

CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN

IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19



Revised July 31, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

We have created this plan to aid in navigating the reestablishment of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to Cathedral. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state of Texas, and city of El Paso. Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by the CDC, and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

Throughout the year, our schools will emphasize Catholic Identity, high quality and developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction, community building and relationships, and the importance of extracurricular programs, recreation, and socialization. Protocols will be implemented at varying levels throughout the 2021-2022 school year, dependent on the community transmission and infection rates.

All after-school programs will operate in conjunction with these procedures and must follow this guidance in coordination with Cathedral High School.

Due to the seriousness of the situation, Cathedral could face a temporary school closure due to positive COVID-19 cases in the surrounding area. Students, parents, and faculty should be prepared for this in the event that it occurs, while actively working to prevent it through prevention and mitigation practices.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This document contains four sets of principles that minimize the likelihood of viral spread. They are listed below:

1. Provide Notice: Requirements for parental and public notices
2. Prevent: Recommended practices to prevent the virus from entering the school
3. Respond: Required practices to respond to a lab-confirmed case in school
4. Mitigate: Recommend practices to mitigate likelihood of spread inside the school

SECTION 1- PROVIDE NOTICE: PARENTAL AND PUBLIC NOTICE

Cathedral High School (CHS) will post this action plan on our website. This is a summary of the plan we will follow to mitigate COVID-19 spread in our school, based on the requirements and recommendations of our federal, state, and local governments. CHS has designated Amanda Murillo-Estrada as the person responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. She may be reached at (915) 532-3238, or via email --- aestrada@cathedral-elpaso.org.

A. In-person Instruction - Beginning August 9

Students will be returning to school via in-person instruction. Students will adhere to the Parent/Student Handbook with regards to attendance policies, uniform requirements and all other academic policies. In an effort to maintain a healthy atmosphere, all students and faculty will be required to wear masks.

B. Plan for On-Campus Activities and Instruction

1. We are committed to providing a high quality education to all students in a safe and healthy environment. Parents who have concerns as their child returns to face-to-face instruction, should contact administration in order to discuss these concerns.

2. All activities and athletic teams will follow CHS procedures.

C. Online Instruction in Case Cathedral Closes

As the CDC has stated, and as our common wisdom tells us: "Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the Fall of 2021 is a priority." Given the current vaccination rate of our campus, and the current recommendations of the CDC, we are not anticipating a need to close campus. However, if this situation should arise, students and their families will be informed of this action via e-mail. In the case of a campus closure, students would return to the virtual schedule used during the 2019-2020 School year, and would be provided with this schedule via e-mail as well as through the Cathedral High School webpage. Students would attend classes via Zoom or Google Meet, and would be notified of meeting links via Google Classroom by their instructors.



D. Communication Methods

In order to stay updated on the most current information provided by Cathedral High School regarding COVID-19 policies, please do the following:

- A. Make sure all student information is updated on RenWeb.
- B. Check your email daily
- C. Visit our CHS website for any updates
- D. Follow our social media platforms

SECTION 2 - PREVENT: PRACTICES TO PREVENT THE VIRUS FROM ENTERING THE SCHOOL

A. Screening Procedure for COVID-19 Before Campus Access

Anyone entering Cathedral High School will be screened for the following COVID-19 symptoms:

- ★ Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 99.6 degrees
- ★ Loss of taste or smell
- ★ Cough
- ★ Nausea or vomiting
- ★ Difficulty breathing
- ★ Shortness of breath
- ★ Headache
- ★ Chills
- ★ Sore throat
- ★ Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- ★ Muscle pain or body aches
- ★ Diarrhea
- ★ Fatigue
- ★ Congestion or runny nose

Cathedral High School is permitted to prevent any individual who fails the screening criteria from being admitted onto campus or campus based transportation.

1. TEACHERS

CHS will require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. Teachers and staff will have their temperature taken. All screening information will be kept confidential by the CHS administration.

Teachers and staff will report to administration if:

- (a) they have come into close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19
- (b) they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms.

2. STUDENTS

Before coming onto CHS or school based transportation, students will have their temperatures taken. Parents will be required to screen their students before coming to school. All parents are required to notify administration if:

- (a) the student has the COVID-19 symptoms (listed above)
- (b) the student has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19.
- (c) the student or anyone in the student's home is pending a COVID-19 test results

3. PARENTS/VISITORS

The safety of our staff and students remains CHS's primary concern. To help prevent the spread of the virus and reduce the risk of exposure to our staff and students, **VISITORS WILL BE REQUIRED TO FILL OUT SELF-SCREENING FORM. Form can be found online or in the nurse's office.**

B. Individuals Confirmed, Suspected, or Exposed to COVID-19

1. Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

In the event that any individual (student, teacher or faculty member of the school) have a lab-confirmed positive case of COVID-19, the student, teacher or faculty member must quarantine and will not be allowed to return to campus until after the following criteria have been met:

- (a) 10 days have passed from the onset of symptoms, AND
- (b) the individual experiences is free of fever for 24 hours, without the aid of fever-reducing medications, AND
- (c) the individual experiences significant improvement in symptoms, without the use of medications
- (d) Documentation of release of quarantine by a doctor or the health department

Individuals who test positive for Covid-19 still must quarantine even if the infected individual has been fully vaccinated or had Covid-19 within 90 days of the current infection

2. Individuals Suspected to have COVID-19

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 met the following criteria:

- (a) 10 days have passed from the onset of symptoms, AND
- (b) the individual experiences is free of fever for 24 hours, without the aid of fever-reducing medications, AND
- (c) the individual experiences significant improvement in symptoms, without the use of medications
- (e) Documentation of release of quarantine by a doctor or the health department

2. Individuals Suspected to have COVID-19 (cont.)

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 obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return.

CHS will screen individuals after the incubation period has concluded, and if the individual did not experience COVID-19 symptoms during that period, the individual can be allowed back on campus. If the individual experienced symptoms, they must stay at home until the conditions outlined above have been met.

3. Individuals Exposed to COVID-19 on Campus

In the event that a student, teacher or faculty member tests positive for COVID-19, all exposed individuals will be notified by the school, per the guidance of the Director of Catholic Schools and the Health Department.

Fully vaccinated students and staff, or those who have had a confirmed case of Covid-19 within 90 days, will not be required to quarantine following a known exposure to Covid-19.

A quarantine period of 10 days is required following a known exposure to Covid-19 for students and staff who are not considered fully vaccinated. These individuals must bring a negative COVID test in order to return to campus.

(More information on Section 4 of this item found on the next page)

4. Individuals Exposed to COVID-19 Within a Household

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case within the household of a student, teacher or faculty member, current health guidance requires the members of the household to be quarantined for at least 10 days. Based upon this guidance, if there is a positive COVID-19 case within the household of a student, teacher or faculty member, the individual must notify the school. The student, teacher or staff member will also adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. Regardless of whether or not the student, teacher or faculty member is fully vaccinated, they must quarantine 10 days, beginning from when the person in their household tested positive for COVID-19.

- b. The student, teacher or faculty member will be required to show evidence of a negative COVID-19 test, once their quarantine period has been completed, and before they can return to campus or any school related events.

Classmates/close contacts of a quarantined/exposed individual do not need to quarantine unless the quarantined/exposed individual tests positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours of the last time the individual was in close contact with others at the school/school event

C. Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus

CHS will immediately separate any staff member who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school and will require them to follow protocol prior to returning to work. Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave must contact the CHS administration. Employees will be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.

Students who report feeling feverish should be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

CHS 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. It is imperative that emergency information be updated and accurate on RENWEB, in the event that a parent cannot pick up their son.

CHS 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.

D. Additional Requirements in Preventing Spread of COVID-19

1. ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All athletics and extracurricular activities will follow the procedures and regulations stipulated in this action plan.

All athletes must be vaccinated in order to participate in school sponsored sports and activities related to that sport (including practices). Student athletes will receive COVID testing on a regular basis.

2. LOCKER ASSIGNMENTS

While in athletic locker rooms, students are to stay 3 feet from others as a normal practice. Students are to wipe down commonly used/touched items (i.e locker handles, locker doors, etc.) before and after use. Students are asked to avoid anyone who is coughing, sneezing or appears to be sick.

Students will be assigned a locker this year. Students should not congregate in the locker areas, and should retrieve their books as quickly as possible before heading to their designated classroom. Students should not share lockers and should adhere to all locker policies found in the student handbook.

3. LUNCH

Sharing refreshments during lunch is prohibited in order to limit the risk of contamination. Lunch tables and seating will be spaced out so as to create more room for students during the allotted lunch time. Students will enter the school building in small groups, in order to avoid congestion in the hallways

4. WATER FOUNTAINS

The use of all water fountains will be suspended until further notice. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles.

5. FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our employees and students are our first priority. Upon reopening, our schools have been completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the deep clean of the office and school before employees and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection. We will require employees to maintain this safety standard by continuously cleaning and disinfecting based on the frequency stated on the next page.

GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES PROTOCOL

Workspaces	Classrooms, Offices	At the end of each use/day
Appliances	Refrigerators, Microwaves, Coffee Machines	Daily
Electronic Equipment	Copier machines, Shared computer monitors, TV's, Telephones, keyboards	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
General Used Objects	Handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms	At least 4 times a day
Buses	Bus seats, handles/railing, belts, window controls	At the end of each use
Common Areas	Cafeteria, Library, Conference rooms, Gyms, Common Areas	At the end of each use/day; between groups

6. DEEP CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROTOCOL

Deep cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student is identified as positive for COVID-19 based on testing.

7. RESTROOM USAGE DURING THE WORK DAY

Students will be required to sign out of a classroom when leaving to use the restroom. They will also be asked to sign back into a classroom upon their return. Cathedral will provide supplies for employees to clean up after themselves in staff only restrooms.

8. CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENTS

Classrooms will be configured to allow for students and faculty to satisfy social distancing requirements. Seating arrangements will allow for a minimum of 3-feet separation.

To help ensure contact tracing, all teachers will be required to have, and adhere to, a seating chart for all class periods. **All students will be required to wear masks.** Student desk shields will be in place upon the request of the teacher.

9. MASSES AND LITURGIES

In addition to these guidelines, all students and faculty will be required to wear a mask during Mass. Protocols for entering and exiting the church building will be in place in order to allow for distancing between students.

10. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

CHS's counselors will develop resources for parents and teachers to access. The counselors will work with students individually or in small groups to address any well-being needs.

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-general-support#mentalhealth>



SECTION 3 - RESPOND: PRACTICES TO RESPOND TO A LAB-CONFIRMED CASE IN THE SCHOOL

The following are required actions if individuals with lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been on campus:

1. If an individual who has been on campus is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, CHS will notify the 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).
2. CHS will 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, CHS will notify teachers, staff, and the families of students, per the guidance of the Director of Catholic Schools and the Healy Department, if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate in any on campus activities.

SECTION 4 - MITIGATE: Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School

A. Operational Considerations: Health and Hygiene Practices: General

1. CHS will have hand sanitizer stations located throughout the campus.
2. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors will be encouraged to wash hands frequently, especially after using the restroom and before eating.
3. Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors are 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.
4. CHS has instituted more frequent cleaning practices, including additional cleaning by custodial staff, as well as providing the opportunity for students to clean their own spaces before and after they are used. We are requesting that students bring disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer on a daily basis. Students will be required to clean their desk after every use.

We have also arranged for additional cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in common throughout the day. This would include objects such as door handles, tables/desks, shared supplies such as art supplies, and high touch devices such as shared laptops or tablets.

5. CHS will provide instruction to students on appropriate hygiene practices consistent with the mitigation practices.
6. In keeping with Diocesan recommendations, all eligible teachers and staff have been vaccinated for COVID-19 in keeping with medical standards and ADA protocols, policies, and procedures.
7. Although not required for enrollment, all eligible students are encouraged to be vaccinated in keeping with medical standards and ADA protocols, policies, and procedures. Several Vaccination Clinics will be held on campus throughout the beginning of the school year during after school hours, in order to facilitate the reception of the vaccine.

B. Health and Hygiene Practices: Masks

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. All students and faculty must wear a mask on a daily basis. Masks must be in compliance with CHS uniform policy.

C. 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 reduced risk of virus spread outdoors.
2. CHS has planned for entry, exit, and transition procedures that reduce large group gatherings (of students and/or adults) in close proximity.

The Administration reserves the right to amend this Handbook at any time when deemed necessary.