

#### **IV. School Culture: Christian Principles, Spiritual Formation and Community Engagement**

The culture of the school is defined by its operating assumptions, values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors. It establishes the faith-based environment in which learning takes place and the nature of the relationships within the school and the greater community. The school's culture, its Christian principles, attention to spiritual formation and engagement in the community should be maintained and reinforced regardless of the reopening scenario. The main difference will be the methods used to reinforce the above and maintain cohesion and an emphasis on the tenets of a Lutheran faith-based education.

##### **Medallion Considerations**

Irrespective of the scenario under which the school is operating, these issues, which reflect the hallmarks of a Distinguished school under the Medallion program, must continue to be addressed in a meaningful way. Rubrics for School Culture can be found here:

- [Christian Values & Spiritual Formation](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)

##### **Scenario 1**

In Scenario 1, students return for onsite learning, either full-time or on a rotating schedule. Pre-COVID-19 structures relating to the school and the broader community (e.g. mission and values visible in the school, Chapel services, classroom community, in-person opportunities to reinforce culture and values among students, teachers, and families). In response to government regulation and these Guidelines, modifications will need to be made to spiritual formation, school community engagement and interaction with the local community. Specific health and safety considerations are detailed in Section IV.

##### ***A. Spiritual Formation and School Community Engagement***

- The school's systems and philosophy support students and staff to process issues related to the COVID 19 pandemic and the recent civil unrest in a way that supports their spiritual growth and formation.
- Chapel services and classroom discussions allow for an exploration of current events in a Christian and spiritual context.
- School community engagement structures (e.g. parent groups, board meetings, committees, etc.) comply with applicable government regulations and these Guidelines (see Section IV).
- School community events and activities are modified to comply with applicable government regulations and these Guidelines. For example, ways to conduct Chapel, concerts, sporting events, school assemblies, and the like that comply with governmental regulations and these Guidelines are implemented (see Section IV).

- Protocols for hosting school-run events open to the public that meet governmental regulations and these Guidelines are implemented (see Section IV).
- Systems for maintaining consistent and timely communications within the school community regarding any changes or updates to school functioning in response to governmental directives are put in place and followed.
- Systems are put in place to provide additional support to teachers, students and families in response to the COVID-19 situation.
- Additional communications protocols are put in place to foster a cohesive school community, for example:
  - 1 written piece per week from administration
  - 1 Zoom social opportunity per week

### ***B. Use of School Facilities by Community Organizations /Groups***

- The school reaches out to the local community in order to partner with them and to be of service to them, particularly as it relates to opportunities arising from the COVID-19 situation.
- Evaluate existing agreements with community organizations/groups that utilize the school facility to determine the viability of allowing these groups to use the school facilities given governmental regulations and these Guidelines (see Section IV).
- Develop/update a schedule of events that can be held on school property and how applicable governmental regulations and these Guidelines will be applied.
- Develop protocols for community usage of school facilities.
  - Prepare an agreement setting forth expectations and the allocation of liabilities and shared responsibilities for complying with governmental regulations and these Guidelines.
  - An individual is designated with the accountability for compliance of the community groups with the agreement.
- Evaluate existing community partnerships and assess the need for additional/new partnerships to support the school and/or local community.

### ***C. Service-Learning***

- Evaluate service-learning opportunities and assess modifications that need to be implemented to adhere to governmental regulations and social distancing guidelines and other Phase-specific restrictions or requirements.
- Develop service-learning opportunities that are appropriate to the phase-specific restrictions or requirements

## Scenario 2

All Scenario 1 considerations in effect for Scenario 2 with the addition of:

### **A. School Community Engagement**

- Plan in place for rapidly transitioning from onsite operations to remote/distance operations and back again.
  - Transitioning onsite school events and community engagement structures to and from remote alternatives.
  - Transitioning community usage of school facilities to and from remote alternatives.
  - Transitioning staff, faculty and board meetings to and from remote alternatives.
  - Postponing activities that cannot be done in a remote way.
- This plan considers how to intentionally integrate/translate the following components into and out of a distance-learning environment:
  - Reinforcing school mission, vision, and values in the digital space.
  - Digital translation of mechanisms of spiritual formation such as chapel services, Pastoral and Principal communication to constituents, and religion classes.
  - Personalizing the connection between students, teachers and families, and creating opportunities for one on one engagement.
  - Service-learning opportunities
- Communication protocols inform all members of the school and outside communities regarding changes to operations in the event that school activities transition to distance/remote alternatives.
- Provide additional resources, training, and support to teachers and staff to maintain emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness in order to contribute to a positive school culture and climate.

### **B. Local Community Engagement and Service-Learning**

- School and community partnerships are reviewed, and the school is prepared to make appropriate translations to and from remote alternatives.
- Evaluate service-learning opportunities and assess modifications that can move between an in-class situation to a remote learning environment.

## Scenario 3

In scenario 3, distance learning is in effect and school facilities are not open to the school community or to the public, and thus most operations are remote. Thus, the considerations of Scenario 2 must be considered in school operations.

## **A. School Community Engagement**

- All school events and activities are modified for remote participation, including:
  - Classes and instruction (see Section II)
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Sports, performances and assemblies
  - Chapel services and other spiritual formation mechanisms)
  - Service- learning
- Communication and engagement structures are adjusted/enhanced to allow for consistent, well-structured communication among:
  - Parents and school
  - Teachers and students, families
  - School leadership and board

## **B. Local Community Engagement and Service-Learning**

- Existing community partnerships are translated to a remote environment in order to continue providing family/schools with services and partners with benefits.
- Additional partnerships have been considered/established to provide enhanced support for the school and local community.
- The school participates in virtual community events and activities where relevant to the school's mission.
- Evaluate service-learning opportunities and assess modifications that need to be implemented to adhere to a remote learning environment.
- Develop service-learning opportunities that are appropriate to remote learning.