Explanation of COVID Protocols (updated January 2022)

Both the Health and Wellness Committee and full Board have been in communication frequently over the past month as we prepare to welcome kids back. We have had communications with the Health Department, with the Eastern Ottawa Christian Schools, and have included health professionals in our conversations and decision-making. We will continue to be in discussions as we monitor COVID in the West Michigan area. If any adjustments need to be made over time, we will clearly communicate these to you. Please know that we take very seriously our responsibility to provide an environment that is safe for your child, and is considerate of their physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual well-being. We also know that you know your child best and we want to provide you the ability to work with us on decisions affecting their schooling.

Please carefully read the information below to help you better understand the plans for COVID mitigation at ACS.

It is critical that healthy students and staff are at school.

Everybody that comes to ACS should self-check (or be checked by a parent) before entering the school building. A flowchart can be found on our website that shows key symptoms to watch for, and will help you in the decision to stay home from school, and potentially seek medical attention. You can also find CDC guidance regarding COVID symptoms. As the heading says, it is critical that all families make sure to send healthy kids to school, and keep kids home if they are symptomatic. Our best defense against COVID is to keep it out of the school.

Are visitors allowed at school this year?

The plan is to allow visitors into ACS this year. We will have chapel in the gym and we encourage healthy visitors to join us to learn and worship! There will also be opportunities for volunteering and other ways to get involved. If any guidelines were to change in regards to visitors, we will clearly communicate this to families.

Will my student have to wear a facial covering?

The Ottawa County Department of Public Health announced a facial covering mandate for students in grades pre-K-6 through January 2, 2022. Once the mandate ended on January 2, facial coverings became optional for both staff and students. Facial coverings on buses are mandatory in compliance with a federal bus law.

What are the protocols for COVID-positive and Close contact situations?

It is very important that ACS is informed immediately if there is a COVID positive individual within the school. Any ACS student or staff member that tests positive for COVID will have to isolate for 10 days after first symptoms, or 10 days after a positive test if asymptomatic. This is the same protocol as last year. When there is a person infected with COVID that has been on campus at ACS, we will contact trace students and staff that were within six feet of the infected person for more than 15 minutes. The local health department will be responsible to contact the person confirmed with COVID-19, inform close contacts of their possible exposure, and give instructions to those involved with the confirmed case, as well as close contacts, regarding self-

quarantine and isolation. This also allows families to know if they have a member of the family that was a close contact, so they are able to watch for symptoms. We will also thoroughly clean and disinfect the rooms that a COVID positive person was in. Below are the quarantine guidelines for the beginning of the school year.

- It is REQUIRED to quarantine for 10 days if someone at ACS is a close contact to a positive COVID case in their household OR to a COVID 'breakout' in school (defined as two or more positive cases that are connected). Vaccinated individuals, and those with COVID in the past three months do not need to quarantine. We will continue to monitor changes in CDC guidance and adjust accordingly.
- It is RECOMMENDED to quarantine for 10 days if someone at ACS is a close contact in other situations. ACS will work with families on an individual basis in situations where there are ACS students that are close contacts.

Will there be academic opportunities if my child is home due to isolation or quarantine?

For students that are either in isolation or quarantine, ACS will once again provide remote learning opportunities so that the student can continue to progress with their classmates. This may be live stream (middle school classes), or by sending work home (elementary). We will work with a family in each individual situation to find what will be best for the student impacted by quarantine or isolation. Parents will be responsible to gather any devices, books, papers, and supplies that are necessary for learning at home.

Will COVID Vaccinations be required to attend school?

Although vaccinations have been encouraged by the health department to mitigate the spread of COVID, they will not be mandatory for students and staff at ACS.

What is the plan for cleaning surfaces?

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least one time per day to help mitigate the spread of any viruses. The cleaning crew will continue to use a backpack sprayer that effectively covers surfaces with disinfectant that is effective against COVID.

What about athletics and other extracurricular activities?

All athletics and extracurricular activities are currently planned to be run for the 2021-2022 school year. We will follow updates and guidelines from the Michigan High School Athletic Association, the National Federation of High School Sports, the Health Department, and in collaboration with the Eastern Ottawa County Christian Schools. All of our decisions have come from this information and are based on what we believe is best for the health and safety of our students and staff. We will continue to keep everyone updated as more information becomes available.

Will Chapel be inside again?

We are excited to have chapels back in the gym with our full student body, staff, and visitors!