

Dear BCS Community,

Over the past several months your administration has been diligently planning for the reopening of school on campus this fall. We have maintained four principles as we look towards reopening. First, we want the fall to feel as normal and as joyful for our students as possible. Second, we want the safest and healthiest environment possible for our students, faculty, staff, and community. Third, we want the highest quality academic experience for our students. Fourth, in the midst of a global pandemic we want this semester to be about praising God for our blessings and opportunities – in other words, our mission matters now more than ever.

There are many communications that need to occur between now and the start of school so let me begin this one by giving you the communication plans so that you will understand when information will be provided. The timeline of communications lines up with the dates for mandate and guideline releases from the various health, educational, and accreditation agencies.

- Today's message will give you our basic reopening structure, options, and a sense of some of the health and safety precautions we are taking.
- The week of July 13 – The Financial Relief options for COVID for different contingency scenarios
- The Week of July 20 – Plans for Athletics and Physical Activity Co-curricular
- The Week of July 27 – Plans for Fine Arts and Academic Competition Co-curricular
- The Week of August 3 – The Daily Procedures for Parents: Campus Access, Lunches, Community Gatherings, etc.
- The Week of August 10 – Specific Information Related to your Student(s) Class

This communication schedule will give you the broad overview information you will need to understand what is being put into place to make BCS the safest and highest quality educational institution in central Texas. It will then begin narrowing down as we approach the start of school to the concrete procedures and processes that will be implemented on a daily basis for both students and parents. We have had our plans in place for several weeks but have been waiting on the educational authorities to release the mandates so that we can make sure our plans and communications are as consistent and regulatory compliant as possible. My commitment to you

is that you will have all the information you need to understand what we are doing and how it will be of benefit to you and your family.

### **Health and Safety**

Please know that your administration has spent a great deal of time in trainings and research on how to make our campus as safe and healthy as possible. Also please know that we are doing all of this while trying to make sure the daily school experience is either as normal as possible or, when it cannot be normal, that the potential impact to spirit and confidence is as minimized as possible. I truly think you will be pleased when you see the physical and programmatic steps we are taking to make the campus as safe as possible. This is just a sampling of some of those steps:

- Sanitation Stations at every entrance and in every classroom
- An advanced cleaning protocol to insure sanitation and sterilization on a daily basis
- High quality and fully see through plexi-glass shielding on all shared tables
- Cohort scheduling so that students are only in contact with a defined group of students each day
- Classroom capacity designation and a redesign of every classroom to ensure social distancing
- Lunchroom redesign for social distancing
- New queue based drop off and pick up procedures
- Scheduled hallway, restroom, and common use areas access
- Face covering procedures for common use areas and age appropriate classroom protocols

Again, this is just a small sampling of the physical improvements and programmatic changes we are implementing to make the campus as safe and as healthy as possible. The full, extensive list of changes and improvements will be made available in the August 3<sup>rd</sup> communication.

### **Educational Options and Contingencies**

Again, you will be receiving much more extensive plans and information as school nears. The purpose of this message is to give you the plan overviews so that you know your options and the school's plans for contingencies if there is a mandated change of daily educational practices. Before I list the contingencies let me first assure you that the full intent of BCS is to

be open and providing on-campus education throughout school year 2020-21. I truly believe it is important to get our kids back to school. We need to be careful and we need to be cautious but keep in mind our students are still developing socially, emotionally, spiritually, as well as academically. These formative years need social interaction as well as the personal and independent accountability of the classroom. Please take a few minutes and read this article from the American Academy of Pediatrics, [AAP Article](#). It outlines the demonstrable gains of on-campus education versus the risks of illness, especially for this age group.

Having said all of that, we also have extensive plans for those parents who want an online option, as well as full contingencies for all 4 levels of state mandated operational related possibilities. I fully understand that some parents want more time with your kids at home because your children or a family member have respiratory issues or another issue that creates vulnerability or for the parents who want to take a more cautious approach. I respect that and I want you to know that BCS will have a full online option even while classes are occurring on campus.

The following is a summation of each level of contingency as defined by the state:

1. BCS Plan: Full On-Campus with Online Choice Options:

- This is the model that should be in place throughout the year and that we are being told is fully supported by the health authorities and government
- We are back on campus with in-classroom learning with social distancing and sanitation precautions
- Daily processes will be different but there is great effort being put into place to make the learning environment as normal and as joyful as possible
- Online learning will be made available for those who choose to keep students home for an extended period of time, up to and including the full year.
  - Teaching Zones are being put into place in each classroom and classroom lessons will be both livestreamed and recorded for rebroadcasting for at-home students. This means students at home will hear the same lessons and hear all the classroom questions. The full day will not be broadcast, only lessons from the teaching zones. Also, there will be no visual of classroom students on the livestream lessons or rebroadcasted lessons.
  - All lessons will be maintained on a private platform accessible only by BCS enrolled students.

- All at-home students will have access to live Q&A from the teacher and/or designee on a daily basis as a supplement to the lesson.
    - A livestream, non-recorded or rebroadcasted, SEL Q&A will be made available each day. This is a time when elementary students at home will be able to see their classmates and visit with them virtually. There will be no recording or posting of these virtual visits.
  - More details about on-campus and online will be coming in early August. Both will have outstanding classroom based teaching and full student interaction at home and in the classroom.
2. If State Mandated: 50% Capacity Hybrid Model Contingency
- This is the least likely of all options but it is one TEA has identified as a possibility so we have full plans ready, just in case.
    - In this model we would have half our students on campus on Monday and Wednesday and the other half on campus Tuesday and Thursday. The half not on campus would participate with the utilization of the "teaching zone" option online.
    - Fridays would be designated for specialties and online subject recapture by teachers and tutors.
    - The only students on campus every day would be those elementary students whose parents are "Essential Employees" which means they both work outside of the home as well as single working parents.
    - Again, it is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** this would model would be implemented but I am sharing it with you for transparency purposes.
3. If State Mandated: 25% or EEL Model:
- This is a model that sends the majority of our students home due to a city or community spike in cases.
  - In this model we would still have daily classroom teaching but only for those elementary students of "essential employees" as well as those elementary and secondary students the faculty designates as "at-risk" academically.
  - All other students would participate in daily online education utilizing the same "Teaching Zone" process outlined above with extra tutoring and Q&A sessions added.
  - If this contingency were enacted by health officials, we are being told it would be in reaction to a spike in cases and would tie into the defined time period necessary to quell the increase. In other words, if this model were enacted it would likely be for 35 days or less.
4. Only if State Mandated: Prolonged Quarantine - Online Only:
- We are being told it is highly unlikely we will experience a long-term campus closure like we experienced in the spring. All health and governmental

authorities are adamant about keeping schools open and only have short closures if there is a city or community spike and then moving to online only during the mitigating time.

- However, we have to have a contingency plan in place. If this were to occur the main difference from the spring is that we will be privatizing access and likely moving to a block schedule for secondary so that the workload for both faculty and students can be managed.
- As the spring demonstrated, we had a successful move to online with no notice. We have now been planning for this unlikely contingency for many months. Our main goals, should this occur, is to maintain the quality of education and manage the workloads so that time is concentrated into specific core topics in a blocked fashion which maximizes teacher access and manages the workload.
- For our elementary students, we will focus on those core lessons necessary for advancement and placement with supplemental specialty offerings.
- Next week's communication will address financial assistance should there be a COVID mandated move to online education.

This is a lot of information and yet it is just a sample and summary of the plans and procedures your school is putting in place to make sure Brentwood Christian School Bears are the best educated academically but also the best nurtured socially, emotionally, and spiritually. I want our community to have enough information to have faith that your child(ren) will be as safe, healthy, and loved as possible. I also want you to understand the options and changes that will be coming.

### **Quarantine and Closure Trigger Events**

Finally, please know that my full intent is to maximize classroom time and minimize online time as a mandated option. The following is how we will address a mandated campus or cohort quarantine closure, should it occur:

- We are being told very clearly that the intent is to keep schools open. We are implementing cohort models so that if we have an infection on campus we can move to a 14-day quarantine for that cohort.
- The plan at this point is that a single 14-day quarantine will not have a makeup or online offset.
- A second 14-day quarantine would be addressed through an addition of class time through the removal of training days and a 1-day calendar extension for every 2 days lost.

- A third 14-day quarantine would be a direct move to online learning.

Again, financial information will come next week and more information each week thereafter. I am happy to answer questions but I do ask that if your question pertains to one of the coming topics that you wait until we release that information. Again, we are waiting on final state mandates which is the driving force behind our communication schedule.

Here is the bottom line, we are so excited to see our students back on campus. This year will be different but it will be special. For every opportunity lost due to regulations we are putting in place a replacement that makes the time special. For every safety precaution that feels invasive we are finding a correlating opportunity to bring normalcy and joy. School year 2020-2021 will be one of the best Brentwood Christian School has ever had and I can assure you that your administration, faculty, and staff is putting in the work to make this happen.

In the midst of so many issues the one constant for me is that we are blessed and it is absolutely a great day to be a Brentwood Bear!

***Blessings,***  
***Jay Burcham***  
***President***

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/americas-pediatricians-say-schools-should-reopen-f-or-the-fall/ar-BB16a4HE?li=BBnb7Kz>