



CLEF Detailed Guidelines for Reopening Chicago Lutheran Schools 2020/2021 Final Version

CLEF Mission: To empower urban Lutheran schools to deliver innovative, quality education in a Christian environment.

CLEF Vision: Children in Chicagoland have the opportunity to experience Christ's love and grace through a high-quality, Christian values-based education, in order to reach their potential and fulfill their vocation.

I. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has required all the CLEF Lutheran schools in Chicago to adjust their methods of teaching students and interacting with constituents at an unprecedented speed. Beginning in mid-March 2020, schools were forced to convert their teaching to online platforms and provide instruction on a remote basis. All communication among teachers, staff, students, and parents was done primarily online given the shelter-in-place directives from the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago. Overall, our schools did a wonderful job making these adjustments and continuing to meet their overall mission to their school community.

As Lutheran schools in Chicago look to beginning a new school year in Fall 2020, the circumstances under which students will be allowed to return to the classroom are subject to a number of regulations issued by various entities; a complete list of these references is available at the end of this document. The primary direction for these Guidelines is provided by the [Illinois State Board of Education](#), copies of which have been provided to all Principals. These Guidelines are meant to be a living document, and changes will be made to them as the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago issue additional regulations governing the operations of schools. In order to ensure the maximum amount of learning for our students and the highest degree of care for all the schools' constituents, this set of Guidelines will provide direction for our schools under the three most likely scenarios in the Fall.

A. Three Scenarios

This document is intended to detail the guidelines and procedures CLEF has created to ensure a safe learning environment at our schools no matter what governmental regulations might be in place over the next school year. The Guidelines take into account three primary scenarios, coinciding with the phases of reopening Illinois outlined in the Governor's [Restore Illinois](#) plan.

Phases of Reopening:

Phase 1 Rapid Spread	Phase 2 Flattening	Phase 3 Recovery	Phase 4 Revitalization	Phase 5 Illinois Restored
<p>Strict stay at home and social distancing guidelines are put in place, and only essential businesses remain open.</p> <p>Every region has experienced this phase once already and could return to it if mitigation efforts are unsuccessful.</p>	<p>Non-essential retail stores reopen for curb-side pickup and delivery.</p> <p>Illinoisans are directed to wear a face covering when outside the home and can begin enjoying additional outdoor activities like golf, boating & fishing while practicing social distancing.</p>	<p>Manufacturing, offices, retail, barbershops and salons can reopen to the public with capacity and other limits and safety precautions.</p> <p>Gatherings of 10 people or fewer are allowed.</p> <p>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</p>	<p>Gatherings of 50 people or fewer are allowed, restaurants and bars reopen, travel resumes, child care and schools reopen under guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health.</p> <p>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</p>	<p>The economy fully reopens with safety precautions continuing.</p> <p>Conventions, festivals and large events are permitted, and all businesses, schools and places of recreation can open with new safety guidance and procedures.</p>

Source: Restore Illinois plan

Scenario 1: Chicago is in Phase 4 as defined by the Governor of Illinois and/or the Mayor of Chicago, under which students are allowed to return to school for regular classroom learning. In this scenario, space restrictions in classrooms, the unwillingness of some parents to send their children back to the school building, and the potential that ill students will not be able to come to the building will require that the **school offer remote learning along with in-class teaching**. For those who do return, there are significant restrictions regarding social distancing, classroom protocols, the wearing of masks, frequent hand-washing, and other activities.

Scenario 2: Chicago oscillates back and forth between Phase 3 and Phase 4 due to a periodic spiking of the number of COVID-19 cases. Schools would be required to switch between onsite and remote learning, and to close and reopen the school building according to prevailing Phase requirements.

Scenario 3: Chicago is in Phase 3, under which all teaching is done on a remote basis and the access to the school is limited.

B. Medallion Framework

In order to put a structure around the various actions and steps that will need to be implemented under each of the aforementioned scenarios, the rubrics of the Medallion program, with which the school Principals are familiar, will be utilized. These rubrics, taken as a whole, define what an excellent Lutheran school looks like, and thus will serve as a barometer of the best practices for operating a

school during the next school year irrespective of the environment in which the school must function. It should be remembered that there are currently no best practices for the situation in which the schools are operating during this pandemic, and thus these practices need continual updates and revisions so they reflect an optimal way of engaging the school's community.

The major Medallion categories will serve as the framework for the Guidelines as set forth below.

- [School Leadership & Sustainability](#)
- [Student Learning and Academic Achievement](#)
- [School Culture & Community Engagement](#)
- [School Environment, Health and Wellness](#)

C. Principal and Board of Education Planning

Each one of the CLEF schools has, in its own words, a mission that essentially communicates that ***it will provide a high-quality education for its students in a Christian environment.*** As they look to reopen in the Fall, this simple but concise statement should continue to be the mission of each school. While the tactics and the approach to implement the mission may change, the mission of each school should continue to reflect this ideal. The schools continue to make our teachers, staff, students, and parents feel safe, welcome and cared for every time they are in or are dealing with the school's learning environment.

It is important for the Principal and Board of Education at each school to begin planning for the reopening of the school as soon as possible. All the processes and procedures described in these Guidelines will need to be communicated to parents and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis. The confidence of students, parents, and staff that the school is a safe environment for learning under all scenarios is critical. **As each school is planning for the next school year, it should keep in mind that money from Title funds and the CARES Act (which will likely be a one-time payment) should be considered.** Note, however, that the amount of CARES money that will be available to individual schools will likely not be determined until mid-July. Each school's entire plan should be in place by July 15, approximately one month prior to the opening of the school year.

As a starting point, each Principal and Board of Education can refer to the companion document: **CLEF Checklist for Reopening Chicago Lutheran Schools 2020/2021** for a suggested high-level timeline of planning activities to complete in June, July and August.