



Covenant Christian Academy

10101 Cunningham Ave. – Westminster, CA 92683 – 714-531-9937
www.ccawestminster.com – cca@ccawestminster.com

COVID-19 PREPARED: REOPENING CCA FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

PURPOSE

We seek to reopen Covenant Christian Academy (CCA) on September 1, 2020, as safely and fully as possible. Our aim is to foster the overall well-being of the students, staff, and community that we serve.

INTRODUCTION: IDEALLY POSITIONED FOR A SAFE REOPENING

CCA is a small school, able and eager to implement COVID-19 safety guidelines.

- **Just 29 students enrolled in K-6th** for 2020-2021, in 3 classrooms, perfect for cohorting
 - Lower K-2nd
 - Middle 3rd-5th
 - Upper 6th
- **Large building and playground**
 - Large classrooms allowing for 6-ft spacing between student desks
 - Outdoor seating for lunch and some lessons
 - Separate restrooms for each of the 3 classes
- **Support of the school community, staff, and families for full reopening**
 - Board of Directors: 100% approval
 - Staff & Teachers: 100% approval
 - Families: 100% approval of K-6th families
- **Ability to transition as needed between on-campus and remote learning**

BASIS FOR REOPENING COVENANT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

In California, as of August 2, 2020, children ages 5-17 accounted for just 7.2% of confirmed cases, with only 1 death reported for that age category (CDPH data). It appears that the majority of children who become infected are asymptomatic or have only mild symptoms, and also that they may be less likely to transmit the disease to others. While serious disease requiring hospitalization is known in children, this is relatively rare and is generally treatable.

We must balance the risks of COVID-19 in children, which appear to be minimal, with the harms of school closure as it impacts their academic progress and their physical, social, and mental well-being. The CCA community was diligently engaged in remote learning for 9 weeks last year, with no loss of instructional days. Nevertheless, standardized tests administered in early June show that distance learning was less than ideal for students at all grade levels; and for certain students, the learning gaps were considerable.

FROM THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS:

“Schools are fundamental to child and adolescent development and well-being and provide our children and adolescents with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, physical/speech and mental health therapy, and opportunities for physical activity, among other benefits. Beyond supporting the educational development of children and adolescents, schools play a critical role in addressing racial and social inequity. As such, it is critical to reflect on the differential impact COVID-19 and the associated school closures have had on different races, ethnic[ities] and vulnerable populations.”

FROM THE PARENTS OF COVENANT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

- *“We recognize the **importance of having an in-person education experience** for our children” (A.T. – 2nd, 3rd, & 5th).*
- *“With the small school size I pray [the health department] will make an exception” (P.J. – 3rd).*
- *“[We] fully support...in-person learning for this next school year” (M.T. – K & 2nd).*
- *“Due to our **very small size and ample classroom space**, CCA will be able to safely reopen, and I strongly support applying for a waiver for our small school. I have no doubt that **CCA parents and students will be compliant and respectful regarding all safety measures**” (V.S. – 5th).*
- *“It is imperative that we start in person in September...I can't afford to pay for tuition and full-time childcare, [since] school not being open and **trying to teach 2 kids and work full-time is not possible**...They need teachers to teach. So, in short, yes, please reopen. I will want both girls wearing masks, and will supply them” (E.G. – 1st & 6th).*
- *“What I see is that **kids are getting attached to their iPads and phones** for homework and all of that, which I don't like. **I prefer [in-class] school**” (J.C. – 2nd & 5th).*
- *“We support reopening CCA 100%” (T.T. – 1st).*

ONGOING MONITORING OF OUR PLAN

CCA has developed this plan in accordance with guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), after careful consideration of each of the following sources:

- CDPH – *COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools*
- CDPH – *COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs*
- Centers for Disease Control
- American Academy of Pediatrics – *COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry*

Open Safety Team: This team (including parent, board, and staff representatives) will meet regularly to monitor the situation within the school, the families we serve, and our community as a whole. This plan will be revised as situations or government directives change. The Open Safety Team will follow key principles outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- *Flexibility as new information becomes available; or as policies are found to need improvement*
- *Adaptability based on viral transmission levels in the school and the surrounding community; close communication with state and/or local public health authorities*
- *Appropriateness for each student's developmental stage*

- *Consideration and accommodations for vulnerable populations at school, and for those engaged in remote learning*
- *Readiness to communicate policies in languages other than English, if needed*

COVID-19 Point of Contact: Principal Kathleen Winslow will serve as liaison with local public health officials (Orange County Health Care Agency), and as the on-site contact person for parents, staff, the Open Safely team, and the Board of Directors. Questions or comments can be emailed to cca@ccawestminster.com.

COVENANT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY'S PLAN FOR REOPENING

Our current plan for school reopening is organized into the categories below:

1. Health Screening & Testing
2. Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning
3. Cohorting
4. Physical Distancing
5. Face Coverings
6. Hand Hygiene
7. Cleaning & Disinfection
8. Ventilation
9. Parent Responsibility
10. CCA Commitment to Safety, Privacy, & Continuity of Learning

1. HEALTH SCREENING & TESTING

CCA will implement a strict exclusion policy for symptomatic students, staff, and parent volunteers. In order to prevent the spread of infection, no one is permitted on campus with signs or symptoms of COVID-19. In general, nonessential visitors will not be permitted on campus.

Remote learning opportunities will be provided as needed for children who must stay home because they have possible COVID-19 symptoms or are in isolation due to COVID-19 infection or exposure. CCA will identify and implement appropriate methods of remote learning given each student's situation.

Screening begins at home with daily temperature and symptom checks.

- Parents are responsible for screening their children, each morning, at home. CCA will provide a checklist. A staff member will greet each family upon arrival, confirming completion of screening before students enter the CCA campus through a gate directly into the playground; a temperature check may be completed at that time, if warranted.
- Parents will generally remain in their cars at drop-off and pick-up (CCA has no buses). The office door will remain locked, and no visitor will be permitted inside without screening by staff.
- Staff must self-screen before heading to school and will be asked to record results upon arrival.

As an additional safeguard, in order to detect asymptomatic infections, each staff member will be responsible to get a COVID-19 test every 2 months, half the staff each month. Completion of testing will be tracked in the school office.

During the day, staff will watch for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 so that appropriate action can be taken if a child develops symptoms. A room has been designated for isolation of a symptomatic individual, until they can be picked up from school.

Any staff or student who experiences a fever of 100.4 °F or above must remain at home until they have been fever-free for 72 hours, without fever-reducing medication. Further decisions about testing and return to school must be guided by CDPH directives in consultation with local public health protocols. In addition, a return to school for those who have had an exposure to or a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be in accordance with state and local public health recommendations. See 7/17/20 CDPH guidelines below:

Student/Staff with:	Action	Communication
COVID-19 Symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, loss of taste or smell, difficulty breathing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home • Recommend testing • If no testing, may return to school 3 days after symptoms resolve • School/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action needed
Close contact* with a confirmed COVID-19 case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home • Quarantine for 14 days from last exposure • Recommend testing • School/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider school community notification of a known contact
Confirmed COVID-19 case infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the local public health department • Isolate case and exclude from school for 10 days from symptom onset or test date • Identify contacts, quarantine & exclude exposed contacts for 14 days after the last date the case was present at school while infectious • Recommend testing of contacts, especially symptomatic contacts • Disinfection and cleaning of classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time • School remains open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School community notification of a known case
Tests negative after symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May return to school 3 days after symptoms resolve • School/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School community notification if prior awareness of testing
<p>*Close contact is less than 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes. In the school setting, this may be difficult to determine, and an entire classroom cohort may need to be considered exposed if they have spent time together indoors.</p>		

Principal Kathleen Winslow, as the designated COVID-19 Point of Contact, will be responsible to support contact tracing and communication with public health officials, as needed.

2. TRIGGERS FOR SWITCHING TO DISTANCE LEARNING

CCA’s goal is to keep all 3 classrooms open throughout the year. Nevertheless, individuals, whole classrooms, or the entire school must be prepared to switch to distance learning as necessary. CCA will

work with local public health officials regarding the closure of the school, if necessary.

- A single classroom may need to be closed for 14 days, if a single individual in that classroom tests positive and it is determined that close contact occurred between members of that classroom despite attention to physical distancing, hand hygiene, disinfection, and ventilation (as described elsewhere in this document). However, the other classrooms may be able to remain open, given the careful separation of classroom cohorts throughout the day.
- In consultation with local public health officials, CCA will likely transition all classrooms to distance learning if students or staff from 3 separate families test positive.
- Decisions regarding a return to school (by individuals, full cohorts, or the entire student body) will be made according to medical advice and in consultation with public health officials.

Parents and staff are encouraged to consider how their careful daily symptom screening and attention to all guidelines in this document will contribute greatly to CCA's chances of remaining open all year. Neither staff nor students will be penalized for absences related to following these guidelines.

3. COHORTING

The purpose of cohorting is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that if someone develops infection, the number of exposures would be reduced, and only a portion of the students and staff (a single cohort) would be forced to quarantine at home.

CCA's practice has always been to maintain 3 separate classroom groups (or cohorts), and the same will be true in the coming year. Each student group (K-2nd, 3rd-5th, and 6th) will have a single teacher for all core subjects and will eat lunch separately from other groups. Our building and playground are large enough to allow the 3 groups to remain separate at all times, including recess.

4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing is a key component of CCA's plan to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Since close contact is defined as a distance of less than 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes, and that definition is used for decisions regarding quarantines and closures, it is our goal to maintain 6-ft spacing as much as possible.

CCA's layout is such that entrance, egress, and movement within the school can be easily monitored to maintain appropriate spacing between individuals and separation between classes. Students are accustomed to an orderly system of lines and movement at drop-off, pick-up, and throughout the day; this system will be easily adjusted to increase spacing. Throughout the building and playground, floor markings will be used where helpful to indicate safe distances.

Staff must pay particular attention to maintaining distance between each other and between themselves and students and their parents. Plastic shields will be installed in the school office and at teacher desks, as needed. Parents will only rarely enter the building through the school office, where they will be screened. As much as possible, parent/teacher conferences will be conducted virtually.

In classrooms, students' desks will face in the same direction and will be placed 6 feet apart. Since the

three classroom cohorts will be able to use separate restrooms, concern for crowding in restrooms and hallways is minimal. Staff will ensure that not more than 2 students are in a restroom at the same time.

Whole-school assemblies will be held outside or in the largest room in the building, where individual students and the 3 classroom cohorts can be easily spaced out. Recess and PE activities will be those that allow students to spread out. Students will be spaced out for lunch, whether it is eaten in classrooms or outside.

5. FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings have been shown to reduce transmission from individuals who are shedding the virus and may also protect the wearer. In accordance with CDPH guidance for schools (7/17/20), face coverings (cloth or disposable) must be worn by all staff and by students in 3rd-6th grade throughout the school day. For students in K-2nd grade, face coverings will be strongly encouraged and even insisted upon at times when students are interacting more closely.

Face coverings should be removed when eating. They may also be removed during vigorous or distanced outdoor recreation, although students who have trouble maintaining 6-ft distancing at recess may be required to keep face coverings on. Parents who wish their children to wear face coverings more often than is required by these guidelines may certainly have their children do so.

All families and staff should bring their own face coverings to school each day. However, CCA has a sufficient supply of the following:

- Face coverings for occasions when someone forgets
- Face shields to be used as needed (for limited pedagogical purposes) by teachers interacting with the K-2nd grade class
- Plastic desktop shields for K-2nd

Students will be taught about the proper use, removal, storage between uses, and washing of cloth face coverings. Students who refuse to wear a face covering may not attend school on campus, unless they are exempt due to a medical or mental health condition (as per CDPH guidelines); in the case of an exemption, a face shield should be worn instead.

6. HAND HYGIENE

COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses are almost exclusively spread by respiratory droplet transmission. As a result, and because virus shedding may occur prior to symptom onset or in the absence of symptoms, routine, frequent, and proper hand hygiene is critical to limit transmission.

Students will be taught how to clean their hands properly. They will be reminded to avoid touching their faces as much as possible and to cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow. Age-appropriate signs will be placed at CCA to remind students to perform hand hygiene. This will include both soap and water opportunities (CCA has an outdoor sink plus separate restrooms for each) and hand sanitizer (at least 60% ethyl alcohol).

A regular schedule for routine hand hygiene, above and beyond what is usually recommended (before eating, after using the restroom, etc.), will be encouraged. Hand hygiene will be built into the schedule before and after activities where items may sometimes be shared (e.g., art class, PE, and recess).

Hand sanitizer will be available at the entry point for each classroom. In addition, there are 13 sinks in 9 separate locations in the building, plus 1 outside, allowing for plenty of soap and water hand hygiene. Liquid soap and hand sanitizer will be replenished and paper towels available for drying. No-touch waste receptacles will be available for disposal of materials.

7. CLEANING & DISINFECTION

CCA is committed to regular cleaning and disinfection, with an emphasis on high-touch surfaces.

As much as possible, teachers will limit the sharing of classroom, recess, and PE materials and equipment. Where items must be shared, teachers will emphasize hand hygiene and will ensure proper disinfection after use. Disposable disinfectant wipes will be readily available so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down regularly by staff.

Each day after school, staff will perform basic cleaning and disinfection of surfaces in classrooms, hallways, and restrooms. A more thorough cleaning will be done weekly by a professional janitor service.

8. VENTILATION

Adequate ventilation is associated with a lower risk of transmission, as potentially harmful particles are dispersed and blown away. CCA is committed to maximizing ventilation through various means:

- Opening windows and using fans
- Limiting the use of air conditioning when children are in the building
- Using the best possible air filters when air conditioning is used
- Eating lunch outdoors, weather permitting
- Holding some classes outside

9. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

While medical experts agree that the risk to the individual child is very low, and reasonable precautions are being taken, there is risk that a child could become infected while attending Covenant Christian Academy and could infect others. For students with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk for serious illness related to COVID-19, it is important for parents to work with their child's healthcare providers so that an informed decision can be made about attendance on campus. In all cases, the CCA Board of Directors asks that parents consider carefully the steps CCA is taking to promote the health and well-being of all students and staff. Parents must determine whether enrollment at CCA and attendance on campus is in the best interest of their family.

By enrolling at CCA, parents commit to following all school guidelines presented in this document, the Student Handbook, and other enrollment paperwork. Parents also commit to making their best effort to help their child succeed as a CCA student, whether on campus or during remote learning.

10. CCA COMMITMENT TO SAFETY, PRIVACY, & CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

The entire CCA community is encouraged to pray for one another throughout this school year, trusting the Lord for His provision. The safety and privacy of members of the school community are very important to CCA. Adjustments will be made to these guidelines as directed by public health officials, and parents will be informed of any such changes.

In case of a confirmed COVID-19 case among students or staff, families will be informed of the possibility of exposure via email first, with follow-up by text or phone to ensure receipt of the information. As much as possible, individuals who test positive will not be identified by name without their consent.

CCA recognizes that present circumstances related to COVID-19 have created for each student a unique set of challenges; these challenges may be medical, behavioral, mental, or academic. As always, CCA teachers are committed to working with each student and family to meet their specific needs.

CCA believes that in-person learning is best for all students from an academic perspective. However, teachers are prepared to teach students remotely as necessary. Due to careful screening procedures, it is likely that individual students will miss more days than usual this year, due to possible symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19. Also, it is possible that an entire classroom cohort would be sent home for 2 weeks, or that the entire school would need to close for a time. In all these situations, CCA staff is committed to continuity of learning.

The school will train all staff and substitutes in the guidelines found in this reopening document. Training will begin on 8/17/20, two weeks before the proposed opening of the school. All families are expected to have read, discussed, and agreed to this document before the start of school. However, teachers will also plan significant time to teach and practice these procedures during the first weeks of school. Information will be provided in languages other than English, as needed.

REFERENCES

We gratefully acknowledge the guidance of experts in education and public health.

- Assoc. of Christian Schools International
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- ChurchWest Insurance Services
- California State Department of Education
- California State Department of Public Health
- Center for Disease Control