



WHITEFIELD ACADEMY

A Classical Christian Education

Re-Opening Plan August 2020
Updated: July 31, 2020

Dear Whitefield Community,

Thank you for your patience and commitment throughout this trying time. I have appreciated your comments and encouragement. I know that the two great concerns are the use of face coverings and the likelihood of the school needing to close in the event of a positive case. In light of our research and new regulations I have addressed these on pages 8 and 14 respectively.

I believe it is vital that we return to Whitefield-in-Person, in the classroom, on-site, while maintaining and prioritizing the health of our students, families, faculty, and staff. This document outlines a “living” plan to accomplish just that.

As noted on page 4, we have consulted widely and read extensively from as many available credible sources as we can. We recognize our limitations with regard to accessing and analyzing complex data. However, we believe we have a responsibility to the Whitefield Academy community to make decisions in the light of carefully reviewed research while doing our best to maintain a realistic sense of risk to the safety and health of our school.

Thus, the best we can honestly say is that we are seeking to draw faithful conclusions from the data we have and interpret how we can also be true to our mission to educate our students in the most feasibly safe manner possible. I have added a “Notes” section to summarize some of the new data that has impacted our planning. Please take time to follow the links.

I value input that you might have. Please reach out to me with questions or comments at qjohnston@whitefieldacademy.org or 816-444-3567.

The Peace of Christ to you all!

Quentin Johnston
Headmaster

THE PLAN:

Whitefield-in-Person

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

School will open on campus on August 20. Our goal is to keep routines and programs in place as much as possible so that our students fully experience the mentoring and discipleship that characterizes our classical Christian education. At the same time, we seek to ensure the safety of the students, families, faculty, and staff that make up our school community.

We are also preparing in the event a student is required to be absent in response to a COVID-19 concern or if we are required to close our campus for a short or long period. Steps are being taken to acquire sufficient technology to ensure that students will have the use of a personal device that will permit access to Zoom in the event that we have to reinitiate Whitefield-at-Home.

We are closely scrutinizing output from a multitude of sources such as our local health department, state and local government, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), and the [CDC](#). We have spoken with physicians on the frontline of COVID-19 treatment, surveyed other schools for best practices and have in some cases incorporated their insights. We are monitoring international studies and seeking to make faithful and reasoned decisions.

This update incorporates our understanding of the current data, science, and recommendations. While health recommendations and guidelines will likely evolve, and we will make updates to the plans as needed, one thing will remain constant—we will worship, learn, and grow in virtue together.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

Our teachers are excited to be returning and once more welcoming your children into their classrooms. We will need to be flexible, but we will be true to our mission “to equip students to be Christ-honoring critical thinkers, clear communicators, and compassionate leaders, through the pursuit of academic excellence, in the tradition of classical Christian education.”

We look forward to being back together soon!

BUILDING MODIFICATIONS

- We are testing the [Tersano Stabilized Aqueous Ozone](#) system to allow us to create our own safe sanitizing products in house. The SAO system infuses water with aqueous ozone (SAO) to create safe, green products that will be used by our team to clean and sanitize throughout the day. We expect this to be in place by August 20.
- We are adding [Upper-Air/Room Germicidal Ultraviolet \(UV-C\) Fixtures](#) to the lower floor rooms that do not have external windows and to the front office. These will help mitigate any aerosol pathogens and have a proven track record in dealing with coronavirus.
- We are adding hand-sanitizing stations and our new bathroom facilities have more sinks.
- We are adding health and safety signage and reminders throughout the building.
- We are looking to set up [sail canopies](#) where feasible to create outdoor classrooms.

THE PLAN: Whitefield-in-Person!

HYGIENE & SAFETY PRACTICES

- **Hand Hygiene**
 - Hand hygiene is repeatedly cited as a key to helping prevent the spread of COVID-19. We will place a strong emphasis on hand hygiene, including intentional hand washing/sanitizing times during the day.
- **Cleaning**
 - A dedicated staff member will be assigned to continually clean high point of contact areas, common areas, and restroom sinks.
 - Teachers and staff will sanitize desks and surfaces at lunch and at the end of the day.
- **Temperature Screening**
 - We are requesting that all families, teachers and staff take their own temperature before leaving home. In the event that one person in the household has a temperature of 100.4° F or higher, please advise the office that all will be staying home as a precaution. Advice from medical professionals should be sought about when it is safe to return to school.
 - We will be using infrared forehead thermometers like [these](#), but there are many styles and prices to choose from.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

- No person will be allowed into the school with a temperature of 100.4° F or higher. Those who test at 100.4° F or higher will receive a second test (with a different thermometer if available) to confirm the reading. If readings conflict, a third temperature will be taken (with a third thermometer if available) to determine the accuracy of the reading.
- Those who develop a temperature of 100.4° F or higher during the school day will be put in a quarantine area until a parent arrives to take them home.
- As students exit their vehicles each morning at drop-off, a staff member or volunteer will take their temperature while the driver waits for the result.
 - After passing the temperature check, the driver may leave.
 - Both Lower School and Upper School students will enter by the Cafeteria door.
 - Only students who drive themselves and their passengers may use the northeast “Library” door. Their temperatures will be taken before they enter.
- Staff, teachers, and others arriving during the day will report to the office and have their temperature taken.

THE PLAN: Whitefield-in-Person!

FACE COVERING

We will encourage physical distancing, but we recognize that physical distancing is difficult for students. We do not believe it will be feasible to keep the students six feet apart at all times.

- While current research points to the [effectiveness of face coverings in reducing the spread of COVID-19](#), we understand that this issue has generated a considerable amount of controversy nationally and around the world. Our policy takes into account data from the CDC and international studies, and seeks to strike a reasonable balance, taking into account the extremely low risks associated with PK-12 students.

We expect to deploy a hybrid approach with older students and adults wearing face coverings and younger students (PK-6) wearing them at certain times (*see below*).

- Our policy is not intended to take liberties or infringe on rights. We have two primary goals in this regard:
 - To do whatever it takes to maintain in-person instruction.
 - To love one another by helping to keep each other healthy.

As inconvenient as face covering are, it is surely more inconvenient for students and faculty members to have to stay at home!

THE PLAN: Whitefield-in-Person!

- **What face coverings will be used?**

- The school has ordered “gaiters” in bulk for students, faculty, and staff. They are worn around the neck, so are less likely to be lost or accidentally picked up by someone else.
- We will provide two gaiters per student at no charge. Additional gaiters will be available for purchase from the front office for \$3 each.
- Students may opt to wear their own face covering provided it covers the mouth and nose and leaves the face above the nose visible. Personalized face coverings are allowed but may not include slogans, or scary or provocative images. No bandannas.

- **When will face coverings be required?**

- **PK-Grade 6** will not be required to wear face coverings in class. Face coverings will be worn at all other times while in the building, on arrival, and on departure. They will not be required during outdoor activities including recess and PE. During lunch teachers will keep students as far apart as feasible.
- **Grades 7-12 and Adults** will wear face coverings whenever indoors and physical distancing is not possible. This will include upon arrival, at morning assembly, during passing periods, in classrooms, after eating, in the restroom, on the shuttle, and during departure.
 - We recognize that it will be trying for students to wear face coverings for a long time. To help our students, teachers will create situations where it is safe to remove

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

face coverings throughout the day. For instance, we will set up a classroom in the gym (when PE does not need to use it) with physically-distanced tables. Teachers will regularly take their students outside for a walk or to conduct class. Our hope is to ensure that for at least one full class a day face coverings will not be required.

- Teachers may permit a student who is giving an oral presentation to remove his/her face covering provided physical distance is maintained.
- We have considered and continue to consider many outdoor options. While some, unfortunately, are too expensive or impractical to implement, we are looking to set up [sail canopies](#) where feasible, and are purchasing [portable lap desks](#) for use in the gym, chapel, and outdoors.

- **What if my child has a health issue that would be exacerbated by wearing a face covering even for short duration?**
 - Please bring a doctor's note indicating such an issue regarding your child, and we will accommodate the need.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND GROUP SIZES

- **At the start of the year:**
 - We will limit visitor access to campus.
 - We will limit large group gatherings and cross-grade level interactions.
 - We will encourage and plan for more outside time.
 - We will adopt universal seating charts to limit the extent of possible exposure.
 - We will adjust the drop-off and pick-up protocol.
- **Morning Assembly and Chapel**
 - Upper School will begin each day with morning assembly. Face coverings will be required, and we will physically distance as much as possible.
 - Lower School will have chapel on Fridays without Upper School present. We will physically distance as much as possible.
- **Lunch**
 - Because of hygiene, space, and staffing considerations, we are unable to offer a hot lunch program. Because students will be having lunch in classrooms and outdoors, microwaves will not be available. We will continue to offer pizza and Chick-fil-A on Mondays and

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

Fridays and are looking at a possible Subway (or similar) option for one other day. As with other plans, we will review this regularly.

- Students will eat in classrooms or outside whenever the weather permits. We will continue to provide milk. Students should bring a water bottle which may be refilled but water fountains will be unavailable to drink from.
- **Midday Pick-up for Pre-K, TK, and Kindergarten**
 - Parents may not enter the building to collect their students.
 - Please park in the circle drive and teachers will bring your students to you.
- **End of Day Pick-up**
 - Parents may not enter the building to collect their students.
 - Only PK-K will wait in the Cafeteria for dismissal. All other Lower School students will remain in their classrooms until they are called to the pick-up line or collected by an older sibling who will be driving them home.
 - Upper School students who are not driving will be called to the pick-up line by intercom.
 - More detailed information will be forthcoming.
 - Our Athletic Director will publish plans for athletes going to practices and games at a date closer to scheduled athletic activities.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLANS

We will need for all members of our community to self-monitor, self-report, and follow health provider and health department guidelines. Please do not come to school if you feel sick.

- Everyone entering the building must receive a temperature check. If you have a temperature of 100.4° F or higher or have any [CDC-identified COVID-19 symptoms](#), please consult your healthcare provider. You must be fever-free for [24 hours](#) without the use of fever-reducing medication before re-entering the building.
- If a student or staff member becomes symptomatic during the day, they will be isolated and asked to leave campus as soon as possible.
- **Positive Tests and Close Contact**
 - If a community member (staff, student, parent, household member, close contact) tests positive, they are expected to notify Dr. Andrew Selby, Assistant Headmaster, immediately. All physicians and schools are [required](#) to report incidences to the health department.
 - Those who are symptomatic or awaiting COVID test results should not come to school.
 - Based on current CDC guidelines, all individuals who test positive must stay home for a minimum of ten days. You must be fever-free for [24 hours](#) (previously 48 hours was required) without the use of fever-reducing medication [before returning to school](#).

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

- All individuals who have been in close contact with someone who tests positive must stay home for 14 days. “Close contact” is defined as being within 6 feet of a positive case for more than 15 minutes without wearing a face covering.
- If a positive case arises in our community, let us assume the best of one another. “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:7). Resisting the temptation to blame and speak harshly will allow our community to draw together in support and care.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

Kansas City Health Department (KCHD) guidelines indicate that a single confirmed case of COVID-19, or even a small number of simultaneous cases, is not sufficient to close a school. As long as we demonstrate reasonable caution, we will be able to avoid the high number of cases that might necessitate a temporary shutdown of the school for community quarantine and building cleaning.

In what we believe to be the unlikely event of a school closure, we will transition to Whitefield-at-Home while making every effort to continue the PK-1 normal academic program on campus.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

FAQ

- **What about bringing treats to class for birthdays?**
 - We are investigating best practices and will determine shortly whether we will be able to do this to start the semester.
- **What happens if my student has traveled?**
 - All students who travel out of state will be required to notify the school. If the area of travel is in a zone deemed “a hot spot,” then the student may be required to stay home for a period of up to 14 days.
- **If another student in my child’s class gets COVID, does my child have to stay home?**
 - Generally, no. We will follow our “COVID-19 Response Plan” on pages 13-14.
- **Are we going to have “Meet the Teacher”?**
 - Because we will not be able to effectively physically distance, we have canceled our regular “Meet the Teacher” afternoons.
- **Are we going to have “Back to School Nights”?**
 - We are expecting to schedule these as online events with materials available for download or sent home in advance.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

- **Are we going to have Fall Fest?**
 - TBD.
- **Will Aftercare be available?**
 - We are expecting to offer aftercare.
- **Will we have Fall or Winter Sports?**
 - We are currently awaiting guidance from the Missouri Christian Schools Athletic Association (MCSAA) regarding how we will conduct athletic practices, competitions, and policies that will be put in place for spectators. More information will be forthcoming from our Athletic Director, Raquel Carley.
- **Will Whitefield conform to federal, state, county, and city mandates?**
 - Yes. *Recommendations* by these entities will be seriously considered and weighed according to our needs and context.
- **Will the Christmas concerts take place?**
 - We are planning to hold the Christmas concerts; however, we will abide by best practices for gatherings.

THE PLAN: Whitefield-in-Person!

- Is this the plan for the remainder of the school year?
 - We will re-assess our procedures as more information is made available. It is expected that our plans will change if the distribution, course, or frequency of COVID-19 changes. We will announce updates (if any) to this plan close to August 20th.

NOTES

In looking at the available research there is evidence from around the world that:

“Children under 10 are less likely to get infected than adults and if they get infected, they are less likely to get seriously ill. What is interesting is that even if children do get infected, they are less likely to transmit the disease to others than adults. We have not found a single instance of a child infecting parents.”

Kari Stefansson is the CEO of the company [deCODE genetics](#) in Reykjavík, which has [studied the spread](#) of COVID-19 in Iceland with Iceland’s Directorate of Health and the National University Hospital.

<https://www.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/blog/hunting-down-covid-19/>

See also:

- [Swiss Study](#) (use Chrome for translation)
- [Article by Boston University epidemiologist Benjamin Linas](#) summarizing international experience.

THE PLAN: **Whitefield-in-Person!**

- CDC, [Key Updates for Week 29, ending July 18, 2020](#): “For children (0-17 years), cumulative COVID-19 hospitalization rates are lower than cumulative influenza hospitalization rates during recent influenza seasons.”
- The [American Council on Science and Health](#) shows that fatality rates for children are very low. See articles [here](#), and [here](#).
- When considering the actual numbers of infection and fatality, it is worth noting that on the [list of states with most cases](#), Missouri is 27th and Kansas is 34th, and on the [list of states with most fatalities](#), Missouri is 30th and Kansas is 41st.

Of course, none of this data suggests that should be complacent, however, as Alex Berezow concludes in his [article](#), while the data suggests that COVID-19 poses a minor threat to students, we do need to consider measures that protect not only students, but their families, and the teachers and staff who serve them.

