

Dear parents/caregivers of the students at Abiding Word Lutheran School,

We are excited to open our doors once again and offer your children the exceptional Christian education they need and deserve. However, with that excitement we also want you to be aware that we are concerned for the physical well being of your children; and are committed to keeping the environment at Abiding Word as safe as possible. We at Abiding Word are well aware that COVID-19 still remains a threat and is to be taken seriously. We are taking every possible precaution to ensure that your children and our community of learners on the whole remain safe and healthy. Our detailed plan listed below is based on guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as well as our state and local health officials.

Abiding Word's COVID-19 Action Plan

Staying Home When Appropriate

- We actively encourage employees and students who are sick, namely those who have exhibited COVID-19 [symptoms](#), to stay home.
 - We recommend you contact your healthcare professional.
 - If you are experiencing [an emergency warning sign](#), then go to the hospital immediately.
- We actively encourage the return to school only when:
 - You have tested negative for COVID-19.
 - Upon testing positive; you have been cleared to return by a medical professional after the proper isolation guidelines have been met.
- In the event that a student, staff, or faculty member test positive for COVID-19; the specific classroom in which a case has been reported will be shut down for two weeks.
 - Remote learning will be the only option for those specific students.
 - Face-to-face instruction will resume on the first Monday following the 14 day mandatory quarantine period.

Practicing Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Provide adequate supplies.
 - Support [healthy hygiene](#) behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.
- Face Coverings/Masks

- We encourage that parents or visitors refrain from entering the building as much as it is possible.
 - For drop off and pick up, please stay in your vehicles if possible.
 - If you need to exit the vehicle, then please observe social distancing and wear a mask.
- Any parent, caregiver, or visitor will be required to wear a mask before they are permitted to enter the building.
 - Please call in advance and inform the office of the time and nature of your visit.
 - All visitors will be asked to wait in the office until their child or the teacher they wish to speak to comes to meet them.
- Faculty, staff, and students will be required to wear masks during the following:
 - Upon entering the building and walking to their specific classroom.
 - Upon exiting the building to go home for the day.
 - When engaged in cooperative learning or individual help where social distancing cannot be attained.
 - During any class where there is a need for frequent movement and student discourse, e.g. - science labs, art class, forensics or speech.
 - When/If classroom transitions happen (Note: classrooms will transition on a minimal basis)
 - If any individual cannot wear a mask for health reasons, then a face shield is an acceptable alternative.
- Faculty, staff, and students will NOT be required to wear masks if:
 - The student is in 4th grade or lower
 - Direct instruction and individual learning is happening
 - Outdoor activities where social distancing can be attained
 - Students are participating in physical activity. E.g. - physical education or recess
 - Lunch/snack time
 - Individual bathroom breaks, free time, or any instance where others are not within close proximity.
 - Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Faculty, staff, and students are responsible for their own masks/face coverings
 - Students and Employees are asked to provide their own.
 - Misused or misplaced face coverings will be discarded immediately.
 - Up to one replacement mask will be made available per week.
 - Any replacement beyond one will need to be paid for at a minimal cost.
- Teach and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff.

- If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- All hand sanitizer will be FDA approved and safe for use.
- Encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
 - Classroom tissue boxes will be placed in multiple spots in order to limit foot traffic throughout the room.
 - Individual tissue packages are encouraged as well.

Signs and messaging

- We will provide access to free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page.
- [Signs](#) will be posted in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measures](#).
- Daily reminders will be issued regarding limiting/stopping the spread of communicable diseases.
- Signs and messages will promote [properly washing hands](#) and how to properly wear a face covering.
- We will include messages and updates regarding the health and wellness of students and employees at Abiding Word.
- We will include messages and updates regarding COVID-19 status nationwide, statewide, and locally.
- We will be completely transparent regarding any confirmed case at Abiding Word.

Maintaining Healthy Environments

- Cleaning and Disinfection
 - [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) will be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.
 - Develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
 - Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#); including storing products securely away from children. Use products that meet [EPA disinfection criteria](#).

- Toxic or potentially harmful cleaning products will not be used near children, and staff will ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Homework/Classwork
 - Classwork
 - Any handouts for the day will already be provided on the students' desks when they enter the room
 - Passing out of papers is prohibited until otherwise stated.
 - Students may not touch each other's materials.
 - If a student loses their materials, then they will be responsible to get replacements when their teacher is able to do so safely.
 - Any materials or items found on the floor during the day or after will be discarded immediately; unless they can clearly be identified and picked up by the person who lost them.
 - Students will be given minimal homework when possible.
 - Assignments will be modified
 - Ample class time will be provided for the student to finish their work in school.
 - Middle school students will primarily work through google classroom on their chromebooks; in order to greatly reduce the spread of any germs.
 - If chromebooks are taken home, then they will need to be sanitized upon re-entry.
- Shared Objects
 - Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
 - Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
 - Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, equipment) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
 - Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
- Ventilation
 - Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.
- Water Systems
 - All drinking fountains will be shut down indefinitely
 - All faculty, staff, and students should provide their own water bottle
 - All faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to make use of the touchless bottle filling stations that have been provided

- Pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible, and promote social distancing of at least 6 feet between people if events are held. Limit group size to the extent possible.
- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible – especially with individuals who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, county).
- Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible.
- Pursue options to convene sporting events and participation in sports activities in ways that minimizes the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to players, families, coaches, and communities.
- Identifying Small Groups and Keeping Them Together (Cohorting)
 - Ensure that student and staff groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for young children, and as much as possible for older children).
 - Limit mixing between groups if possible.
- Staggered Scheduling
 - Stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations by cohort or put in place other protocols to limit contact between cohorts and direct contact with parents as much as possible.
 - When possible, use flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) to help establish policies and practices for social distancing (maintaining distance of approximately 6 feet) between employees and others, especially if social distancing is recommended by state and local health authorities.
- Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact
 - Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns (e.g., school nurse). All school staff and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Participation in Community Response Efforts
 - Consider participating with local authorities in broader COVID-19 community response efforts (e.g., sitting on community response committees).
- Communication Systems
 - Put systems in place for:
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having staff and families self-report to the school if they or their student have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#)
 - (e.g. see “Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts” in the Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick section below) and other applicable federal

and state laws and regulations relating to privacy and confidentiality, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

- Notifying staff, families, and the public of school closures and any restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation).
- Leave (Time Off) Policies and Excused Absence Policies
 - Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or caring for someone who is sick.
 - Examine and revise policies for leave, telework, and employee compensation.
 - Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off, and should allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
 - Develop policies for return-to-school after COVID-19 illness. CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine](#) can inform these policies.
- Back-Up Staffing Plan
 - Monitor absenteeism of students and employees, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Staff Training
 - Train staff on all safety protocols.
 - Conduct training virtually or ensure that [social distancing](#) is maintained during training.
- Recognize Signs and Symptoms
 - If feasible, conduct daily health checks (e.g., temperature screening and/or or [symptom checking](#)) of staff and students.
 - Health checks should be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. School administrators may use examples of screening methods in CDC's supplemental [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) as a guide for screening children and CDC's [General Business FAQs](#) for screening staff.
- Support Coping and Resilience
 - Encourage employees and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
 - Promote employees and students eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
 - Encourage employees and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
 - Consider posting signages for the national distress hotline: 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746