

Trinity Christian School Reopening Guidelines

We are still in the midst of an unprecedented period in our history, and it has caused a great deal of turmoil and anxiety in our community, our nation, and around the world. Schools continue to modify and decide upon the wisest course of action for the 2021-2022 school year. There are many factors to consider in making decisions about school: the health and safety of faculty, staff and students; the academic needs of children; the mental, social, emotional and spiritual well-being of students and families; the economic impact of COVID-19 and the related shut-downs on families and our nation. There are no easy answers to these issues, and there are inherent risks no matter what options schools take. Online options risk the academic, social/emotional, and economic health of students and families, while face to face options have health and safety risks. Yet we have to make difficult decisions about the 2021-2022 school year. Thankfully we serve a sovereign God who controls all things and who promises wisdom to those who seek it from him. At TCS a task force was formed in the summer of 2020 to consider issues related to re-opening, and they made recommendations to the School Board, which approved these guidelines for the 2020-21 school year. Now, as we begin the 2021-22 school year, these guidelines have been evaluated and modified appropriately. Please note that as this situation changes, these policies may have to be updated as well.

1. Will school be face to face or online in 2021-2022?

TCS will continue teaching face to face on our campus in 2021-2022 unless the governor issues an order shutting down face to face instruction in the state. Our belief is that education is best done in person and that online instruction is not as effective. We are committed to providing face to face instruction for as long as possible in 2021-2022. Our ability to remain open, however, depends on everyone in the TCS community following these guidelines to the best of their ability. While some of these guidelines may not be easy or popular, we all need to remember that their purpose is to keep students, faculty, staff and parents as safe as possible and to keep our students in school as much as possible.

2. Will TCS parents have an online option for 2021-2022?

TCS will not be able to offer parents the option of online instruction. The reason for this is that teachers give 100% to their in-person classes, and teaching online also requires teachers to give 100% in preparation and instruction. It would be unreasonable to expect teachers to do both face to face and online instruction every day.

However, if there is a state-ordered shutdown or if there is COVID-19 exposure in one or more classes, we may have to move to online instruction for a class or the entire school for a time. Our faculty is prepared for what online instruction would look like, in the event there is a closure.

3. What will TCS do to ensure the health and safety of faculty, staff and students?

There is no way to remove all risks with regard to meeting face to face. Whenever possible, we will follow current guidelines and best practices for minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Some precautions will include: having hand sanitizer stations at entrances and throughout the buildings; having disinfecting solutions in every classroom with teachers wiping down desks, door handles, and other shared items at least daily; having public areas (restrooms, lunchroom) cleaned thoroughly at least daily; allowing all

classes to eat outside if they wish; shutting off water fountains and asking students to bring their own water bottles; being cautious about what field trips to take; not having student desks facing each other; reminding students to wash their hands often, including before and after lunch, recess and using the restroom.

4. What responsibility do parents have to help keep TCS safe and healthy?

First, we are asking that you sign a form stating that you have read and agree to follow these guidelines to the best of your ability.

Second, please take your child's temperature daily before school and screen for any symptoms.

Third, you must commit to not sending your child to school if he or she is sick, has been sick in the last 24 hours, or has had a fever in the last 24 hours. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of Tylenol or Advil. This applies to a routine illness and not a COVID-19 related illness.

During flu season, it will be very difficult to know if your sick child has the flu and/or COVID-19 unless you go to the doctor to be tested. If your child has flu-like symptoms, please contact your doctor and follow his or her advice. A child with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, aches) or COVID-19 symptoms will need to have a doctor's note giving him or her permission to return to school in order to be allowed back in class. The office will follow up with parents of students who are absent to find out the reason and conduct a screening to determine if the student can return to school.

Fourth, if your child has had an exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please consult with your physician for his or her guidance on when it is safe for your child to return to school. If your child is fully vaccinated, no quarantine is required with a positive exposure as long as you are asymptomatic.

Fifth, we ask that all parents visiting the school or volunteering to not come into the school if you have any illness. Also, please limit your visits to the school or classrooms to those that are absolutely necessary.

Lastly, we will follow DPH/CDC guidelines for quarantines.

5. What responsibility do students have to help keep TCS safe and healthy?

First, students need to not come to school if they are sick, and need to stay home until they are fever free for at least 24 hours (see number 4 above).

Second, students need to practice good hygiene by washing hands and/or using hand sanitizer when they arrive at school, before and after lunch, recess, and P.E., and after using the restroom. They also need to respect one another's space and keep from touching one another or breathing or coughing on one another as much as possible.

Third, students (and parents) need to respect one another's decisions regarding wearing or not wearing a mask. The Bible talks extensively about how we should treat one another when it comes to matters of conscience, and our duty is to love and respect our brothers and sisters and not to look down on or to judge one another in these matters.

6. Will students, faculty or staff be required to wear masks?

Masks will be encouraged and allowed for anyone who feels the need to wear one but will not be required.

7. What about sports, recess and P.E.?

At this time, the plan is to have P.E. classes and recess as normal, but limiting activities that involve physical contact. Our interscholastic sports program is required to follow the guidelines of the Georgia Association of Private and Parochial Schools. We will continue our sports programs like we did during the 2020-21 school year.

8. If my child has to be absent for an extended period of time, what will happen?

We will work with students who have extended absences as we have done in the past. Teachers will gather missed work and send it to the office to be picked up by a parent. The teacher(s) will also check in with that student several times a week by phone or Zoom to answer questions and make sure the student is not falling too far behind.

9. What if a child or teacher in a class comes to school and then tests positive for COVID-19?

This is the most difficult issue in re-opening. If a child or teacher came to school asymptomatic or symptomatic and then tested positive, we would notify all families in that class of the exposure and encourage you to contact your physician for medical guidance and possible testing. We would also consult with local health care providers to ensure proper mitigation strategies are followed. In order to prevent a school-wide spread that could lead to shutting down the whole school, there may be times when all the students in a grade would have to be sent home for a period of time. If this were to happen, the teacher would provide online instruction for those students for the period they could not attend school. We know that this could create a hardship for working parents, but this may be necessary to prevent a school-wide outbreak or possible shut-down of the entire school for a longer period of time.

10. Will other clubs, extracurricular activities or field trips be affected?

All clubs that meet during the school day or after school still plan on meeting, as well as music, art, and other “specials” and electives. Field trips will depend on the location, whether the venue is open, and virus spread at the time of the trip.

11. What about the mental/emotional/spiritual well-being of students and families during this crisis?

Our assistant head of school and our school counselor participated in an online conference on dealing with the emotional trauma of this crisis and are well-prepared to help counsel students. In addition, TCS will continue to have Bible classes daily and chapel weekly where we can be encouraged by God’s word. We all need to be reminded that even during this crisis God is in control, that nothing happens apart from His holy will, and that He has promised never to leave us or forsake us.

12. Will parents have to sign a waiver for their children to attend school in 2021-2022?

We will be requiring parents to sign a waiver stating that they understand that there are risks associated with sending their children to school in 2021-2022 and that they will not hold the school liable if their

child gets sick, and that they have read these reopening guidelines and agree to follow them to the best of their ability.

13. What about lunch?

Students will be able to eat in the lunchroom or outside (weather permitting). Hot lunches will be served in individually packed lunches without communal serving trays. Lower school students will still be able to bring foods to be microwaved by parent volunteers, and upper school students will still be able to microwave their lunches. Microwaves will be spread out. Hand sanitizer will be in the lunchroom and students will be asked to wash their hands before and after lunch.

14. Will TCS do standardized testing in 2021-2022?

We will do Terra Nova testing for students in Kindergarten through grade eight in the Spring. Our testing is used to assess individual student achievement and academic progress and is not “high stakes” testing as in the public schools. We will also offer the PSAT for grades 9-11, and juniors and seniors will take the SAT and/or ACT.

**Trinity Christian School
Parent/Guardian COVID-19
Consent Form & Liability Waiver**

During the last quarter of the 2019-20 school year, a worldwide pandemic was declared as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19). The Center For Disease Control (CDC) states that "the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes." As the CDC learned more about the virus, they alerted the public on possible preventive measures. Trinity Christian School will follow our state and local standards of conduct and will put in place reasonable preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at the school. However, even though such standards will be followed and reasonable measures put into place, the school cannot guarantee that you or your child(ren) will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending the school could increase your risk and your child(ren)'s risk of contracting COVID-19.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and that my child(ren) and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by participating in school activities and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at Trinity Christian School may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, School employees, volunteers, and program participants and their families.

Considering the foregoing, however, I, _____ grant permission for my child to participate in this
(parent/guardian name)
school activity that may require transportation to a location away from the school site, notwithstanding the risks associated with the COVID-19 virus and group activities.

I confirm that there are no necessary changes to the Medical Information Consent form for my child that I previously submitted. If there are any necessary changes, I will make that change in the FACTS portal or will contact the school to make the change.

I further agree on behalf of myself, my child named herein, and my spouse, our heirs, successors, and assigns, to release, indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Trinity Christian School and Trinity Presbyterian Church of Statesboro, Inc., their members, directors, officers, employees, agents and representatives ("indemnitees") associated with the event arising from or in connection with the negligent acts or omissions of the indemnitees' in relation to prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. I SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE THAT I AM AGREEING TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE INDEMNITEES' FROM THEIR OWN NEGLIGENCE IN REGARD TO THE INDEMNITEES' NEGLIGENT ACTION AND/OR INACTION IN REGARD TO PROTECTION AGAINST THE COVID-19 VIRUS.

Student's name(s) - list all children enrolled at TCS for 2021-2022

Parent/Guardian's name (print) _____

Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

I do signify that I have read and understand the Trinity Christian School Reopening Guidelines document and agree to the best of my ability to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Form must be signed and returned before student begins school on campus