



**Trinity Lutheran School**  
**Springfield, Illinois**  
**RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN**  
***IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19***

## **Trinity Lutheran School- Back to School Plan**

The 2019 novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is a member of a large family of viruses that causes a variety of illnesses in humans and animals. The virus primarily spreads from person to person via respiratory droplets or aerosols. Trinity will continue to follow guidance from federal, state, and local government, as well as national and state health organizations, to ensure a safe return to campus. As part of Phase 4 in Illinois, schools are welcome to reopen under specific guidance. We have been in consultation with a wide variety of resources in developing guidelines for a safe return to school. Since there is no vaccine at this time, we expect that COVID-19 will continue to be prevalent this coming school year. As we plan to reopen, there is no guarantee that COVID-19 will be kept away from our school, families, or local community. However, this plan presents evidence-based guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19 at our school to ensure that our students, faculty, and staff can proceed in a safe and responsible manner.

Trinity Lutheran School intends to open in August of 2020, with in-person classes offered each school day as scheduled. In order to make this happen, we need to consider how to accommodate the health needs of our students, faculty, and staff—especially those who are at increased risk for the COVID-19 virus. We have worked to ensure that procedures are in place to make Trinity as safe as possible for all of our stakeholders. This guide will continue to be revised as information and understanding of COVID-19 evolves.

In order to make this plan successful, we need all stakeholders to work together in a manner that values all members of our community as unique creations of God, so that we can protect each other. With that in mind there are truly two scenarios that Trinity is considering for the coming school year.

- I. While in Phase 4 we will put in place procedures and precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19 on our campus and in our community. During this time, we will pay special attention to each person's unique needs in order to successfully provide in person instruction.
- II. If a community outbreak of COVID-19 does occur again, we will consider moving all students, teachers, and staff to an online and remote learning environment.

While we believe that our current plan is comprehensive, it may change as more information becomes available. Currently, COVID-19 appears to behave differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses, such as influenza, of which much of the current guidance regarding school closures is based. Although children and adolescents play a major role in amplifying influenza outbreaks, to date, this does not appear to be the case with COVID-19.

Evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from COVID-19 infection. Also, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection. COVID-19 policies are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, risk. No single action or set of actions will eliminate the risk of COVID-19 transmission, but implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk. We will adapt our plans if the information changes and dictates a change.

This plan has been created 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 in-person learning. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on current understanding of the virus, transmission, and safety. There are a few **requirements from the Illinois State Board of Education** that have been put into place in order to reopen schools.

1. Requirement of facial coverings indoors (This may change in the near future)
2. Social Distancing be observed as best as possible
3. Require symptom screenings and temperature checks and/or self-certification of being symptom free
4. Require an increase of cleaning and disinfection

### **Returning to School- Daily Procedures**

#### **Daily Screening**

All faculty, staff, and students will be screened to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure within our Trinity community by completing a pre-screening before coming to campus each day or once they arrive. All students entering the building will also have their temperature taken using school devices.

**Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or above will be sent home from school. Please do not send your child to school with a fever this school year. Anyone (students and teachers) who has exhibited a fever cannot return until a MINIMUM of 24 hours fever free without use of fever-reducing medication has passed.**

**We retain the right to evaluate all situations on a case-by-case basis and send or ask students to remain home when deemed necessary.**

### **Visitors**

Trinity Lutheran School will not be able to allow normal visitation to our campus until Phase 5 reopening. This does mean that parents will not (normally) be allowed past the office and entry lobby with the two sets of double doors.

Contracted workers from outside organizations will be required to answer screening questions, wear a mask while in the building, and have their temperature taken. All effort will be made to do any work away from students.

All non-school groups will be unable to meet on the campus while students are present.

### **Facial Coverings**

Masks are to be worn by all personnel in the building at all times, unless a person has a health related issue that does not allow them to wear a mask. It is necessary to provide a note from your doctor in these situations.

While we know this is a touchy issue for many people, we will provide many opportunities for students to be without their masks daily. This will occur during recess, lunch, and other activities that occur outdoors. This issue is evolving daily, and as of the current time there is a lawsuit involving the use of masks by students.

We also recognize that masks may be a struggle for many of our students. Our teachers will work to do the best that they can do to maintain a balance between teaching and keeping to the standards necessary for student safety.

### **Social Distancing- Classroom Families**

Students will remain in their homeroom (Family) classrooms for the majority of the time while teaching and learning occurs. Access in hallways, lunchrooms, and bathrooms will be limited to maintain social distancing as best we can. We are blessed with a large facility to allow all of our student desks to maintain social distancing standards. In order to do this, **cap sizes have been implemented on all grade levels.**

### **Air Conditioning**

We recognize that Trinity does not have air-conditioned classrooms in all spaces in the K-8 part of the building and are working to alleviate this worry. New electric is being installed within the building as we speak. This will allow us to place temporary cooling systems in the K-4 classrooms, while moving our 5-8 classes to spaces that are currently air-conditioned. This will allow for better student comfort while wearing a mask.

### **Hand Sanitizing Stations-Hand Washing**

Hand sanitizing stations will be stationed liberally throughout school and in the classrooms. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. All people are encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon entering the building, after restroom usage, before and after eating, and upon leaving the building.

### **Drinking Fountains & Bottle Filling Stations**

The use of drinking fountains will be minimized to avoid sharing germs, but the use of the bottle filling feature of the water fountains will be encouraged. All students will need to have a water bottle to use daily.

### **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

The safety of our employees and students is our first priority. Upon reopening, Trinity has 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 will be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and students 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 below. Trinity has invested in cleaning materials and supplies to ensure a high level of disinfection and cleaning.

## **GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Workspaces</b>	Classrooms, Offices	At the end of each use/day
<b>Appliances</b>	Refrigerators, Microwaves, Coffee Machines	Daily
<b>Electronic Equipment</b>	Copier machines, Shared computer monitors, TV's, Telephones, keyboards	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
<b>General Used Objects</b>	Handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms, handrails	At least 3 times a day
<b>Common Areas</b>	Cafeteria, Library, Conference rooms, Gyms, Common Areas	At the end of each day, multiple times daily when spaces are shared
<b>Playground</b>	Play equipment, shared materials	Multiple times daily

### **Traffic Patterns in the Building**

It may be necessary to create traffic patterns in the building to keep and promote proper distancing standards. If needed, markings will be used to indicate these patterns. Stairs should be used whenever possible, as no more than one person may enter an elevator at a time. If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer upon departing the elevator.

### **Hot Lunch Program**

We are working with the lunchroom and custodial staff to provide a safe and enjoyable environment. Details are still in the works and will be communicated when completed. These will also be subject to change to make them work for the safety of our students and staff.

### **Extended Care Program**

We will continue to offer before and after care programs. Any student that arrives for early care will have to be screened in the same way all students that enter school at arrival time. Aftercare will also be available most days. We are working on a plan that allows for students to spend as much time outside as possible.

### **Playground and Recess**

We will be adding recesses to the school day to allow more outdoor time for students. This includes all grade levels from Preschool through grade 8. These times will be staggered to provide recess where students are with their homeroom classes. This will limit the number of students/classes on the playground/ or athletic field at one time to promote distancing. We will work with students to best understand social distancing concepts. The playground equipment will be sanitized regularly.

### **Sports**

Fall sports will likely be postponed as opposed to cancelled (we will be reviewing this position with other Lutheran schools.) The seasons may look different than in the past.

### **Electronic Equipment**

We will be sanitizing any shared equipment between uses. We will encourage any students in grades 5-8 to bring their own chromebooks if they would like.

### **Choir and Band**

For the current school year we will be postponing choir. Choir and singing have been shown to be a method for possible greater transmission. We will re-evaluate this as the year goes on. We are still evaluating band class, and a decision will be made in conjunction with Lutheran High School.

### **When Someone Becomes Ill at School**

It is important to remember that students will become ill with many other things this school year. Just because a student is ill does not mean it is COVID-19. Keeping students home when sick is much more important this year. If you go to the doctor, please bring a note confirming the ability to return to school.

Currently, symptoms for COVID-19 are as follows: fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea, headache, congestion or runny nose, and/or sore throat. (These continue to change.) Students and staff exhibiting two (2) or more of these symptoms will immediately report to our **isolation room** and the case form will be completed.

Once the employee or student arrives at the isolation room, we will immediately provide them with a mask in order to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus. The following steps will then be completed:

- **Suspected COVID19 Case Form must be completed.**
- Health Authorities will be notified as required by ISBE/IDPH
- Employees will be required to leave work
- Parents will be called to pick up their child within one hour.
- The principal will work to identify persons who may have come in close contact with the suspected infected person. Any persons or parents will be contacted if determined necessary. Close contact is defined by 15 minutes of contact within 6 feet. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee or student exhibiting symptoms cannot be provided.*
- Advise employees they may have been in contact with a suspected employee or student and to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the school principal.
- The isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

### **Returning from COVID-19**

In accordance with state and federal guidance, school community members who are sick should not return to school until they have met criteria to return. CDC and IDPH guidelines for students who were suspected of having COVID-19, whether they were tested or not, state that **72 hours must elapse from resolution of fever without fever reducing medication and 10 days must pass after symptoms first appeared.**

It is recommended medically fragile and immunocompromised students consult their medical provider prior to attending school. Students or staff returning from illness related to COVID-19 should call to check in with the building administrator following quarantine.

### **When a Student is Quarantined**

Trinity will provide families the opportunity to continue learning at home, when the student is well enough or if just quarantined at home with a family member. We will be providing a remote learning liaison who will coordinate with the classroom teacher and the family. Remote learning will be developed to meet the learning needs of each individual, knowing that all cases will be different. Mrs. Alicia Klug will be working with families daily in the afternoons to ensure continuity of learning. She will be in contact with students and families to create a unique plan if they are out of school for any extended period of time. Families may contact her at [aklug@trinity-lutheran.com](mailto:aklug@trinity-lutheran.com) or at school via phone at 217-787-2323.

### **Guiding Documents**

ISBE/IDPH - *Starting the 2020 – 2021 School Year*, June 23, 2020

American Academy of Pediatrics – *COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry*,

DCFS - *Restore Illinois Day Care Guidance*

COVID-19 Transmission and Children: The Child Is Not to Blame Benjamin Lee, MD, William V. Raszka, Jr, MD