



## **COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SPRING 2021 Revision Aug 24 2021**

Berean Christian Academy believes that the ultimate aim of a Christian education is to reproduce disciples – men and women who walk in wisdom, obey His word, and live out their faith. We strive to guide our students toward a meaningful relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, to emulate His compassion toward others, and to foster servant leadership qualities while providing a comprehensive academic program presented from a biblical perspective. During this unprecedented time, the Board and administration of BCA will continue to keep the above vision at the center of all decision making and policy development. While no document can attempt to cover every possible scenario, we pray that the following policies and procedures in reference to COVID-19 will be a solid framework to allow the BCA family to safely return to campus on-time and in person this coming fall. We hope to provide a safe environment while striving to create an atmosphere that mitigates fear and exemplifies trust in the sovereignty and provision of our Lord.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps we can take to significantly reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families. This guidance document contains information on four sets of practices that minimize the likelihood of viral spread, including some that are requirements for all schools and others that are recommendations:

- **PROVIDE NOTICE:** Requirements for parental and public notices
- **PREVENT:** Required practices to prevent the virus from entering the school
- **RESPOND:** Required practices to respond to a lab-confirmed case in the school
- **MITIGATE:** Recommended and required practices to reduce likely spread inside the school

The prevention and mitigation practices outlined in this document are designed to significantly reduce the likelihood that a coronavirus outbreak occurs on campus. Some practices are required for all school systems, some are required in areas with high levels of community spread, and some are recommendations. Consistently implementing recommendations to the extent feasible is the best way to reduce the potential negative impact of infection on students' educational experiences. We have seen even recently situations that necessitate temporary class or school closure due to positive COVID-19 cases in other schools. Parents, educators, and school administrators should be prepared for this in the event that it occurs, while actively working to prevent it through prevention and mitigation practices. BCA's goal is to maintain on-campus, in person instruction and activity unless legally or logistically impossible.

Note that on the onset of the past school year, BCA took the cautious approach to the following recommendations by eliminating large group gatherings and activities with the hopes

of reinstating such activities incrementally when deemed safe and appropriate by school administration and local health advisors. This year we are beginning the year with a one-month hiatus on large group gatherings between both campuses. We will reassess at our September board meeting.

### **PROVIDE NOTICE: Requirements for parental and public notices**

BCA parents are required to notify the school as soon as possible if a confirmed case is found in their immediate family or any persons living in the household. All COVID-19 related communication, concerns, or questions should be sent to our designated COVID-19 campus contact as well as the office email. BCA is required to contact our local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

#### **Berean Christian Academy's COVID-19 Contact:**

Ryan Peeples

[rpeeples@bereanchristianacademy.org](mailto:rpeeples@bereanchristianacademy.org)

[office@bereanchristianacademy.org](mailto:office@bereanchristianacademy.org)

#### **Local Health Department:**

Fort Bend Public Health and Human Services: [fbchealth.org/ncov/](http://fbchealth.org/ncov/)

### **PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School**

#### **Screening Questions for COVID-19 Before Campus Access**

1. All teachers, staff, and students must self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Symptoms are listed at the end of this document. The self-screening must include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must notify the school if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below. Additionally, they must notify the school if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, as defined at the end of this document, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 10-day incubation period has passed.

2. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and instead should opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 10-day incubation period has passed. Berean Christian Academy may consider screening students for COVID-19 as well. Screening is accomplished by asking questions by phone or other electronic methods and/or in person. The screening questions will be asked of the student's parent if that parent will be dropping off or picking up their child from inside the school.

3. Excluding parental drop-off and pick-up as discussed above, before visitors are allowed on to campuses, BCA may screen visitors to determine if the visitors have COVID-19 symptoms (as listed in this document) or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below.

4. Additionally, BCA may screen to determine if visitors have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until the 10-day incubation period has passed. When practical, screening questions may be supplemented with temperature checks of adults.

### **Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19**

1. Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until BCA screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

- In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
  - i. at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  - ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  - iii. at least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
    - a. or seven (7) days have passed, symptoms have subsided, AND the individual has a negative COVID test in hand.
- In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
- If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

## **Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus**

- BCA will immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.
- BCA will clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) as soon as is feasible.
- Students who report feeling feverish should be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

## **RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School**

### **Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School**

1. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please contact Ryan Peeples [rpeeples@bereanchristianacademy.org](mailto:rpeeples@bereanchristianacademy.org) immediately so that the health department can be notified.
2. Schools must close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have already passed since that person was on campus.
3. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, schools must notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on-campus activities.

## **MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School**

### **Operational Considerations:**

#### Health and Hygiene Practices: General

1. Upon arrival at school, students will be directed to wash hands or use handsanitizer. BCA will provide hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water in every classroom.
2. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.
  - Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and if not available, covered in their elbows. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer should be used.
3. BCA will institute more frequent cleaning practices, including additional cleaning by janitorial staff, as well as provide the opportunity for children to clean their own spaces before and after they are used, in ways that are safe and developmentally appropriate.
  - BCA has arranged for additional cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in common throughout the day. This would include objects such as door

handles, common tables/desks, shared supplies such as art supplies, and high touch devices such as shared laptops or tablets.

- BCA has arranged for cleaning of commonly-touched surfaces in classrooms between different class groups, if the same room will be used by multiple class groups.
- BCA will ensure that cleaning products are stored safely, including storing chemical-based products where children cannot access them.

4. When possible, teachers can direct students outside, for instruction in an open-air environment.

5. On the first day of school on campus, BCA will provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices and other mitigation practices that have been adopted.

### **Health and Hygiene Practices: Masks**

1. For the purposes of this document, masks include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose, and mouth. Face shields may be superior to cloth face coverings in many circumstances, given improved ability to see mouth movements and improved air circulation.

**2. The Governor's mask mandate has been lifted at the time of this writing.**

**Effective March 10<sup>th</sup>, the mask mandate is no longer in effect.**

3. Masks or face coverings are optional.

4. If under a Governor's executive order, BCA may require the use of masks or face shields for adults for *whom it is developmentally appropriate*.

### **Student-Teacher Groupings**

Where feasible without disrupting the educational experience, encourage students to practice social distancing.

1. In classroom spaces that allow it, student's desks may be spaced apart.

2. In classrooms where students are regularly within six feet of one another, BCA will plan for more frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing and will provide increased outdoor instruction.

## **Use of Non-Classroom Spaces**

1. When feasible and appropriate (for example, in physical education classes as weather permits), it is preferable for students to gather outside, rather than inside, because of the likely reduced risk of virus spread outdoors.
2. BCA will continue to offer some extracurricular activities but will require extracurricular activities to follow BCA's adopted safety protocol.
3. Operation of the facilities must be consistent with the Governor's executive orders for similar activities.
4. BCA has eliminated full assemblies of both buildings and other activities that bring the entire school together.
5. BCA may consider practices that reduce the likelihood that students meet the close contact definition (defined below) at lunch by having students eat at their desks or outside (when weather permits).
6. Effective Nov 2nd, 2020, multiple grades will be allowed outside at recess simultaneously.

## **Visits to Schools**

Parents may visit BCA when volunteering for headmaster approved roles and class activities. During these visits, parents and other visitors must follow virus prevention and mitigation requirements of the school.

## **Staffing**

1. Employees of BCA, like employees of any organization, must continue to meet the work expectations set by BCA, subject to any applicable employment contract terms.
2. School teachers and staff will be trained specifically on the protocols outlined in this document and the practices adopted by BCA.

## **COVID-19 Symptoms**

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the following questions will be considered:

- Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?
  - Feeling feverish or a temperature greater than or equal to 100.0°F
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Shortness of breath
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Sore throat
  - Shaking or exaggerated shivering
  - Significant muscle pain or ache
  - Diarrhea

### **Close Contact**

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:

- a. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or
- b. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield; if either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious. Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

### **At-Home Quarantine Protocol**

In the event that a BCA student is required to quarantine due to a positive COVID-19 test of self, or a confirmed exposure to a positive case, BCA staff will provide take home materials. Attendance will still be kept and the quarantined student will be counted as “present” as long as the student completes assignments. Students and parents are required to stay in regular contact with their classroom teachers in order to maintain clear understanding of academic requirements and attendance.

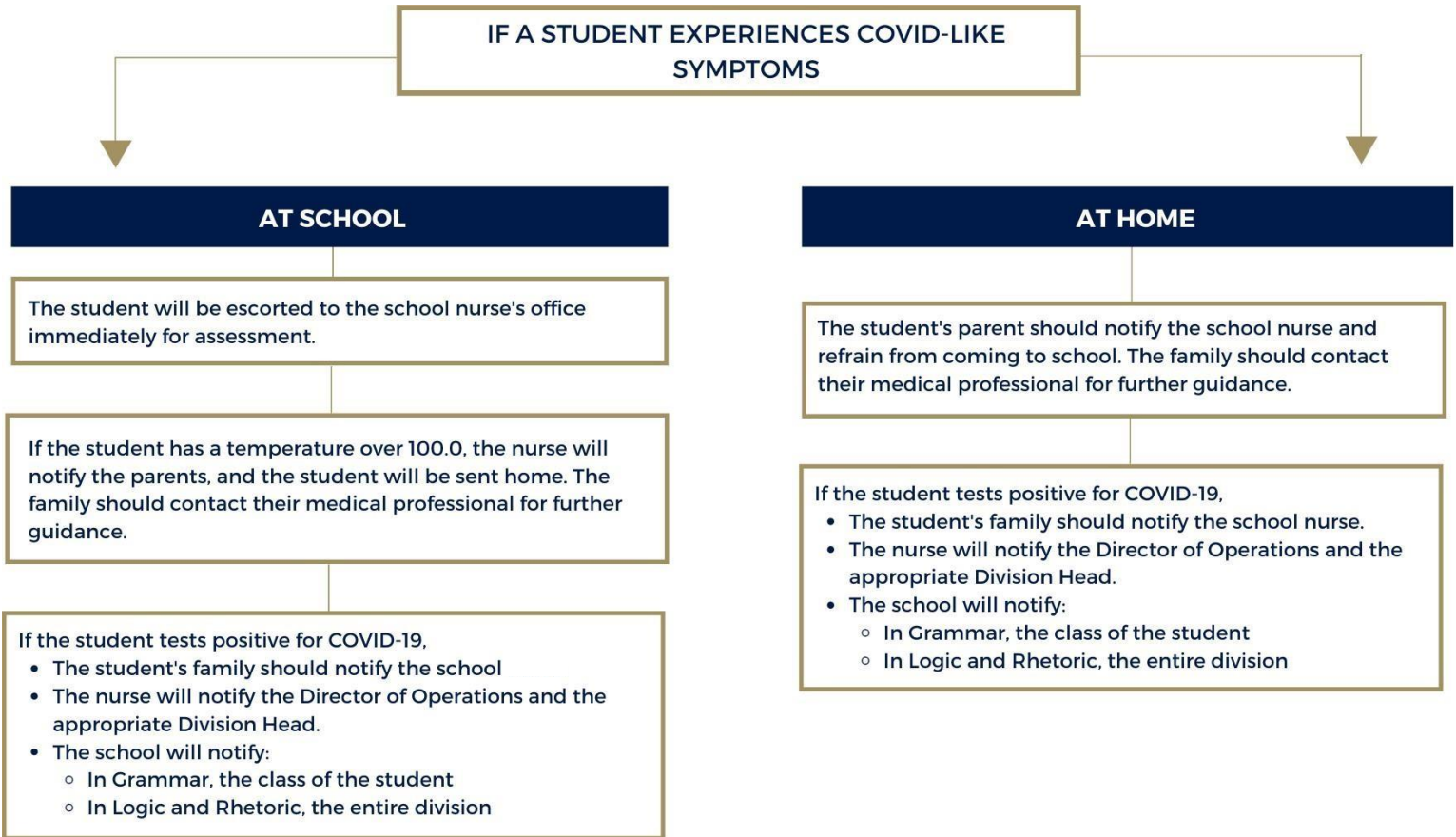
### **Disclaimer**

Berean Christian Academy reserves the right to amend or strike any of the policies or procedures stated above with the exception of Governor mandates that apply to all Texas citizens. Any amendments made to this document will be communicated to BCA families at that time.

# MITIGATION - QUICK GUIDE

## NOTIFICATION

Reducing the spread of COVID-19 requires the cooperation of all members of the Blazer community. To that end, we respectfully ask parents to partner with the school to provide notice when your student has a confirmed positive COVID-19 test result. The school will follow the process outlined below in notifying the community. Following health privacy laws, the school will keep confidential the identity of the individual who tested positive for COVID-19.



## FEVER PROTOCOL

We recognize that there are many reasons for a fever, and we encourage our families to seek guidance from their medical professional so they can receive the appropriate treatment. Regardless of cause, students may not come to school until they have been **fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for at least 72 hours**, which is an extension of our previous 24-hour "no fever" policy.

## TESTING

If a student is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, families should seek guidance from their medical professional to determine if the student should be tested for COVID-19.



# MITIGATION

## “CLOSE CONTACT” SELF-QUARANTINE

Authorities<sup>1</sup> define “close contact” as being in close proximity with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 while not wearing a face covering and not physical distancing for 15 minutes. Guidelines recommend that those who have been in “close contact” with a person who is positive for COVID-19 self-quarantine for 10 days. Quarantine period can be shortened to 7 days with a negative test result at that time.

If 20% of students in the school are absent with the same contagious illness (i.e., flu, strep throat, COVID-19), the school will be closed for three school days and cleaned. BCA Administration reserves the right to suspend individual and/or all school classes in the event of a serious outbreak of the same contagious illness.

## RETURNING TO CAMPUS

THE SCHOOL WILL FOLLOW THE FLOWCHART TO DETERMINE WHEN A STUDENT CAN RETURN TO CAMPUS

