

## Northwest Christian School Covid-19 Mitigation and Campus Readiness Plan Fall 2020

### Summary of the NCS Covid-19 Mitigation and Campus Readiness Plan

- ***Multiple, recognized authorities have asserted that an expedient return to on-campus, in-person learning is in the best interests of students.<sup>1</sup>*** For this reason, Northwest Christian is resolute within its commitment to return to campus on Monday, August 17th.
- ***Northwest Christian School has provided options for families which enable them to decide when and how their students will begin learning this fall.<sup>2</sup>*** In addition to on-campus learning, these options include NCS Plus for all students and NCS Online for K-5 students.
- ***Within the Campus Readiness Plan, the school has deployed multiple measures which help to reduce, though not eliminate, Covid-related risks to students and staff.*** Each of these measures is described in detail below.
- ***Once the current mandates that have been set forth by the city of Phoenix<sup>3</sup> and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health<sup>4</sup> lapse, face coverings on campus will not be mandated by the school.*** Until that time, the school will provide division-specific guidance, aligned with the developmental maturity of students, that will support the use of face coverings when social distancing is not possible but also allow for ample, but safe, time for students to not wear face coverings. Further details regarding the use of face coverings are described in detail below.
- ***Northwest Christian School will continue to communicate to families within the ever changing landscape of Covid-19 in a manner that is accurate, frequent, and nimble enough to change when required.*** The primary forum for this communication will be the Week-at-a-Glance that is distributed each Sunday afternoon around 2:00pm.

<sup>1</sup><https://services.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2020/pediatricians-educators-and-superintendents-urge-a-safe-return-to-school-this-fall/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/ncs-choice.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.phoenix.gov/newsroom/em-and-hs/1353>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face\\_Coverings\\_2020\\_Schools](https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face_Coverings_2020_Schools)

## **Premise of NCS Covid-19 Mitigation and Campus Readiness Plan**

- ***NCS will adhere to the core principle of focusing on the health and well-being of faculty, staff, students, vendors, volunteers, and visitors within facilitation of the Campus Readiness Plan.*** The school is quick to realize that while “well-being” does include the physical health of each member of these constituencies, it also includes their mental and spiritual health as well.
- ***NCS would respectfully ask each member of the community to recognize that within the community of faculty and staff that sacrificially serve our students, there are individuals who are considered to reside***



***within the Covid-19 “high risk” categories.***<sup>5</sup> For these individuals, the school is prepared to set forth rules, standards, and physical accommodations for all members of the community that will help to defuse anxieties tied to the physical, spiritual, and mental health of these individuals and their families.

- ***NCS is resolute in its commitment to re-open for on-campus learning for students on Monday, August 17th.*** NCS anticipates that all virtual learning--whether through NCS Plus or NCS Online--will also start on Monday, August 17th.

- ***Planning and development of the Campus Readiness Plan has included key stakeholders: school board members, administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students.*** Additionally, the school has closely followed the

“Planning Matrix for Re-opening” from the Association of Christian Schools International.<sup>6</sup>

- ***The Campus Readiness Plan and the ongoing decisions around it will respond and align to developing federal, state, and local government mandates placed upon NCS.*** Separately, the school will independently evaluate *recommendations* and determine if they are applicable to Northwest Christian.
- ***NCS recognizes that there are limits to the statutory authority that the government of the state of Arizona has over the school.*** These limitations are primarily curricular in nature, affording the school the privilege of keeping God’s word central within instruction. However, the school also recognizes that certain state statutes, especially within the domain of public health<sup>7</sup>, do directly pertain to it, as they do to all other schools, public, private, or charter; and other Arizona organizations of public accommodation.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the school has secured legal counsel to make specific recommendations regarding its obligations.
- ***NCS will continue to use the Week-at-a-Glance email to families and staff as its primary instrument for ongoing communication to families.***
- ***Based upon the ever changing landscape of public health mandates and recommendations put in front of it during this exceptional time, NCS reserves the right to make changes to the Campus Readiness Plan as we move forward.***

**Objectives:** The purpose of the Fall 2020 Campus Readiness Plan is to clearly communicate expectations to all Northwest Christian stakeholders. One facet of these expectations is for our families to understand what the school expects of our families as we work together to maintain a safe environment on campus and defuse the fear and

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://blog.acsi.org/reopening-school-covid19>

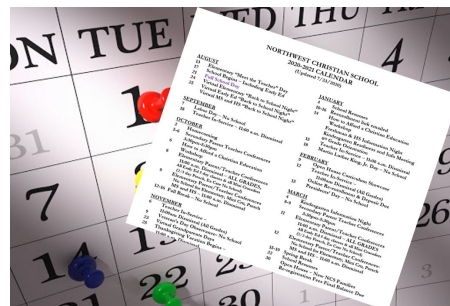
<sup>7</sup> <https://azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/index.php>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/non-public-education/regulation-map/arizona.html>

anxiety that exists around issues pertaining to Covid-19. The other facet of expectations is establishing an understanding of what our families can expect from the school. Armed with this information, our families will be best prepared to decide which forum for education they wish to engage as school resumes on August 17th: NCS on-campus, NCS Plus, or NCS Online.

## **Logistics and Planning**

***Days of instruction and instructional time.*** Within his press conference on Thursday, July 23rd, Governor Doug Ducey asserted that schools within the state should meet the benchmark of 180 days of instruction *or the equivalent number of instructional hours* (“180 days of instruction or equivalent hours are required this year...” Governor Ducey<sup>9</sup>). It should be noted that the postponement of the 2020/2021 school year start date by NCS resulted in a reduction of anticipated day count by eight days (172 days). Even within reduced day count, the number of instructional hours for Northwest Christian students still supersedes the instructional hours generally found within the full 180 day allotment for public schools. This being understood, there are two additional points: First, barring any further public health mandates from the state, it is our intent not to alter the school’s recently revised calendar<sup>10</sup> further. However, the Arizona Interscholastic Athletic Association has not, as of this writing, released the fall athletic calendar. This means that events like Homecoming could shift within the calendar. Second, NCS is working to include within the NCS Plus platform additional learning opportunities for all students that will expand instructional hours without impacting the calendar. More information on this will be provided at a later date.



***Additional health staff and space for student health assessment.*** Northwest Christian School is pleased to welcome Anna Johnson, RN to the role of managing the student health office. In addition to her work within pediatrics, Mrs. Johnson’s most recent experience includes screening individuals for Covid-19 infection. Presently, the school is working to provide an additional full-time registered nurse to assist in possible increased demands upon the attention of the student health office. In addition, the school has identified up to three additional rooms on campus where, separate from the student health office, symptomatic students can be safely quarantined until they are picked up in order to go home.



***Entrance protocols.*** The expectation is that students and staff who are presenting symptoms associated with sickness **will not be present on campus**. Aside from visitors to the campus (see below), potential screening of students for symptoms will take place in the classroom and not upon arrival to the campus.

***Classroom screening of students for symptoms.*** By virtue of the expectations established by the school and communicated to each member of the staff, every member of the school’s faculty and staff has the opportunity to conduct an impromptu assessment of a student’s symptoms. Every classroom has been equipped with both an oral thermometer and either an iHealth PT3 infrared No-Touch Forehead Thermometer or a Simzo brand, non-contact,

<sup>9</sup> <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/video/arizona-covid-19-briefing-governor-ducey-dr-christ-maj-gen-mcguire-0>

<sup>10</sup> 2020/2021 School Year Calendar, revised 7/23/20: <https://app.box.com/s/lv3jtkr44sldfmzp0jz5voltkcscem7p>

model HW-F7 forehead thermometer<sup>11</sup>. Using the non-contact forehead thermometer, student temperatures will be taken each day at approximately 8:00am within the first hour (secondary students) or by the student's homeroom teacher (elementary students). A second temperature verification may be taken after lunch if the teacher feels it is warranted due to symptoms.

The school recognizes that there are limits to the accuracy of non-contact infrared thermometers<sup>12</sup>, will follow best practices with their use, and prior to making any final determination on diagnosis of a student's temperature, will certify its conclusions based on multiple administrations of its use.<sup>13</sup> Based upon the reading of the non-contact forehead thermometer and/or a simple visual screening, if classroom staff suspect that a student is displaying symptoms of any type of illness, they have two options: (1) Send the student immediately to the student health office where the school nurse will assess the student.

(2) Use the classroom's oral thermometer to do a temperature verification check. (Note: The school's oral thermometers use disposable sleeves that are disposed of after each use.) Classroom teachers should send a student to the student health office if any of the following are true: (1) after using a thermometer, the student's temperature is above 100.0°F<sup>14</sup>, (2) the student's forehead is warm to the touch, (3) the student is persistently coughing or sneezing, or (4) if the student is displaying any of the symptoms consistent with illness. Conversely, students and staff will recognize that if they are personally displaying any Covid-related symptoms, they will not report to school. This is especially true if they experience the symptoms most common to Covid infection<sup>15</sup>:

- Fever or chills
- Persistent cough<sup>16</sup>
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusual level of fatigue
- Severe headaches
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell

**Face covering protocols.** Once the current mandates<sup>17</sup> that have been set forth by the city of Phoenix<sup>18</sup> and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health<sup>19</sup> lapse, face coverings on campus will not be mandated by the school. Until that time, Northwest



<sup>11</sup>[https://ihealthlabs.com/products/thermometer-pt3?gelid=CjwKCAjwmf\\_4BRABEiwAGhDfSQasj8ShzhtW6gZug4td6j-jkUGfZ8jzEE-wjIRdKqUAwjvopsD3qRoCh2oQAvD\\_BwE&hsa\\_acc=1244494479&hsa\\_ad=436585880126&hsa\\_cam=9878427040&hsa\\_grp=98391254377&hsa\\_kw=ihealth%20no%20touch%20thermometer&hsa\\_mt=p&hsa\\_net=adwords&hsa\\_src=g&hsa\\_tgt=kwd-897856126208&hsa\\_ver=3&utm\\_campaign=Sales-Search-PT3\\_Brand&utm\\_medium=ppc&utm\\_source=adwords&utm\\_term=ihealth%20no%20touch%20thermometer](https://ihealthlabs.com/products/thermometer-pt3?gelid=CjwKCAjwmf_4BRABEiwAGhDfSQasj8ShzhtW6gZug4td6j-jkUGfZ8jzEE-wjIRdKqUAwjvopsD3qRoCh2oQAvD_BwE&hsa_acc=1244494479&hsa_ad=436585880126&hsa_cam=9878427040&hsa_grp=98391254377&hsa_kw=ihealth%20no%20touch%20thermometer&hsa_mt=p&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=kwd-897856126208&hsa_ver=3&utm_campaign=Sales-Search-PT3_Brand&utm_medium=ppc&utm_source=adwords&utm_term=ihealth%20no%20touch%20thermometer)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK263237/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/general-hospital-devices-and-supplies/non-contact-infrared-thermometers>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/air/reporting-deaths-illness/definitions-symptoms-reportable-illnesses.html>

<sup>15</sup><https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-in-babies-and-children/art-20484405>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/cough/basics/definition/sym-20050846>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61311/Regulations-on-Face-Coverings>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.phoenix.gov/newsroom/em-and-hs/1353>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face\\_Coverings\\_2020\\_Schools](https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face_Coverings_2020_Schools)



Christian will support and enforce these public health mandates. For the purpose of this document, “face coverings” may include either “face masks” or “face shields”. Families will need to recognize that the primary responsibility for educating their children about the need to wear a face covering in light of public health mandates belongs with them. For a number of reasons, teachers cannot be charged with enforcing student compliance. Rather, the school’s administration will communicate with families for whom face coverings are an area of concern. Families are being asked to provide their own unique face covering with the student’s name. In the event that the student’s face covering becomes lost or soiled, the school will make a limited number face coverings available to students and staff free of charge but it does not warrant any additional measure of safety or any reduction of risk based upon wearing the school-provided coverings. The expectation is that any mask that is worn on campus will not be a source of distraction and will be free of any words or messages. In certain classes where it is important for the teacher to see a student’s face, Choir and Sign Language for example, students may be required to purchase face shields. If used, these face shields would be cleaned by the student before and after use. In that there are numerous factors which affect the ability of a student to wear face coverings for extended periods of time, there are important issues pertaining to their use by school division:

- ***In recognition that face coverings diminish student comfort, for the period of time that the city of Phoenix and Maricopa county mandate face masks, all students will not be required to adhere to school dress code.*** Students and parents should refer to the “free dress” section of the handbook for their school division in order to understand standards of free dress.
  - Specifics from within the handbook notwithstanding, the chief aspiration of the school’s free dress guidance is modesty. This will mean no tank tops, shorts/skirt length must extend past the fingertips when the student’s arms are fully extended at their side, no yoga pants/leggings, and no holes in jeans, shorts, or skirts.
- ***Early Education and Kindergarten:*** Early Education and Kindergarten students will not be required to wear face coverings by the school. If a parent prefers for their child to wear a face covering, the school will support that desire.
- ***Elementary:*** Within the first through fifth grades, due to the fact that students are within homeroom



cohorts and because the school has provided a number of physical accommodations within classrooms, including barriers (see picture to the left), students will not be required to wear face coverings while at their desks. For this reason, certain “specials” classes (art, library, etc.) will take place within the classroom for the period of time that face covering mandates with city and country are in place. When outdoors and for periods of time during which, in the view of the teacher, social distancing is maintained, students will not be required to wear face coverings. This includes lunch, recesses, etc.

- ***Middle School and High School:*** Generally speaking, secondary students will be required to wear face coverings. There are certain, safe exceptions to this guidance. Within the school’s secondary program, students travel between classes. During these passing

periods, students will be required to wear face coverings. While in a classroom, the students may or may not be required to wear a face covering and this decision will be at the sole discretion of the teacher. Variables which will shape the teacher's decision include: number of students within the classroom, the ability or inability to maintain social distancing, the period of time during for which students are within the classroom, whether or not physical barriers have been deployed within the classroom, and the whether or not the teacher, or a student within the classroom, falls into a Covid-related high-risk category.<sup>20</sup> Teachers will also be encouraged to take their students outdoors in order to provide students with a 'break' from face coverings.

**Exceptions to the face coverings protocols.** The school recognizes that there are exceptions published by the Maricopa County Department of Public Health to the governmental mandates regarding face coverings.<sup>21</sup> These exception include:

- Any individual that has a medical or behavioral condition or disability and cannot wear a face covering (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance),
  - when eating or drinking,
  - or when participating in strenuous exercise.
- Children under two (2) years of age should never wear a face covering.

**Note:** If a family wishes to pursue an exemption to the face covering protocols for their student, the family should complete and submit the school's form for "Medical Certification of a Chronic Health Condition".<sup>22</sup>

**Physical accommodations within individual classrooms.** In order to allay the anxieties expressed by some faculty and staff members, the school is working with employees to provide some level of physical accommodation within a number of classrooms. The hope of the school is that students and families would recognize that providing assurances of safety to staff is a priority superseded by few convictions that individuals may hold. Employees should understand that the school will make the final determination about whether a particular physical accommodation can be employed or not.

**Secondary Locker Use.** To minimize gathering in the locker areas and hallways, we will start the year with no student locker use. Students will be able to take their backpack into the classrooms with them. Please encourage your child to keep their backpack as light as possible. If your child has an injury that prohibits them from carrying their backpack, please contact Mrs. Maszton ([smaszton@ncsaz.org](mailto:smaszton@ncsaz.org)) or Mr. Parsons ([jparsons@ncsaz.org](mailto:jparsons@ncsaz.org)) for assistance.

**Release of liability waiver.** Northwest Christian School has a long-standing relationship with Brotherhood Mutual as our insurance provider. The school has been asked to have all families with students on campus sign a limited



<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face\\_Coverings\\_2020\\_Schools](https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/61739/Face_Coverings_2020_Schools)

<sup>22</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/Site/Forms/Health-Chronic-Illness-Form.pdf>

release of liability waiver in order to ensure that families have reviewed this Campus Readiness Plan and acknowledge implicit risks within the plan. (Students that are participating within NCS Plus will not need to sign this form provided that they are not on campus.) This is not a unique requirement of Northwest Christian; rather, all schools with Brotherhood Mutual as their insurer are being asked to do the same. A copy of that waiver is included within this information and will be made available for electronic signature during the first week of school and need to be signed for each student. (Please do not print and bring in the waiver.)

***Personal responsibility.*** Northwest Christian expects all students and staff to demonstrate personal responsibility for their individual health and to work towards minimizing the risk of contagious spread. The school trusts that parents will inform their students about these responsibilities and that teachers will remind students when necessary. However, with few exceptions, the school will not be hanging/displaying signs around campus to reinforce these responsibilities. Specifically, the school expects all students and staff to follow these preventative steps:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If possible, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer is available throughout the campus.
- Bring a non-glass water bottle that is labeled with the individual's name. (The school has numerous water fountains around campus which can refill a bottle of water without touching the fountain.)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when sick.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash. (In the past, teachers and students were asked to remove the trash from classrooms. Going forward, this will be accomplished by another party.)
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Avoid sharing food or drink of any type.
- Attempt to maintain a distance of six feet from others when possible.
- Families should be certain that students understand the personal, proper care and cleaning of the covering and how best to put on and remove the covering independently.<sup>23</sup>

***Visitors to campus.*** Between 8:00am and 3:00pm, any visitors to the campus will check in through the front office where they will sign in and have their temperature recorded. In addition, visitors may be asked a couple of simple diagnostic screening questions. During high traffic times, the temperature check and screening questions will be administered by the school's registered nurse. During other times, these duties will be covered by administrative staff. These expectations will include all parents, vendors, ASAP instructors, third-party contractors, prospective students and their families, shadow students, etc. If the visitor's temperature is recorded above 100.0°F, they will not be able to visit the campus.



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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>



**Quarantine protocol.**<sup>24</sup> There are several scenarios in which the school will and will not require quarantine of students and staff. These are described below.

- *If you have symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19, you should:*
  - Stay home and away from others for 10 days since your symptoms first started and at least 72 hours (3 days) after your fever has gone away without the use of fever-reducing medications and your respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, and loss of taste/smell) have resolved.
- *If you have symptoms and tested negative for COVID-19, you should:*
  - Stay home and away from others until 3 days (72 hours) have passed since your fever has gone away without the use of fever-reducing medications AND your respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, and loss of taste/smell) have improved.
- *If you have never had symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19, you should:*
  - Remain in home isolation until 10 days have passed since the date your first positive COVID-19 test was done, as long as you have not started to have any symptoms since that test.
- *If you do not have symptoms but someone in your home or immediate family tested positive, you should:*
  - Remain in home isolation for ten consecutive days or until you have tested negative.
- If you previously had symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19, do not have symptoms now, and are being retested at the end of the 10-day isolation period and your repeat PCR test is positive, you will have to remain in isolation for 10 more days following your repeat positive test.
- In accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act<sup>25</sup>, staff members who are quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a healthcare provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis will be paid two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave.
- Further, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, allows up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a healthcare provider).
- In the event of incidental exposure to Covid-19, presently, medical professionals are **not** encouraging people to pursue Covid testing if they are not demonstrating symptoms. If a student or staff member has been exposed to Covid-19 and/or alerted to potential exposure via contact tracing protocols but has not displayed symptoms associated with Covid-19, the individual will not be required to engage quarantine protocols and may attend classes if they wish. If the exposure was prolonged, i.e. with a family member, refer to previous paragraph regarding quarantine requirements.
- In the event of a subsequent Covid infection for a member of the faculty or staff, the school will honor another period of paid leave in accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.



<sup>24</sup> <https://www.maricopa.gov/5512/Sick-or-Exposed-to-COVID-19>

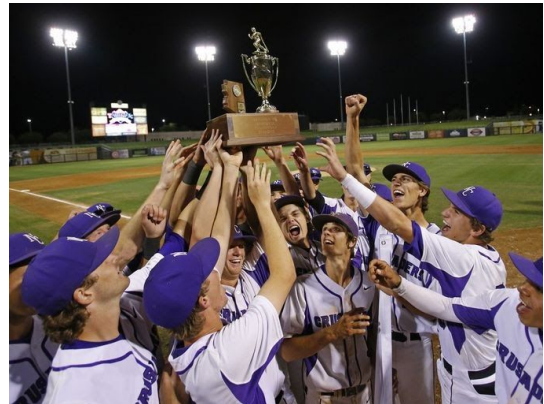
<sup>25</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>



- For the 2020/2021 school year, if a member of the faculty or staff is symptomatic and stays home in accordance with the Campus Readiness Plan, the time away will not be counted against the employee's accrued Paid Time Off.
- In the event that a classroom teacher is asked to stay home in accordance with this Campus Readiness Plan and they are asymptomatic, the school would require that teacher to actively and daily participate within their virtual classroom via NCS Plus.
- If a staff member or student has tested positive for Covid-19, the school will engage its communicable disease protocol within 12 hours. Additionally, any room in which that individual has been will go through a sanitization process using the Clorox 360 electrostatic sprayer.<sup>26</sup>

***Exceptional attendance situations: in-person and NCS Plus.***

The school's handbook reads, "Northwest Christian School is committed to the philosophy that in order for quality education to occur, regular student attendance is necessary and required. Absence from school is always detrimental to the academic progress of the student. In accordance with school philosophy, at each grade level, the administration has determined that a student who accumulates too many absences within a semester may lose credit for the class. Exceptions will be made only in cases of family death or when the student has verification of a chronic/acute illness documented by a physician. This verification must be turned in to the office upon the student's return to school. Parents are asked to notify the office when they first learn of the possibility of an extended illness."<sup>27</sup> For the purpose of clarity, the school considers Covid-19 infection to be an "acute illness". In that these are exceptional times, the school is prepared to make allowances for absences if a parent considers their student is at-risk or displaying symptoms. During periods of absence from the on-the-ground campus, a student will be able to keep current within their classes using NCS Plus and each day that a student is away from campus but active on NCS Plus will not be counted against the student as an absence. During a period of quarantine or in the event that a family has decided to keep a student home for a period of time in the interest of safety, unless a student is symptomatic, teachers will expect for students to engage their class each day. Each day in which a student does not engage their class via NCS Plus will be counted as an absence. In the case of a student that misses more days than provided for within policy, exceptions can be made after administrative consideration.



***Social distancing protocols.*** By its very nature, social distancing within an educational setting is difficult. Within classrooms, it will be the aspiration of all school staff to provide for social distancing whenever possible. This may include placement of the desks within a classroom, assigned seating for students, the placement of barriers, or use of certain permissible physical accommodations. Additionally, because the CDC recognizes that face coverings are a viable alternative

when social distancing is not possible<sup>28</sup>, the use of face coverings will be required when this is the case. However,

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.cloroxpro.com/products/clorox/total-360/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/Site/Forms/Secondary-Student-Handbook.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

parents should recognize that providing for complete social distancing will not be possible. During breaks, lunches, and recesses allowances for social distancing will be provided but difficult to enforce. For example, outdoor tables will be spaced apart and larger spaces will be provided for outdoor activities. Lunches will take place within classrooms until the temperature falls. (This is not a new protocol as this is how fall is always handled within the elementary program and the classroom option is always provided for secondary students.)

**Food service protocols.** Although during lunches and breaks allowances for social distancing will be provided but difficult to enforce, the exception will be during times of food service. Social distancing will be required while students are in line and distancing guidelines will be placed on the ground. Students will no longer be able to pay for food with cash. Rather, they will be required to use the MySchoolBucks payment solution.<sup>29</sup> To use the MySchoolBucks system, all students will have an individual ID with a barcode (They will not need to push keys to enter their code.) These IDs will be provided in a student's first hour class or their homeroom. If they do not have a first hour class, they will pick it up during their second hour. Information While in the school's kitchen building, all staff will be required to wear face coverings at all times.

**Scheduling options to support potential mandated capacity reductions.** In the event that state or county health agencies should mandate or pass a law that classroom capacity be reduced, the school has developed a plan wherein students would attend school on Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday with Wednesdays used for deep cleaning. On a student's alternative attendance days and for all students on Wednesdays, learning would continue via NCS Plus. The school has already drawn up these student lists (and taken siblings into account) but would demonstrate flexibility to facilitate carpools and parental work schedules. *It should be clearly understood that drawing these plans up is an exercise in prudence and the school has no intention to engage them unless mandated.*

**Communicable disease parental notification standards.**<sup>30</sup> In the event of an occurrence of any type of communicable disease within a classroom (Early Ed and Elementary) or grade level (Secondary), upon confirmation of the illness, parents will receive notification of the occurrence within twelve hours. In each instance, the student with the communicable condition will not be allowed back into classrooms until cleared by the school nurse.

Communicable diseases which will prompt notification include: bed bugs, Covid-19 infection, persisting diarrheal illness, E. Coli infection, Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS), enteroviral infections, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease, Fifth Disease, Giardiasis, Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) Disease, Head Lice, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Herpes Simplex Virus Infection, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection/AIDS, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), Impetigo, Influenza (Flu), Lyme Disease, Measles, Meningococcal Disease, Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) Infection, Mononucleosis, Mumps, Norovirus, Pertussis, Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis), Pinworms, Pneumococcal Infection, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection, Ringworm, Roseola, Rotavirus, Rubella, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis (Shigella



<sup>29</sup> <https://www.myschoolbucks.com/ver2/getmain?requestAction=home>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.azdhs.gov/documents/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/communicable-disease-reporting/school-childcare-reporting-requirements.pdf>

infection), Shingles (Varicella Zoster Virus), Staph skin infection, Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever (Streptococcal infection), Tuberculosis, Typhoid Fever (Salmonella typhi Infection), Viral Meningitis, and West Nile Virus.

**Confidentiality protocols.**<sup>31</sup> In every instance of parental notification of communicable disease, every effort will be made by school administration to maintain student confidentiality broadly within the community. However, due to the infectious nature of some of these diseases, the school considers it responsible to notify classroom teachers so that they can engage cleaning protocols. It is also understood by the school that for reasons of health, certain students and staff cannot be required to wear face coverings. Due to confidentiality around the issue of health, the school's faculty and staff will not engage a student as to the reason that they are not wearing a face covering.



**Expanded sanitation and janitorial services.** Effective July 1st, the school has moved away from prior third-party partnerships within its janitation services. The school has presently employed Plan B Facility Services<sup>32</sup> for campus janitation, deep cleaning, and recurring sanitation. Plan B has extensive experience working with school districts and

professional sports venues to reduce Covid-19-related risks. In addition, the school is presently recruiting an in-house team of sanitation service members.<sup>33</sup> These adaptations will facilitate cleaning throughout the school day and provide for more accountability. Additionally, the school has invested in new cleaning technologies that will ensure sanitation and safety. The cleaning agents that will be utilized as part of this effort are all certified by the Environmental Protection Agency<sup>34</sup> and the Food and Drug Administration<sup>35</sup>.

**Cleaning protocols.**<sup>36</sup> The school will ask that students and staff wash/sanitize hands upon entering the classroom, after using the restroom, and before eating. The school will provide resources in order to maintain the following standards of cleanliness:

- General classroom sanitation: In addition to daily cleaning, twice each week, school staff will go through each classroom, locker rooms, lunch areas, etc. and use a Clorox 360 electrostatic sprayer<sup>37</sup> to apply cleaning agents. Once each evening, all carpet floors will be vacuum cleaned and hard surfaces will be dry and damp mopped.
- General restroom cleanliness: In addition to daily cleaning and sanitizing, three times each week, school staff will go through each restroom and use a Clorox in 360 electrostatic sprayer to apply cleaning agents.
- Classroom trash cans will be emptied twice per day by janitorial staff.



<sup>31</sup>[https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource\\_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.planbfacilityservices.com/>

<sup>33</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/employment.htm>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.fda.gov/media/136533/download>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/cleaning.htm>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.cloroxpro.com/products/clorox/total-360/>



- Door knobs and light switches will be wiped down three times a day by classroom teachers (morning, lunch, afternoon).
- Classroom tables, desks, and chairs will be wiped down each evening and during lunch.
- Handrails will be wiped down each evening and during lunch.
- Bathroom faucets and drinking fountains will be wiped down hourly.
- Lunch areas and outdoor tables will be wiped down between each lunch period.
- Playground equipment will be sprayed and cleaned with disinfectant each day at 10:00am, noon, and 1:45pm.

***Procurement of necessary supplies to support classroom sanitation.*** Northwest Christian School currently utilizes Plan B Facility Services<sup>38</sup> and Western Paper Distributors<sup>39</sup> as its source for cleaning agents, hand sanitizer, gloves, masks, toilet paper, and disinfectants. Plan B and Western Paper have assured the school that supply channels for these items are sustainable and the school is not at risk of shortage. Hand sanitizer will be provided within each classroom. Face coverings are available to students and staff in the office.

***Safety data sheets for cleaning agents.*** The safety data sheets for each of the cleaning agents that will be used within the 2020/2021 school year accompany this information. Working with cleaning professionals, the school has invested a significant amount of time in identifying cleaning agents that are safe, vetted by the Environmental Protection Agency, and suggested for use by the Centers for Disease Control.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

As part of an effort spanning two years, working with Grand Canyon University and others with expertise within digital learning support, this fall and next, Northwest Christian is launching several new programs that will enhance student learning at all levels. These programs will support and facilitate learning for students within the context that your family feels is safest for your unique needs and individual student.

*Enhanced Learning Everywhere*



***NCS Plus: a digital forum to support on-the-ground learning.***<sup>40</sup> Starting this fall, every on-campus student and every family will enjoy an added dimension within their classrooms: NCS Plus. Facilitated by a learning management system called Canvas produced by Instructure<sup>41</sup>, NCS Plus will be a classroom enhancement at all grade levels—from kindergarten through high school—that captures key elements of the on-campus classroom experience. Although direct instruction within classrooms will not change, NCS Plus will support the “flipped classroom”

model of learning wherein students can revisit key concepts presented within the classroom when away from the classroom. Beyond this, NCS Plus will better support students that are absent. Or, if we experience a viral resurgence at some point in the coming year with mandated school closure, NCS Plus will replace the Google Classroom system we used this spring to provide a more robust student learning experience. Additionally, while school will resume on August 17<sup>th</sup>, if a family wishes to keep their student home for a period of time for whatever



<sup>38</sup> <http://www.planbfacilityservices.com/>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.western-paper.com/>

<sup>40</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/ncs-choice.htm>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.instructure.com/canvas/k-12>

reason, NCS Plus will support that student's continued learning, concurrent with what is happening in the classroom, so that when that student is ready to return, they can with no disruption to academic progress. In order for a family to opt into NCS Plus, they must alert the school's administration via email only (NCSPlus@ncsaz.org) by August 8th. In order for a student to engage learning-from-home via NCS Plus, it must be approved by the division principal. The window of opportunity to transition from NCS Plus to the on-the-ground classroom for families that elect to start the school year at home is the first of each month. If a family decides to transition a student back to the on-campus classroom, they must alert Michelle Reddy one week in advance of the first day of the month that they wish to return.

**Northwest Christian School Online.**<sup>42</sup> Beginning this fall, NCS is launching Northwest Christian School Online for the elementary grades (kindergarten through fifth grade). Then, in the fall of 2021, Northwest Christian School Online will launch for all secondary grades as well. NCS Online is a wholly separate, asynchronous learning experience for students who find the online classroom a more conducive learning experience than the traditional on-the-ground experience. For kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, NCS Online will utilize Canvas as its learning management system. Within the high school, starting in August 2021, Northwest Christian School Online will be utilizing Grand Canyon University's LoudCloud learning management system. The NCS Online experience will be different from direct instruction or NCS Plus: different pacing, different learning facilitators, and different opportunities. Over the next few weeks, our families can look forward to some exciting announcements regarding new partnerships—what we are calling “Distinctive Diplomas”—that represent new and enhanced learning opportunities with a growing number of universities like Grand Canyon University and Arizona Christian University. ***Whether the student pursuing a Distinctive Diploma is on-campus or online, these partnerships will provide for an learning experience unlike any online or ground high school in the country.***



**\*\*Note:** *Parents should recognize that NCS Plus and NCS Online are wholly separate learning forums. There are several key distinctions but among these, parents should note that NCS Plus is an extension of the on-campus classroom and therefore when a student is away from campus and engaged in learning via NCS Plus, their space is preserved within the on-campus classroom. Because it is a wholly separate learning forum, this is not the case with NCS Online and a space is not held within the on-campus classroom for students enrolled within NCS Online. The newly announced NCS Plus is a classroom complement but not a replacement for the traditional, on-the-ground classroom. While it is synchronized with on-the-ground classroom instruction, it is principally designed to support both the “flipped classroom” and “distance learning” models of learning but not “online education”. NCS Plus is*



*maintained by on-campus classroom teachers whose primary focus will be their on-campus students. Further, families considering the NCS Plus option will need to recognize that it will not be as robust and rigorous an experience as the on-campus classroom. In fact, many students may require a parent or tutor to act as an academic coach. NCS Online is very different from NCS Plus because it is an asynchronous, online learning experience that will feature a wholly separate staff of online facilitators and a different tuition price point. While NCS Online students will have the opportunity to participate within some aspects of the school's on-the-ground culture (chapels, extracurricular clubs, a limited number of sports programs, etc.), many extracurricular, athletic, and fine arts opportunities will*

*be reserved for on-the-ground students only. Because NCS Plus is an extension of the on-the-ground experience, NCS Plus participants will be eligible to participate within extracurricular activities.*

<sup>42</sup> <http://ncsaz.org/online.htm>

**Northwest Christian Biblical Worldview Institute.** As part of NCS Online, both our on-the-ground and online students will enjoy an expanded number of online classes centered around exploring Christian worldview in a number of contexts. We are presently working with GCU and prominent pastors, authors, and experts in diverse fields to develop these courses. Though it is a bit too soon to announce all of these courses just yet, we look forward to doing so as we move into the fall.

**New Student Information System.** To facilitate all of these added digital dimensions to the school, we are beginning to move towards Blackbaud as our new student information system this fall. The school does not expect complete transition until later in the school year but once the transition is complete, under a single virtual umbrella, students and parents will find Blackbaud to be a more robust and seamless system of communication than we have enjoyed previously.

**Elementary specials.** Specials teachers (music, Spanish, art, etc.) will be travelling to classrooms throughout the month of August.

**Tuition.** Each of the aforementioned vehicles for curriculum delivery have a different price point but it should be noted that NCS Plus is not a separate opportunity. Rather, because it is a complement to the NCS on-campus classroom experience, *it is included within on-campus tuition.* As such, students that opt into remote learning via NCS Plus will see their spaces within the on-campus classroom preserved. *Because we have learned that expenses during a school closure are either the same or greater than the school's traditional budget, no tuition discount is possible during periods of NCS Plus use by a family.*

**Technology resources for family use.** Because the pool of school iPads is in use while school is in session, families that opt into use of NCS Plus as an alternative to the on-campus classroom will need to provide their own technology. However, if the school is forced to temporarily close due to governmental mandate, these iPads will be made available to students in order to bridge any digital divide.

### **Adaptations within Specific School Programs and Extracurricular Programs**

**Afternoon Pick-up and Dispersal.** On the elementary side of the campus, students who are expecting to be picked up through the afternoon pick-up lane will be kept inside their classrooms. Duty staff will use walkie-talkies to call these students to the dispersal area when their car is observed within the pick-up lane. *Additionally, Northwest Community Church is asking that students not be allowed to be picked up or congregate around the Cook Education Building or the church sanctuary and classrooms. For this reason, students will remain behind the school's fence until their ride has arrived.*

**Athletics.** The elements of the Campus Readiness Plan outlined above are identical to what is expected of coaches and student athletes. For example, this includes quarantine protocols, expectations for personal responsibility, providing allowances for social distancing whenever possible, and screening of symptoms by coaches prior to practices and games. However, one difference will be that the school will discourage use of face coverings when engaged within athletic activity as coverings could incite other potential risks. Ultimately, however, the decision to use face coverings is the domain of parents. The fall sports for high school include football, volleyball, cross country, and cheerleading. On July 13th and 24th, the Arizona Interscholastic Association is conducting surveys of schools within the state to see





which schools and districts intend to participate within the fall sports seasons. We do know that the AIA has pushed fall sports back to August 17th but we also anticipate that, following these surveys, we will receive some direction that could include adjustments to season lengths and scope. Middle School fall sports include football, volleyball, soccer, and cheerleading. Middle school football will begin practice on August 17th. Try-outs for middle school soccer, volleyball, and cheerleading will also start on August 17th. The first day of competitions for middle school athletics will take place after September 8th. In terms of spectators at school-sponsored athletic contests, presently Northwest Christian is waiting for additional guidance from the Arizona Interscholastic Association.

***Fine Arts.*** The school is presently working up plans for fall concerts within all three divisions of the school and these plans will be communicated once they are complete. The fall movie is scheduled to go forward but we have not yet confirmed a theater venue. If a theater is not able to accommodate our movie premiere, alternative plans for the premiere will be provided.

***Chapel.*** For the months of August and September, chapels will be pre-recorded or live-streamed into classrooms. These chapels will also be posted on the school's RightNow media page.

***Live streaming.*** During the summer of 2020, Northwest Christian has significantly expanded its capacity for live streaming. These new technologies will allow for internet-based viewing of athletic events, concerts, chapels, and more.

***Afterschool Clubs.*** Enrollment for afterschool clubs that are scheduled to take place indoors will be limited so as to accommodate social distancing when possible.

## **Assumption of the Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19**

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is considered extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state and local governments as well as federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing and have, in many locations, prohibited the congregation of groups of people. Even now with some of the restrictions being lifted, the common thinking is to still practice social distancing as much as possible.

Northwest Christian School and/or NCS (“*Northwest Christian School*”) have put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, *Northwest Christian School cannot guarantee* that you or your family will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, **attending *Northwest Christian School* could increase** your risk and your (child(s)’s risk of contracting COVID-19.

We are concerned about the health and well-being of all the children, teens, parents, siblings, volunteers, partners, and staff of all who enter our premises or are involved in some manner with Northwest Christian School. We want you to use wisdom and discernment regarding when and how your child(s) re-engages in social settings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We are putting in place certain protocols that we hope will minimize the potential to contract and/or spread COVID-19. These are precautions; not solutions, cures or guarantees against spreading or contracting this virus.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and assume the risk that my child(s) and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by attending *Northwest Christian School* and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability and/or death.

I further understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at *Northwest Christian School* may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, *Northwest Christian School* employees, volunteers, and program participants and their families.

I agree to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility for any injury to my child(s) or myself (including, but not limited to, personal injury, disability, and/or death), illness, damage, loss, claim, liability, or expense, of any kind, that I or my child(s) may experience or incur in connection with my child(s)’s attendance at *Northwest Christian School* or participation in any *Northwest Christian School’s* programming.

On my behalf, and on behalf of my child(s), I hereby release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless *Northwest Christian School*, its employees, agents, and representatives, of and from claims, including all liabilities, actions, damages, costs or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating thereto.

I understand and agree that this release includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of *Northwest Christian School*, its employees, agents, and representatives, whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any of *Northwest Christian School* programs or classes. I understand that any violation of these new precautions by myself or my child(s) may result in a suspension from Northwest Christian School for the safety of others.

I am attesting that I will not send my student(s) to school if they have any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100.0°F degrees or higher
2. Cough or shortness of breath
3. Chills or repeated shaking with chills
4. Muscle pain
5. Sore throat
6. New loss of smell or taste
7. Body aches/fatigue

Signature of Parent/Guardian or  
Signature of child/adult participant (18 years or older)

Date

Print Name of Parent/Guardian

Name of Northwest Christian School Participant(s)