



**Grace  
Christian  
Academy**

*Raising Up A Standard*

## **Pandemic Policy/COVID-19 Response Overview**

---

8420 W. BELOIT ROAD, WEST ALLIS, WI 53227  
P: 414.327.4200 | F: 414.327.4386 | GCASCHOOL.ORG



# Introduction

As an administration, staff, and school board, we at Grace Christian Academy (GCA) are committed to the health and safety of our students and staff. This presents unique challenges in the era of COVID-19. However, we also recognize the importance of in-school instruction for students. The CDC notes, “. . . the harms attributed to closed schools on the social, emotional, and behavioral health, economic well-being, and academic achievement of children . . . are both well-known and significant” (CDC The Importance of Reopening America’s Schools this Fall). The American Academy of Pediatrics echoes this sentiment, “The importance of in-person learning is well documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020” (American Academy of Pediatrics). *With this being said, accommodations are being made for students*

*whose parents are more comfortable with distance learning to begin the school year.*

Taking these factors and the results of our parent survey into account, GCA has incorporated plans and policies to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for in-person instruction. These guidelines reflect information gleaned from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), the Milwaukee County Health Department, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools (WCRIS). *The leadership of GCA acknowledges that these policies are subject to change should government mandates or shifting data dictate such a change.*



# Building Safety

## Limited Access

---

To preserve a safe environment within our building, access to the building is being limited to staff and students. Parents and guardians will drop students off in the parking lot in the morning following our usual morning procedure. Afternoon pick-up will also be done in the parking lot. Staff will be stationed outside to notify the office as parents or guardians arrive. The students will then be sent out to meet their ride.

Any exceptions to this limited entry policy will be handled by the administration on a case by case basis. Face coverings will be required for any guests entering the building.

## Spacing

---

Our goal is that students are spaced out in each classroom as much as space allows. Teachers will be removing any non-essential furniture to help achieve this goal. Group work and seating “pods” will be curtailed for the foreseeable future.

## Personal Protective Equipment

---

***\*\*Since this was first written, the state of Wisconsin, beginning August 1, 2020, is mandating face coverings for everyone age 5 and up while indoors and not at a residence. This order currently lasts until the end of September 2020. GCA will comply with this order. Staff and students age 5 and up will follow the specifications of the state mandate.\*\****

Currently, GCA is not mandating the use of masks for students or staff. The American Academy of Pediatrics has observed, “. . . the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from

SARS-CoV-2 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection” (American Academy of Pediatrics).

Masks and gloves will be worn by all students serving lunch in the lunchroom. There will also be a plexiglass divider between those serving food and those receiving it.

If parents prefer their child(ren) to wear a mask, they will need to provide their own and instruct their child(ren) on expectations of wearing it. Staff will not be responsible for ensuring that a child keeps his/her mask on throughout the day.

## Lunchroom

---

Seating in the lunchroom will be kept at 70% or less of capacity to enable distancing. Two strategies are being implemented to achieve this. First, at least one class in each of the two elementary lunch periods will eat lunch in their classrooms each day. This will be done on a rotating schedule. The second strategy has been to add a class period to the Jr. high and High school schedule. This allows us to have Junior high and high school students eat in separate lunch periods to help them maintain distance in the lunchroom.

As noted above, students serving lunch will wear PPE and will have plexiglass barriers between themselves and those they are serving. Extra time has been added between each lunch period to facilitate the sanitizing of tables and chairs before the next group comes in.

## Sanitation

---

To maintain a sanitary learning environment, common touchpoints (doorknobs, handrails, etc.) will be disinfected multiple times throughout the day. Classrooms, including desks, will be thoroughly sanitized every night. In the elementary hallways, coat hooks will be sanitized every night. Any items that students leave on the hooks must be in a plastic bag as hooks will be sprayed with sanitizer. Classrooms will not have any shared items such as markers, crayons, pencils, etc. **This means each student must come with the necessary supplies.**

Students and staff will be required to use hand sanitizer each time they enter and leave a classroom. Because of this, students will be

allowed to keep a small, unscented container of hand sanitizer and unscented lotion (moisturizer) in his/her desk. Classrooms will be sanitized as students move from one classroom to another. Chairs will be sanitized in between each chapel service and other group gatherings in the gym. Recess equipment will be sanitized daily. Students can bring their own (clear) refillable water bottles. These can be filled at the touchless filling stations on the first and second floors.

A professional cleaning company will complete a monthly electrostatic cleaning of common areas. The bathrooms and shared building surfaces will continue to be professionally cleaned and sanitized every night.



# Infection Control

## Sick Students

---

Due to the current health crisis, GCA will be enforcing more protocols regarding illness. Students are not allowed to come to school if they have a temperature of 100.0° F or higher. Daily temperature checks will be taken as students enter the building. Please do not administer fever-reducing medication to your child before coming to school.

Students will be sent home if they have a fever or are exhibiting symptoms of illness (examples: consistent cough, runny nose, diarrhea, and/or vomiting). Parents must pick up a sick child as soon as possible to limit exposure. Sick children will be isolated in a contained area. Students will not be allowed to have over-the-counter cough drops or medicine at school unless prescribed by a doctor.

## Exposure

---

Parents or staff members are required to immediately contact the school to inform administration upon a diagnosis of COVID. Based upon factors including the recommendations from the local health department, the student's last attendance at school, and/or interaction with other students or staff, the administration will decide how best to proceed. This may include transitioning to an online platform for a minimum of two weeks, during which time a thorough sanitization would take place. The administration

will determine how best to continue after the two weeks of online learning is completed if there are more confirmed cases.

If a family member of a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is exposed, that person is required to be quarantined for two weeks. Students or staff that travel outside of the United States are required to quarantine for two weeks when they return.

## Community Outbreak

---

Should an increase in confirmed COVID-19 infections occur in the surrounding community, GCA will follow mandates set forth by state or local government health agencies.

This is an acknowledgment that the situation surrounding the pandemic remains fluid. GCA will be prepared to adjust to significant changes in local infection numbers.

## Extracurricular Activities

---

GCA is beginning the school year with a moratorium on fall extracurricular activities, including but not limited to girls' volleyball. GCA

is taking a "wait and see" approach with winter extracurriculars as the state of the pandemic in late 2020 will dictate if or how we proceed.



# References

## **American Academy of Pediatrics**

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

## **Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) Coronavirus Resources**

<https://community.acsi.org/coronavirusresources/home>

## **CDC The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>

## **CDC Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/prepare-safe-return.html>

## **Education Forward: Reopening Wisconsin's Schools**

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/Education\\_Forum\\_web.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/Education_Forum_web.pdf)

## **Milwaukee County Health Department**

<https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/COVID-19>

## **WCRIS Coronavirus Resources**

<https://www.wcris.org/coronavirus-2020-covid-19/>