



REOPENING/COVID-19 PLANNING GUIDE FOR ASHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

2020-2021

The following planning guide is developed from the COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools (effective July 2, 2020), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Ohio Department of Education, recommendations from the Ohio Department of Health and State of Ohio guidelines for school buildings to reopen in the fall of 2020, the Ashland County Health Department, and medical professionals.

A Message from the Administrator/Principal

A major shift in learning occurred this past March 2020 as we found ourselves transitioning to remote learning due to the coronavirus health pandemic. While I understand this was not what any of us anticipated, I was so proud of the students, staff, and parents who adapted so well and responded with overwhelming support. Governor Mike DeWine was recently quoted during his Reset and Restart press conference on Thursday, July 2, 2020, stating, “Kids need to get back to school.” While we welcome our students and staff back to Ashland Christian, we also must realize “the traditional school experience as it was known prior to the onset of the pandemic will be different, as will many of the day-to-day practices of schools.”¹ The education system we know must be responsive to help ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff. As we move forward, Ashland Christian School and its entire staff will continue to provide strong academics with Biblical integration to our students. We all must be flexible given Ohio’s landscape and the direction given by our state and local departments and it is imperative that we continue to support each other and work together as we move forward. I understand there may be apprehensions as we go back to school, but there is comfort in knowing that God is the sovereign Lord, Creator, and Sustainer of all, where all things are under His control. We can be assured that all things work together for good through Him.

Introduction

The time your child spends in school is precious and should encompass all aspects of their well-being, including spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual. This reopening plan was created and developed with assistance from the resources listed above, along with parents, teachers, board members, church leaders, and has been approved by the Ashland Christian School Board.

There is overwhelming support for students to get back to school. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry, “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.”² While it may be challenging at times to adjust to these changes, the following adaptations are critical to ensure that children are able to return to Ashland Christian School safely and responsibly:

GENERAL POLICIES

What will be the first day for both students and staff for Ashland Christian School (ACS)?

The first day of school, for both students and staff, will occur on Wednesday, August 19th, 2020. There will be a teacher work day on Tuesday, August 18th, 2020.

Will Ashland Christian School have in-person learning, conduct hybrid learning, or go completely remote learning?

We agree with the American Academy of Pediatrics that, "Schools are fundamental to child and adolescent development...." 2 Our children need to get back to school, as Governor Mike DeWine stated, and we are excited to welcome back our students, families, and staff for the 2020-2021 school year.

Ashland Christian School is committed to going back to school in-person, daily (5 days a week), beginning Wednesday August 19th, 2020. We understand we must be flexible given the nature of COVID-19, however we are extremely confident we will be able to adjust (if needed or required) if future mandates or restrictions are given.

Our primary goal is in-person learning for the duration of the school year, but we understand we must be diligent in our preparation in case remote (or hybrid learning) is mandated because as we have learned in the past, such changes could happen with little or no notice.

How will symptoms be assessed before entering Ashland Christian School?

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is essential that students (along with their families and/or caregivers), faculty, staff, as well as volunteers, conduct daily health checks **PRIOR** to heading to school. This includes taking their temperature. Should anyone have a temperature above 100.00°F, that person(s) shall stay at home.

The CDC, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, states you *may* have COVID-19 if you experience or have experienced one or more of the following symptoms: 3

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

Symptoms range from mild to severe and may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

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- When you drop your child off at school, there are 3 points of entry you may use. The first is the gym (early drop-off is available in the gym at 7:30am - 8:05am); the second is the main school entrance by the administrator/principal's & secretary's office (this shall be used if drop-off occurs after 8:05am); the third is the Circle doors (preschool drop-off/dismissal only).
***PLEASE NOTE: The gym should be the first option prior to 8:05am drop-offs.**
- If you're arriving to the gym or Circle doors, a staff member will take your child's temperature and record it. A temperature above 100.00°F will require a student to stay home until 24 hours fever-free, without taking medication. The parent shall remain with their child until the "all clear" is given by an ACS employee for the parent to leave. **Please DO NOT drop off and leave your child without first getting the "all clear" from staff personnel.**
- If you're arriving to the main school entrance/office doors, a parent must accompany their child(ren) to the entrance. A staff member will take your child's temperature and record it. A temperature above 100.00°F will require a student to stay home until 24 hours fever-free, without taking medication. The parent shall remain with their child at the main entrance until the "all clear" is given by an ACS employee for the parent to leave. **Please DO NOT drop off and leave your child without first getting the "all clear" from staff personnel.**
- Ashland Christian School has non-contact Infrared thermometers that will be used at each point of entry. Again, a temperature above 100.00°F will require a student to stay home. A minimum 24 hours fever-free, without taking medication, is mandatory before a student or staff member is allowed to return to school.
- These temperature checks will also apply to teachers, as well as visitors (visitors will be limited). Temperatures will be recorded daily and kept on file. Additional temperatures checks may also occur daily for faculty and staff to ensure the health and safety of students and fellow staff members.

How will you assess for symptoms while a student/staff member is at ACS?

- If a student, staff, or volunteer has a temperature above 100.00°F while at school, they must immediately be separated from other students, staff, or volunteers, wear a face covering, will be monitored by a staff member wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and maintain physical distance when possible. If necessary, there will be a specific space and/or room where the individual will wait before going home (a staff member will be present alongside the student). Parents or guardians will be asked to pick up their child immediately upon receiving notice of their child exhibiting a fever. Once the individual exits the building, the areas which were occupied by the student or staff member will be sanitized appropriately.
- Students, staff, volunteers, and support workers who have confirmed COVID-19 cannot return to school until they meet CDC criteria and provide a letter from their physician clearing them for a safe return. The administrator should be notified

immediately upon a confirmed case of COVID-19 by the student's parent(s)/guardian or any employee or volunteer.

- Those suspected of COVID-19 should follow health and safety guidelines and self-quarantine for 14 days before returning to school, along with notifying the administrator immediately.
- The administrator will notify the Ashland County Health Department immediately if any staff, student, or volunteer is diagnosed with COVID-19. The administrator will consult with the local health department in determining the appropriate next steps for Ashland Christian School should any confirmed cases of COVID-19 occur.
- Ashland Christian School will monitor daily absences of students and staff for trends.

What safety/cleaning protocols will be utilized to help reduce the risk of exposure?

Prevention strategies can help reduce the risk of exposure and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school and our community. The use of disinfectants in facilities reduces the spread of infectious disease. ⁶ The following safety practices will be implemented (and may be reevaluated based on mandates, restrictions, or recommendations):

- Practice physical distancing. Ensuring a distance of 6 feet or more between individuals adds another layer of prevention against the spread of COVID-19 by minimizing the chance of coming into contact with the virus. ⁷
- Teachers will reinforce good hand hygiene with students daily. Handwashing and other common prevention methods are some of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of infectious disease. ⁸ Students will be asked to wash their hands every 2 hours with soap and water (if soap and water is unavailable, students will be asked to use hand sanitizer). Students, staff, and volunteers should practice frequent handwashing for at least 20 seconds when their hands are dirty, before and after eating, following recess, and after using the restroom.
- Automatic hand sanitizers will be installed at points of entry at the school, as well as in each classroom, and will be available to students for use.
- Student desks will be placed 6 feet apart in the classroom to ensure physical distancing recommendations are followed. Students will not use shared supplies in the classroom, which can help reduce the risk of transferring any virus.
- High touch areas (horizontal surfaces) such as door handles, desks, water fountains, etc., will be sanitized daily. During specials, teachers may clean desk tops, door handles, or other high-touch areas to help mitigate the risk of exposure. Teachers will be provided spray bottles and disinfectant to help reduce the risk of exposure.
- A mist sprayer (with disinfectant solution) has also been purchased and may be used to clean classrooms once rooms have been vacated for the day.
- The faculty and staff will influence and instruct students on following these proper prevention strategies. The school will also incorporate signs to reinforce the vital practice of frequent handwashing and sanitizing.

Alone, each of these strategies offers some level of protection. However, when used together, they do provide a greater barrier of defense against the virus. ⁹ More preventative measures could be taken in the future if further mandates or restrictions are required.

How will visitors to Ashland Christian School be screened PRIOR to entering the building?

Visitors will be limited to Ashland Christian School to help minimize the risk of transmission or exposure to the virus. Prior to being allowed to enter Ashland Christian School, all visitors will be required to answer a short health screening questionnaire, along with taking their temperature. The following questions will be asked before admittance is permitted:

1. Do you have any signs of an upper respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing)?
2. Have you had a fever (100.00°F or higher) in the last 72 hours (3 days)?
3. Have you been on any fever-reducing medication in the last 72 hours (3 days)?
4. Have you been in contact with anyone with a laboratory-confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
5. What is your current temperature? _____ °F

Printed Name: _____ Time: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Responses from questions 1-4 must be answered “no” (as well as a temperature of 100.00°F or less) for any visitor to gain admittance into Ashland Christian School.

What are the guidelines for practicing safe physical distancing?

Physical, or sometimes referred to as social, distancing with at least 6 feet between individuals can reduce the spread of infectious disease. ¹⁰ Understanding there are no guaranteed measures to completely eliminate the spread of coronavirus, there are certain measures we can practice to assist us in combating our risk to exposure.

Per COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools, Ashland Christian School will follow these physical distancing guidelines:

- School staff should try when possible to maintain 6-foot social distancing among students, staff, and volunteers in all school environments, including classrooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, playgrounds, drop-off and pick-up locations, and school buses.
- Reinforce distancing with visual cues (such as signs) and verbal reminders.
- Avoid using shared supplies in the classroom.
- Limit the number of visitors to a school.

- Due to the nature of band, choir, music, or orchestra classes, 6-foot social distancing may not be adequate. Teachers and students should maintain as much distance as possible when actively playing and performing. 11

These current guidelines may need to be altered in the future in case further mandates and restrictions are imposed by law.

What is Ashland Christian School's policy on implementing face coverings (face masks & face shields)?

According to the COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools, 12 school staff must wear masks. All school staff and volunteers must wear face coverings **unless it is unsafe to do so or where doing so would significantly interfere with the learning process. Exceptions include the following:**

- Facial coverings in the school setting are prohibited by law or regulation.
- Facial coverings are in violation of documented industry standard.
- Facial coverings are not advisable for health reasons.
- Facial coverings are in violation of the school's documented safety policies.
- Facial coverings are not required when the staff works alone in an assigned work area.
- There is a functional (practical) reason for a staff member or volunteer to not wear a facial covering in the workplace.

*** PLEASE NOTE - Due to face coverings significantly interfering or altering the learning process teachers, while in the classroom, will not be required to wear a face covering.** Communication between the teacher and student is important and face coverings impair the learning process. Teachers are also permitted to wear a face covering at any time, if they feel the need to do so to ensure their personal health/safety. Teachers will be required to wear face coverings during drop-off, dismissal, in the hallways, or where physical distancing guidelines are difficult to follow (for example – during one-on-one teaching). If an exception applies (see exceptions listed above in this section), please contact the school administrator indicating the exception (for example - documentation by a medical professional shall be required for a health reason). Teachers will not be required to wear face coverings when working alone in an assigned work area. Ashland Christian School will supply a face shield for any staff member who requests one. Visitors and volunteers will also be required to follow these guidelines.

*** PLEASE NOTE - Students (K-8) will not be required to wear a face covering while in the classroom (or during lunch time, recess) while at Ashland Christian.** Students (K-8) will be required to wear face coverings during drop-off, dismissal, in the hallways, or where physical distancing guidelines are difficult to follow (for example – during one-on-one teaching, group work, or centers). If an exception applies (see exceptions listed above in this section), please contact the school administrator indicating the exception (for example - documentation by a medical professional shall be required for a health reason).

Children should wash their hands after removing their face covering. If a parent/guardian would rather have their child wear a face covering during other designated times (or for the entire school day), they will be permitted to do so at the request of said parent/guardian.

*** PLEASE NOTE – Students in preschool will only be required to wear face coverings during drop-off or dismissal because of high-traffic during these respective times.**

* Face mask lanyards will be provided to each staff member and student so they may safely ensure their face covering stays safe and within reach.

* Face coverings should be school appropriate.

* Students should also wear face coverings if being transported on public school buses.

* Parents will be responsible for providing a face covering for their child.

While we respect the recommendation of face coverings, Ashland Christian realizes face coverings will significantly interfere or alter the learning process, affecting the learning process and growth of our students. After speaking with the Ashland County Health Department, we are confident we will still be able to provide a safe and healthy learning experience for every single student, while not hindering the students' educational experience.

How will the new color-coded warning system impact Ashland Christian School?

On July 2, 2020, the governor unveiled a new color-coded warning system for the state of Ohio, made to show county-by-county hot spots relating to the coronavirus. The new system (consisting of yellow, orange, red and purple) is designed to show prominence of the virus in each county, making it easier to implement additional closures or measures on a county-by-county basis.

Gov. Mike DeWine announced that a Public Health Advisory Alert System has been created to help state and community leaders collect information that they can layer with enhanced safety measures to combat flare-ups and case increases in an area. ¹³

The system will be color-coded to assess the level of spread in the area to better guide officials to determine appropriate actions. ¹³

There are four levels with seven indicators, with three more to come, to determine the level an area is in, DeWine said. With all of these levels, the face mask policy of Ashland Christian School may be subject to change (based on future Ashland County Health Department, CDC, state, or additional local recommendations or requirements).

The four levels include: ¹³

- **Level 1 - Yellow:** Zero or one indicator has been flagged; active spread exposure, all current health guidelines to be followed as ordered.

- **If Ashland County is listed as a Level 1, the current face mask policy outlined in this policy will apply for Ashland Christian School.**
- **Level 2 - Orange:** Two or three indicators have been flagged; there is an increased risk for exposure and spread.
 - **If Ashland County is listed as a Level 2, the current face mask policy may be readjusted for Ashland Christian School (and may be based off of possible future recommendations/requirements from state/local departments).**
- **Level 3 - Red:** Four or five indicators have been flagged; there is a very high risk for exposure and spread. Ohioans should limit activities when possible and wear a mask in public.
 - **If Ashland County is listed as a Level 3, the current face mask policy may be readjusted for Ashland Christian School (and may be based off of possible future recommendations/requirements from state/local departments).**
- **Level 4 - Purple:** Six to seven indicators have been flagged; there is severe exposure and spread. Residents in these counties should stay home as much as possible.
 - **If Ashland County is listed as a Level 4, the current face mask policy may be readjusted for Ashland Christian School (and may be based off of possible future recommendations/requirements from state/local departments).**

The seven data indicators are: 13

1. **New cases per capita** - When the data shows that a county has had an average of 50 cases per 100,000 people over a two-week period, that will trigger a flag for increasing case rate.
2. **Sustained new case growth** - If the data shows at least a five-day period of sustained new case growth that will trigger a flag.
3. **Proportion of cases that are non-congregate cases** - When there are a large number of positive cases from those living in the broader community, more than 50% of new cases originating from non-congregate settings during at least one of the past three weeks that will trigger a flag on this indicator.
4. **Sustained increase in emergency room visits** - When there is an increase in the number of people who visit an emergency department with COVID-19 symptoms or COVID diagnoses over a five day period that will trigger a flag on this indicator.
5. **Sustained increase in outpatient visits** - When there is an increase over a five-day period in the number of people in outpatient settings, including telehealth appointments, with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 symptoms, that will trigger a flag on this indicator.
6. **Sustained increase in new COVID-19 hospital admissions** - When the numbers show at least a five-day period of sustained growth in the number of county

residents with COVID-19 who are admitted to a hospital, the county will be flagged for meeting this indicator.

7. **Intensive Care Unit (ICU) bed occupancy-** A county will be flagged for the indicator when the regional ICU occupancy goes above 80% for at least three of the last seven days.

What will lunch services look like as we return to Ashland Christian School?

Lunch services, including hot lunches, will still occur at Ashland Christian School, with classes having staggered lunch times. Cafeteria staff will be required to wear face coverings, except for one of the following reasons as stated by the Ohio Department of Health and by the Director's Dine Safe Ohio Order: 14

- Facial coverings in the work setting are prohibited by law or regulation.
- Facial coverings are in violation of documented industry standards.
- Facial coverings are not advisable for health reasons.
- Facial coverings are in violation of the business's documented safety policies.
- Facial coverings are not required when the employee works alone in an assigned work area.
- There is a functional (practical) reason for an employee not to wear a facial covering in the workplace.

* If an exception applies (see exceptions listed above in this section), please contact the school administrator indicating the exception (for example - documentation by a medical professional shall be required for a health reason).

Cafeteria staff will take proactive measures to ensure compliance with physical distancing recommendations - including designating 6-foot distances for students with signage or tape, having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for students or employees, perform daily cleaning of tabletops, seats, and other high touch areas. Tables will be sanitized between classes entering the cafeteria/lunch area. Students will be required to abide by safe physical distancing measures. Additional tables may be setup/provided in order to follow safe physical distancing recommendations. If necessary, lunch may need to be eaten in respective classrooms to help mitigate the risk of traffic/exposure.

Condiments will be provided in individual cups (no shared bottles will occur) and made available to students upon request per recommendations from the Ashland County Health Department.

Lunch volunteers may also be required to wear facial coverings when assisting in the cafeteria.

The measures put forth by the Director's Dine Safe Ohio Order are effective as of June 30, 2020, but are subject to change.

Will there be recess at Ashland Christian when we return to school?

Yes, recess will still be offered when classes resume on Wednesday, August 19th. The school will make every attempt to go outside for recess (weather permitting). Recess times will be staggered. Physical distancing should still try to occur even when outside to mitigate the risk of acquiring the coronavirus.

When weather becomes colder, please be sure to send your child with the appropriate weather gear (hat, gloves, etc.) to keep them safer from colder temperatures.

If inside recess must occur, due to inclement weather, classes will have recess in their own classroom (or the gym if possible).

Students should always wash/sanitize their hands following recess.

Further restrictions may be required.

Will there be field trips at Ashland Christian this year?

Field trips will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and may be influenced based on the color-coded warning system that was unveiled by Governor DeWine on July 2, 2020.

Will buses operate as we head back to school?

For questions regarding busing, please contact your respective local school district/busing garage.

Ashland City Schools

Phone: 419-281-6961

Address: 1407 Claremont Ave., Ashland OH 44805

Hillsdale Local School District

Phone: 419-368-8519 or 419-368-8502

Address: 485 T.R. 1902, Jeromesville, OH 44840

Closing

We thank each and every one of you for your continued commitment to Ashland Christian School. Our entire staff is grateful for your support and honored to serve your family.

We understand the need for flexibility and recommendations may need to change moving forward. This Reopening/COVID-19 Planning Guide for Ashland Christian may be subject to change (with little or no notice). Any changes or additional policies that are required will be communicated with staff, parents, and students in a timely manner.

We will continue to offer your child the best education here at ACS and we are committed to your child's spiritual and educational growth not only for this upcoming academic school year, but in the years ahead.

There is much comfort in knowing that God is our sovereign Lord, Creator, and Protector, where all things are under His control. There is peace knowing that God has plans for each one of us, to give us a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11-12).

- 1 Reset and Restart Education – Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts (p. 4).
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Reset-Restart-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- 2 American Academy of Pediatrics, COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry.
<https://services.aap.org/en/pag-es/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- 3 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Symptoms of Coronavirus. (p.7).
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- 4 Reset and Restart Education – Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts (p. 6).
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Reset-Restart-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- 5 Reset and Restart Education – Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts (p. 7).
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Reset-Restart-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- 6 [https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553\(02\)48249-1/fulltext](https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553(02)48249-1/fulltext)
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0196655302482491>
- 7 Anfinrud, Philip, Stadnytskyi, Valentyn, Bax, Christina E., Bax, Adriaan. Visualizing speech-generated oral fluid droplets with laser light scattering. April 15, 2020. New England Journal of Medicine.
https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2007800?query=featured_home#article_citing_articles
- 8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Show Me the Science - Why Wash Your Hands? Sept. 17, 2018.
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwash-ing/why-handwashing.html>.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs). April 27, 2020.
<https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharma-ceutical-interventions/index.html>
- 9 The Lancet. Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systematic review and meta-analysis.
https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2820%2931142-9/fulltext?utmsource=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_axiosscience&stream=science
- 10 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Social Distancing. May 6, 2020.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
- 11 Reset and Restart Education – Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts (p. 12).
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Reset-Restart-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- 12 Reset and Restart Education – Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts (p. 13).
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Reset-Restart-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- 13 <https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/continuing-coverage/coronavirus/local-coronavirus-news/ohio-creates-color-coded-public-health-alert-system-to-monitor-covid-19-spread-across-each-county>
- 14 Ohio Department of Health, Director’s Dine Safe Ohio Order. Updated 6-5-2020.
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/publicorders/Directors-Order-Dine-Safe-Ohio.pdf>