bus. We trust our

families to decide when their children are ready for after school clubs and sports, but since this part of our program provides additional social and emotional development opportunities, we plan to continue.

Field Trips:

- Many of our regularly scheduled trips that are so crucial to our school experience, may be affected outside of our control. Once we are able, we will engage in our grade level trips with distanced seating on our Warrior bus. One exception is our middle school retreat which will not occur this Fall on Mt. Lemmon, but a planned on campus event will still meet the same unity objectives for our middle schoolers.

We are praying daily for the well-being and safety of all of our Casas Christian School community.

Please contact 520-297-0922 or info@casaschristianschool.com with any questions.