

Chesterton Academy of Buffalo
COVID-19 Reopening Plan
2020-21 School Year

Introduction

The following document outlines adjustments made to normal school procedures in light of individual and public health concerns due to COVID-19. The plan incorporates guidelines and recommendations of federal and state health officials. Our protocols might, by necessity, evolve as the overall understanding of the disease and the needs of our students change in the course of the school year. The current plan addresses areas of communication, health and safety, academics, and athletics.

Communication

Chesterton Academy will utilize various avenues to inform parents, students, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community in general of procedures and protocols with respect to COVID-19. The primary methods of communication will be email and, due to our small size, personal phone calls and individual text messages. The school website (www.buffalochestertonacademy.org) will be updated as information or modifications to procedures become known. Families, faculty, and administration will be notified of guidelines and updates as they become available from official state and federal bodies and the school regarding:

- Length of time to remain home if a student/teacher/staff member becomes ill
- Protocol for isolation if a student/teacher/staff member suspects they have been exposed or have tested positive
- How the student/teacher/staff member's health will be monitored and the protocol if a student/teacher/staff member is suspected to be ill
- Procedure for school closure if there is an outbreak on campus
- Social distancing/PPE protocols on campus
- How classrooms, workspaces and common areas will be cleaned/disinfected and the responsibility of employees, students and janitorial staff to help maintain a safe environment

Health & Safety Protocols

The school will maintain protocols and procedures for students, faculty, staff, and other individuals to protect against the transmission of the COVID-19 virus when on school grounds and in school facilities.

Masks

An acceptable face covering any time or place that individuals cannot maintain appropriate social distancing is advised. Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. This guidance shall not prevent employees from wearing their personally owned protective coverings (e.g. surgical masks, N-95 respirators, face shields), as long as they adhere to the minimum standards of protection for the specific activity they perform.

Specifically, masks or cloth face-coverings will be worn when:

- Upon entry to the building
- When in tightly confined spaces occupied by more than one individual at a time.

Masks or cloth face-coverings do not need to be worn when:

- At least six (6) feet of social distance is able to be maintained.
- In-person gatherings when held in an open, well-ventilated space with appropriate social distancing among participants.
- Employees are in their normal workspace while observing social distancing, or working alone within a workspace.

Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements will be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors. Face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old;
- Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction;
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious; or
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

Mask breaks will occur throughout the day. Breaks will occur when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside or at least with the windows open. Further guidance on mask breaks, including duration and frequency will be forthcoming, as well as more information about properly removing and putting on masks.

All individuals in school facilities and on school grounds must be prepared to put on a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance; and for this reason, individuals – including students – will have face coverings in common areas, such as entrances/exits, lobbies, and when traveling around the school.

However, whether this plan indicates a mask does not need to be worn in a given scenario, all employees reserve the right to wear a mask in a situation when they are not required.

To be clear, face coverings are not a replacement for physical distancing, but they should be used to mitigate virus spread when physical distancing is not feasible.

Social Distancing

Faculty and staff need to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals, unless safety or core function of the activity (e.g., instruction) requires a shorter distance. When this is the case, persons involved will have acceptable face coverings.

Each classroom will create a new layout to determine its capacity within parameters of proper social distancing. Extra/unnecessary furniture will be removed from rooms to create the maximum space possible between individuals in shared spaces.

Tightly confined spaces will be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings.

Alternative spaces in the school (e.g., cafeteria, library, and auditorium) will be repurposed to increase the amount of available space to accommodate the maximum distance possible. In these larger spaces, establishing consistent cohorts/classes with separation between the cohorts/classes provides another option to maximize these spaces safely.

In order to reduce student density in a cafeteria, meals can be served in classrooms.

It is recommended that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities requires projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity.

Arrival and drop-off times may be staggered or other protocols can be put into place that encourage social distancing.

Each student's personal belongings should be kept separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas. If possible, we avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

Classrooms will have adequate supplies in order to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, music equipment, general classroom supplies) or use of supplies and equipment should be limited by one group of children at a time and cleaned and disinfected between use.

We will consider creating traffic patterns that best adhere to the social distancing guidelines.

Instruction in and Support of Proper Hygiene

Teachers and support staff will reinforce proper hand hygiene and cough/sneeze covering with

all students.

The school will provide and maintain adequate supplies to support healthy hand and respiratory hygiene, including soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, and lined trash receptacles.

Health Monitoring

Active monitoring for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus will be essential to informing school policy and public understanding over time. It will not be possible to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools to zero. At this point, we know that:

- A fever is technically defined as a body temperature of 100.4° F or higher, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The fever temperature is consistent for both children and adults.
- Per the CDC, a variety of symptoms associated with COVID-19 have been reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list does not reflect all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Faculty and staff are required to stay home if they are sick. Parents are required to keep sick students home.

Employee Health Screening Procedures

Employees and parents will sign a health agreement form (see appendix). By signing the form, they will verify that:

- Employee/student has temperature less than 100.4 without fever reducing medication upon arriving in the school.
- Employee/student does not exhibit any of the following symptoms upon arriving in the school:
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fever

- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Employees/students who respond “yes” to any of the questions are expected to stay home.

Employees/students who develop any of the symptoms during the school day will be asked to leave the building. Students will remain in a designated area until they can be picked up. Areas used by any sick person will be disinfected.

Cleaning & Disinfection Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

The school will provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces.

Plan for returning to school

It is recommended that sick staff members or students not to return until they have met CDC and/or DOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.

The school will be aware of current CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19, they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - It has been at least three days since the individual’s symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

For most persons with COVID-19 illness, isolation and precautions can generally be discontinued 10 days after symptom onset and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms.

If an employee is deemed essential and critical for the operation or safety of the business, as determined by the employee's supervisor, the exposed, asymptomatic employee may return to work if the employee complies with the following practices:

- Regular monitoring: The employee must self-monitor for a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit and symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Social distance: The employee must comply with social distancing practices, including maintaining at least six feet of distance from others in the workplace when possible.
- Clean and disinfect workspaces: The employer must continue to regularly clean and disinfect all areas, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment.

Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups

We will work with these individuals one-on-one, while seeking to follow recommendations given by their healthcare providers.

Academics

The following section describes instructional models that Chesterton Academy will be ready to employ during the 2020-2021 school year. The Board of Directors, in conjunction with the school's administration will determine the instructional model for the 2020-2021 school year. The model is subject to change at any time during the school year as circumstances permit.

Instructional Models

Chesterton Academy of Buffalo believes that the best way to deliver academic excellence is through in-person instruction. We will remain flexible to achieve the best educational results while at the same time balancing the health needs of our faculty and families. Regardless of the model employed, regular and substantive interaction between teachers and students will aim for the best possible education.

- In-Person Model

Staff and students will attend school in the physical building for a full day on each scheduled school day and instruction will be delivered in traditionally scheduled courses/subject areas with

established precautions for maintaining health and safety. Social distancing measures will be in place and masks are to be worn when social distancing is not possible. Using this model, students will be actively involved in the school learning environment. In addition, instructional programs, for the most part, will maintain their current integrity.

- Remote Model

Neither students nor staff will attend school in the physical building. Instruction will be conducted digitally through online methods. The structure of the classes, expectations for students and teachers, and protocols for taking attendance, delivering lessons and instructional materials, assessing student work, and grading/providing feedback will be communicated to all parties.

- Hybrid Model

Given the small size of the school, which allows us to maintain social distancing, it should not be necessary to alternate between in-person and remote instruction on different school days. Our focus, instead, is on continuing instruction in the event a student/teacher remains at home due to circumstances related to COVID-19.

- Teacher Remote. The teacher for the class is remote out of necessity, but still able to provide instruction. In this circumstance, adult supervision will be provided as needed in the school building. Social distancing measures will be in place and masks are to be worn when social distancing is not possible.
- Students Remote. The teacher and a portion of the students are in-person, but some students are remote. Social distancing measures will be in place and masks are to be worn when social distancing is not possible.

Technology Instruction Plan

- Classrooms will be equipped to broadcast each class via videoconference capabilities such as Zoom or Google Meet. Relevant equipment might include in-class computers to run video communications, webcams for streaming video, microphones for adequate audio, and video monitors.

- All assignments will be published in a centrally accessible online location (such as Google Docs or Jupiter Ed—the school’s LMS), so that students are always aware of expectations.
- Teacher-student communications will take place through Jupiter Ed.
- Classes, where and when possible, will be recorded to allow for student playback.

Athletics

According to the Niagara Christian Athletic Association, to which Chesterton Academy belongs, play will be suspended until September 21, 2020, at which time a reassessment of COVID-related issues can take place. Our current plan is to begin the fall athletic seasons on September 21, 2020. Games will be reduced to only a few. Schools will provide each player with a waiver to sign accepting risk of playing given the presence of the COVID-19 virus in our community.

Appendix A

Chesterton Academy of Buffalo Family Health Agreement

All Chesterton Academy families must read, sign, and adhere to the health protocols for the safety of the entire Chesterton Academy community. The goal is to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. All families must take responsibility and follow these steps on their honor for the common goal of the safety and health of all our members of the community and their families.

1. All students, parents, tutors, and administrators entering the building for more than 10 minutes will need to check their temperature. Their temperature must be below 100.4°F without fever reducing medication. If their temperature is at or above 100.4°F, or if they are ‘feeling feverish’, that person will remain at home.

2. All parents, siblings, and visitors will need to sign in on the Visitor's Information Sheet in the main office. They will also need to have their temperature to be less than 100.4°F (without fever reducing medication) and be symptom free.

3. All students and adults who come into the building must be symptom free of any of the following signs of COVID-19. Symptoms of the novel coronavirus are now:

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

Please realize that sending a child with symptoms may put an entire class or more at risk of shut down. Therefore, we need your vigilance to adhere to the health monitoring policies.

4. Face masks are required wherever social distancing is not possible.

5. Social distancing will be practiced in the hallways, classrooms, and bathrooms of the building as well as during break times and lunch. Students will sit distanced from others at tables.

6. Students will bring a water bottle WITH THEIR NAME on it and will take it home every day. Water fountains will be disabled to reduce transmission risks.

7. If a student becomes ill or develops symptoms while attending classes, the student will be isolated until the parents or emergency contacts come to pick them up. If an adult becomes ill or develops symptoms while at Chesterton, they will leave the building immediately. The area in which that person spent time will be cleaned rigorously immediately.

9. The policies for returning to school are as follows:

It is recommended that sick staff members or students not to return until they have met CDC and/or DOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.

If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19, they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

For most persons with COVID-19 illness, isolation and precautions can generally be discontinued 10 days after symptom onset and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms.

I understand and commit that it is my responsibility to adhere to the measures outlined above for the safety of all who attend Chesterton Academy of Buffalo.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____