

2020-2021 Reopening Plan

Good Shepherd's Lutheran School

Addendum to the 2020-2021 Good Shepherd's Parent Handbook
(Revised: 7/31/2020)

Introduction

As we began exploring what it would be like to reopen Good Shepherd's Lutheran School for the 2020-2021 school year, we knew that there would be many possible changes and scenarios that might come into play. We needed to develop a plan that was able to accommodate as many changes as we could predict. This document will serve as a guide for this upcoming school year. The draft of the reopening plan document that you are reading is not a finished product. This plan will be updated whenever new information or best practices become available. As a school, we will work to communicate changes in a timely manner so that your family can be fully informed.

This reopening plan will be an official addendum to the 2020-2021 Good Shepherd's Lutheran School's Parent Handbook. While all policies and procedures in the handbook still apply, updates that pertain to the changing operational practices of the school for the upcoming school year will be found in this plan.

Rationale

How were these initial decisions made? That question is likely running through your mind. The bullet list below is an effort to "pull back the curtain" and explain some of the priority factors that were considered in creating this plan.

- While our students get to hear about Jesus every school day regardless of the educational setting, we want to give them every opportunity to see that message in action by being in the company of others who demonstrate the love of their Savior
- The full scope of high-quality education that Good Shepherd's has developed can only be completely delivered to students when they are in the school building
- Full social development of children cannot occur in a virtual setting
- The immense emotional stress that our students are facing can be greatly reduced by getting them back in regular in-person contact with other students
- The value that a reliable, daily routine which school provides cannot be overstated
- In our recent family survey, over 73% of our families indicated that their preferred instructional scenario would include in-school learning for students
- Many parents have now returned to work and require supervision of their children each school day; finding, transporting, and/or paying for additional child care places an enormous burden on families
- Child care settings that have been operating during the past months have not seen any significant impact of COVID-19 amongst their student or staff
- The WI Department of Instruction in partnership with the WI Department of Health have recommended a return to in-person learning this upcoming school year.

Good Shepherd's is committed to offering the safest environment and best education that we can possibly provide to our students. Unfortunately, reality informs us that there will be risk. Returning students and staff to the school will never be 100% safe regardless of the measures and protocols we put in place. Laid out in this plan is our best effort at this time to minimize the risk and exposure to illness for all students and staff.

Some will not be comfortable with the position that this plan takes. In an effort to address those concerns, the plan includes several either / or type options. Our hope is that you would carefully read through the entire document, seek clarification for your questions from the school principal, and prayerfully consider what is in the best interest of your family.

Development of the Plan

As this plan has been developed, many conversations were had and insights sought out. We first and foremost thank you, our families, for your thoughts and insights. In our recent survey, we had one of the highest participation rates of any Good Shepherd's survey! While we are by no means done asking or looking for your feedback, we thank you for your time in filling out the survey and providing your thoughts. We ask for your continued prayers and support as we continue to move forward.

As we have looked to develop our initial reopening plan, our partnerships with other schools, the West Allis/West Milwaukee school district, educational experts, the West Allis Health Department, and health officials throughout the state has been invaluable. It is such a blessing to have many people in various settings working together to identify best practices and possible solutions. We will continue to work with these individuals and organizations throughout the upcoming school year to maintain the best possible school operation.

Instructional Scenarios

As the situation in the Milwaukee Metropolitan area is likely to change throughout the school year, we will need to be prepared to shift between educational scenarios. Below is a listing of three educational scenarios. These scenario options are the ones that we may need to shift between as the situation demands. Take time to reflect on these scenarios and how your family would need to react if we switch between different scenarios during the school year.

1 - Full In-Person

- 5 full days per week of in-person instruction for all students
- Follow the normal calendar and class schedules
 - Bubble Method of Operation (CDC recommended method)
 - Students remain in the classroom throughout the school day
 - Exemptions - Bathroom and recess
 - Students are spaced apart as best as possible within the classroom
 - Virtual / Distance Learning Option
 - Teachers will provide virtual learning for families who prefer to continue full virtual learning outside of the school
 - While this will involve learning resources and individual tutoring, it will look different than the format that was utilized during the spring of 2019-2020. Google Meetings will be used more regularly to provide teacher led instruction.
 - If this option is chosen by a family to begin the school year, a meeting with the teacher(s) is required before the beginning of the school year in order to lay out expectations.
 - No extra-curricular opportunity (athletics, etc) will be allowed if this option is chosen.

2 - Full Virtual / Distance

- Virtual / Distance learning following normal calendar
 - The 4K-8th grades will learn through Google Classroom

- Option: Scheduled small group learning times with the teacher scheduled throughout the week
- Teachers record lessons for students to watch each day and/or teachers host classroom meetings for instruction daily on Google Meet
- Every student in 4K-8 who needs Chromebook for at home learning will be able to check one out
- Distance learning packets will be offered weekly (either in the school parking lot or in the gymnasium based on weather). This will also serve as an opportunity to hand in paper work if needed.
- If Good Shepherd's goes to full virtual/distance learning, no extra-curricular activities (athletic practices and/or games, etc.) will be offered during this time period.

3 - Hybrid of In-Person and Virtual

- Limited in-person instruction following our normal school calendar and schedules
 - The School is divided into two groups (odd grades and even grades)
 - In-person learning: Group 1 - Monday & Wednesday (Every other Friday)
 - In-person learning: Group 2 - Tuesday & Thursday (Every other Friday)
 - On days when students are not in school for in-person learning, virtual learning will be completed
 - The Bubble Method described in scenario #1 will apply to this scenario when students are in the school building
 - Note: Families with multiple students at Good Shepherd's will be in the same in-person attendance group
 - Virtual / Distance Learning Option
 - Teachers will lead virtual learning for families who prefer to continue full virtual learning outside of the school
 - While this will involve learning resources and individual tutoring, it will look different than the format that was utilized during the spring of 2019-2020. Google Meetings will be used more regularly to provide teacher led instruction.

Current Perspectives on Scenarios

1 - Full In-Person

Preferred and default position whenever possible

2 - Full Virtual / Distance

Virtual learning for all students will only be used if:

- 1) COVID-19 directly impacts Good Shepherd's
- 2) There is not enough staff to deliver in-person learning
- 3) Percentage of students in attendance is determined to be too low
- 4) Good Shepherd's is mandated to close in-person learning

3 - Hybrid of In-Person and Virtual

Method used if internal situation or external mandate determines that it is best practice at the time or it is mandated by the Department of Public instruction or Health Department. This method has been determined as the least favorable option.

Student / Staff Illness

Overview

As we go through this school year, please consider the health and safety of students and staff in the school as a top priority. Parents will be asked to screen their child at home for Covid19 symptoms every morning. Here is a list of known Covid19 symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you believe your child is sick or may be becoming sick, you are highly encouraged to keep them home. While attendance and school work completion are important, consideration for the health and possible transmission of illness to others should be considered more important.

Staff will be trained to recognize the known symptoms of COVID-19 to monitor student health throughout the school day. As outlined below, staff and students will be screened upon entry of the school building each school day with a thermal camera. With our school reopening plans, we are trying to limit the number of contacts your student has during the school day. Out of consideration for the other students, families, and staff, we ask that you carefully consider the number of additional contacts your children have outside of the school day. Good Shepherd's defines fevers as 100.4 degrees or above. Numerous sites are currently available throughout the West Allis area to get a free COVID-19 test. Here is a link for a list of testing locations: <https://www.westalliswi.gov/1744/Coronavirus-Test-Locations>

Demonstrating Symptoms of COVID-19

For those students or staff that are demonstrating the known symptoms of COVID-19, every precaution will be taken to isolate the individual and seek to identify if there are other contributing factors that may mirror the symptoms of COVID-19. A temperature will be taken and if they register a fever, they will need to be picked up immediately. The student will be allowed to enter the building if they are fever free for 48 hours and symptom free for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Exposure to COVID-19

Any student or staff member that has been exposed to an individual known to have tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to remain out of the school building for 14 calendar days. Additionally, any person at school who has had close contact with that individual will also be required to remain out of the school building for 14 calendar days or provide documentation of a negative test.

Testing Positive for COVID-19

Students or staff members that test positive for COVID-19 are not permitted to enter the school building and are required to self-quarantine at home. Any student or staff member who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to be out of school a minimum of 10 calendar days. Furthermore, a classroom would go virtual for two weeks (14 calendar days) if one COVID-19 case is found in a classroom. If a student tests positive during the 14 calendar day virtual learning period for the classroom, that student's 10 calendar day period begins on the day of the positive covid19 test. Please note that a student who

tests positive for COVID-19 also needs to be fever free without fever reducing medications for at least 24 hours, and they need to have improvement in symptoms before returning to school.

If a positive COVID-19 test should be reported to the school, the West Allis health department will be notified and a contact study will be conducted to identify which student and staff members have had direct contact with the individual who tested positive. All those who have had direct contact with that individual will not be allowed in the school building for 14 calendar days. If a contact study identifies a significant number of students or staff, we may need to immediately shift to scenario #2 - Full Virtual / Distance Learning for the entire school.

Communicating Sickness

All student and staff COVID-19 test results are expected to be shared with the school office. The school office will work diligently to maintain an individual's right to confidentiality of testing results. The school will communicate confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a confidential manner so that the school community can be aware of the situation. The school will also contact the West Allis health department if there is a confirmed case within the school.

Excusing for Student Illness

When communicating with the school office to excuse student absences for illness, additional information will be required. Questions will include but are not limited to: 1) Does / has your child have a fever over 100.4 degrees? 2) Does / has your child demonstrated any of the known COVID-19 symptoms? 3) Has anyone in your family traveled outside the state of Wisconsin in the past 14 calendar days?

All students and staff will be screened upon entry of the building.

Continued Academic Work During Illness

Students and staff members that have been exposed to COVID-19 or test positive but do not show symptoms are encouraged to continue their academic work from home as best as they are able during their time away from school. Those who are dealing with symptoms will be supported as much as possible to complete academic work upon recovery.

Temperature Screening

Student Screening

Each in-person school day, students will receive a non-contact temperature check as they enter the school building. If a student does not pass the screening process, they will be isolated and checked again by school staff with a non-contact hand-held thermometer to determine if they have an elevated temperature. If the temperature reads 100.4 degrees or above, the students will be isolated and supervised until they are picked up to go home.

Staff Screening

Each school day, all staff members will undergo a basic health screening including answering specific questions as well as a temperature check. A log of the health screenings for the staff will be kept and shared with the West Allis Health Department upon request. If a staff member does not pass the screening process, they will be

isolated and checked again by school staff with a non-contact hand-held thermometer to determine if they have an elevated temperature. If the temperature reads 100.4 degrees or above, the staff member will be sent home until they are healthy enough to resume their duties or meet the guidelines above for Staff/Student Illness.

Mask Usage

Masks will be required for all parents, students, and teachers while in the building at dismissal and arrival only. Masks will be strongly encouraged, but will not be mandated for parents or adults. However, local ordinances may determine that we need to require everyone to be masked. If this is the case then we will follow the local ordinance that dictates where and when face masks will be used.

The school staff will be trained on the proper method of putting on and taking off a mask. This training will be taught and implemented with all students. Masks should cover both the nose and the mouth. Masks can be brought from home. Those that do not have a mask will be provided with a mask by the school. [Note: On Thursday, July 30th, the Governor of Wisconsin signed into effect a state-wide mask mandate beginning on Saturday, August 1st at 12:01am and ending on September 28th. Since this is the case, as of now we will follow the mandate and require masks throughout the duration of the school day for students in grades 5K to 8 (not 4K). Teachers are exempt from wearing a mask according to the mandate as long as they are teaching a lesson and can remain 6ft from students.]

School Arrival and Dismissal

School Arrival

Preferred drop of times

5th – 8th grade - 7:50-8:08 a.m. (School day begins at 8:10 a.m.)

K4-4th grade - 8:05-8:18 a.m. (School day begins at 8:20 a.m)

Families that have students in multiple grade levels can drop off all their students at the drop off time of their oldest child. Younger children will be allowed to go directly to their classrooms upon entering the school building. Their teacher will be waiting for them in the classroom and not at the main entrance. A reminder that all students will have their temperature screened upon entry of the building.

School Dismissal

4K - 11:15am

K5- 3:00pm

1-2- 3:05pm

3-4- 3:10pm

5-6- 3:15pm

7-8 - 3:20pm

Families that have students in multiple grade level dismissal times can pick up all students at the dismissal time of the youngest child. Students will be allowed to wait for rides outside the main entrance (while maintaining social distancing) if weather allows.

School and Classroom Setup

Social Distancing

Regardless of the in-person learning scenario in use, we will work to provide the maximum social distancing whenever possible. In a school setting, six feet of social

distancing is not going to always be possible. Our efforts will be focused on minimizing the time that students and staff spend in close proximity and contact with one another. Student seating / desks will be spaced apart within the classroom to maximize social distancing to the best of our ability.

Student Hand Washing

As students exit and enter the classroom, they will be encouraged to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer. Students will be trained on how to properly wash their hands using soap and water according to health guidelines. The school will provide soap and hand sanitizer to ensure that students are able to wash and sanitize their hands throughout the school day.

Stairwells and Hallways

Students and staff going “down” the steps will stay on their right. Students and staff going “up” the steps will stay on their right. All students will stay on the far right when passing in the hallways.

School Day Gatherings

During the school day, students will not gather together in groups larger than their class size. We will adhere to this practice as long as gatherings of students larger than the class size are not recommended by health officials. Listed below are a few adjustments we will make to our practices to eliminate large student gatherings:

Lunch - All lunches will continue to be eaten in the classroom. No hot lunch will be offered for the 2020-21 school year.

Chapel – Friday Chapel devotions will be held in church with students in each classroom spaced apart from each other with strict social distancing guidelines.

Phy Ed - The gym will be limited to one class at a time. Each classroom will have their own PE materials.

School Cleaning

Throughout the spring and summer, we have been working with our contracted cleaning service to review our school cleaning practices. We have verified that our cleaning crew will be able to meet or exceed CDC recommended cleaning practices and procedures. In addition to our standard daily cleaning routine, we will be hiring our cleaning company to perform deep cleans of the entire building as necessary throughout the year. Daily cleaning of all surfaces and doorknobs will also take place. High touch areas will be sprayed regularly.

School Supplies

All efforts have been made to eliminate or reduce the need for shared classroom materials and resources. Those materials that will be used between multiple students will be cleaned as best as possible between student uses.

Individual student school supplies will be kept in student-designated totes which will be supplied by the school. These totes will allow students to have their own supplies as well as transport the tote of supplies home as needed for virtual learning. School supply lists will be provided in the back to school registration packet..

Visitors

While Good Shepherd's loves being a welcoming and open place for parents and other visitors, we need to amend our visitor allowances during this time. In an effort to minimize the number of people in the building and maintain the safety of all students and staff, there will be no visitors, including parents/guardians, allowed in the school building either before, during, or after school unless by special appointment. Masks or face shields are strongly encouraged for all adult visitors.

After the first two weeks of school, parents/guardians will need to drop off and pick up their children at the front door of the school. This will be allowed during the first two weeks as some of the students are new to school and may need you to help them adjust. Those who have business to complete with the school office will only be allowed access to the lobby and will need to exit the lobby immediately after completing their business. The lobby is not to be used as a gathering or waiting area.

Attendance

While attendance is important, the health of everyone at Good Shepherd's is more important. Students that are not feeling well or who are showing signs of illness should be kept home out of an abundance of caution.

In order to comply with educational regulations, attendance will be taken on each day either in-person or virtual / distance learning occurs. In person attendance is calculated by the time the student is in attendance in the building. Virtual / distance attendance is determined by work completion for the assigned tasks of that particular school day.

Absence logs may be shared with the West Allis health department upon their request.

Academic Growth

At Good Shepherd's, one of our top priorities is to grow our students to set them up for future success in life. Throughout the upcoming school year, our teachers will be working to grow students academically regardless of the learning scenario. Assessment of student learning and grading will be completed as well. We will make every effort to complete our normal quarterly report cards on student academic progress. Students will be required to complete satisfactory work to be eligible for promotion.

Field Trips

Field trips are an excellent way to provide students with alternative educational experiences that they cannot receive in the school building. Unfortunately, our plan is to cancel all field trips for this upcoming school year. We do not feel that we can adequately keep all students and staff safe throughout all aspects of a field trip at this time. We pray that the situation will improve in the future to allow us to reconsider this decision.

Extracurricular Activities

Throughout this spring and summer, our athletic director has been working to identify ways in which we can offer extracurricular activities this upcoming year. Since extracurricular activities would bring students from various classes together in one space, this presents unique challenges. Our overall goal is to offer as many of our normal extracurricular activities as possible. We are working with other schools and sports leadership groups to identify best practices in minimizing risk for students and

coaches. Despite our best efforts, there will still be an increased risk for students if they participate in extracurricular activities.

As a school, we believe that the physical, social, and emotional growth that students gain when participating in extracurricular activities are critical. It will be up to each family to decide if extracurricular activities align with what they would like to do. All extracurricular activity offerings will only be offered if we can find meaningful measures to minimize risk as well as find coaches and leaders willing to serve.

Sports

In the coming days, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) will be releasing their sport-specific guidelines. Good Shepherd's will work to implement those best practices into our sports practices and competitions. Additional information on sport offerings, practice protocols, and competition regulations will be communicated to families as they are developed. Competition with other schools will only be possible if other schools will be offering those sports at their school.

Singing in Church

In an effort to discourage large groups in the church building, the students will not sing in church until January. A reevaluation of this practice, will take place in December.

Counseling

These past months have been extremely stressful on all people. This is especially true for our students. The following counseling services are recommended by Good Shepherd's should you feel that your student could benefit:

Christian Family Solutions
262-415-7151
Ashley Perushek, LPC
STRONG Program Manager

Anne Huebner & Associates, LLC
17100 W. North Avenue, Suite 100
Brookfield, WI 53005
262-786-9184
e-mail: annehuebner@mac.com

Family Support

Good Shepherd's has several different types of support available to families during these difficult days:

Spiritual

When times are tough, spiritual support and comfort can bring relief to our hearts and peace to our minds. Our pastors Josh Zarling (jzarling@goodshepherds.net) and Tim Wempner (twempner@goodshepherds.net) are available to offer spiritual support to you or your family. Contact the school office for more information.

Emotional

Christian Family Solutions offers family and adult services in addition to the services they provide to our students. Should you be in need of emotional support, Christian

Family Solutions offers many resources and services which you can access directly on their website at <https://christianfamilysolutions.org/>

Closing Thoughts

We understand that not everyone may be in 100% agreement with this plan. We would most certainly prefer to offer school as it was from August to March of last year. Please trust that the staff and Board of Education has looked into our fall reopening with prayerful consideration of health guidelines and best practices. Your input from the survey in June that you provided for us weighed heavily on a majority of the decisions made in this plan. We all pray that things may go back to normal as soon as possible. Your child's teacher missed your student last year very much and missed out on a privileged opportunity to share Jesus with your child(ren). We pray that the measures taken during the 2020-21 school year may keep us all safe.