



**Valley Stream
Christian Academy**
A Ministry of Bethlehem Assembly of God

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Valley Stream Christian Academy

Reopening Plans for the 2021-2022 School Year

This plan is subject to change according to current CDC and governmental guidelines and recommendations.

1. Overview
2. Communication/Family and Community Engagement
3. Health and Safety
4. Facilities
5. Nutrition
6. Transportation
7. Social-Emotional Well-Being
8. School Schedules
9. Teaching and Learning
10. Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
11. Technology and Connectivity

Overview

The Valley Stream Christian Academy COVID-19 Reopening Plan was developed to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and employees, promote equity and accessibility for all students' learning, provide instruction to meet every student's needs, and foster positive relations and interactions during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the development of this plan, feedback and input was received from stakeholders (teachers, staff, administration, parents/legal guardians of students, local health department, health care providers, and community-based groups) through multiple meetings and surveys. It was reviewed by the Administration, the VSCA School Committee, and other stakeholders of Valley Stream Christian Academy.

The following items were paramount in the development of this plan:

- Health and Safety of all Students and Staff
- Student Learning Inclusive of Instruction and Social Emotional Wellness
- Feasibility
- Community Impact
- Financial Impact

Communication/Family & Community Engagement

Communication will be essential for administrators, staff, and parents to work successfully as a team to meet the needs of students and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The principal in each building is designated as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator who will be responsible for compliance with the health and safety aspects of the plan. The following are the varied mechanisms through which communication will occur:

- VSCA will use current SIS platform, FACTS, to communicate all relative information including school opening/closing, calendar, scheduling, and lesson plans. Communication always includes webpage, text, email, and social media.
- Students and staff will be trained in hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene through verbal and written instruction.
- The School Principal is designated as the point of contact upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases.

These are uncertain times, requiring that we all pull together and adapt as best we can to facilitate continued learning, social-emotional well-being, and, most importantly, physical health and safety. We will require all students, staff and visitors to adhere to the CDC/DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically, face masks when distance of 3 feet cannot be maintained. This will be conveyed verbally and through signage posted throughout the school buildings.

Throughout the year, we may find ourselves changing course, depending on the status of the virus, government orders and health department guidelines. As we fully cooperate with the state and local health departments, our plans will, hopefully, allow us to transition smoothly between in school and remote learning, as needed.

The Reopening Plan is posted on our website.

Health & Safety

- Regular reminders will take place regarding:
 - Healthy hygiene practices
 - Social distancing (currently 3 feet)
 - Required face coverings
 - Management of ill persons—designation of isolation room oversight by School Nurse
 - Daily cleaning and disinfection of shared spaces

Valley Stream Christian Academy will designate the building principal as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator who will be responsible for compliance with the health and safety aspects of the plan including plans to ensure the health, safety and cleanliness of our school on a daily basis. Reopening requires all of us to move forward together by practicing social distancing and other daily habits recommended by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>) and the Department of Health (DOH) to reduce our risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Reopening of our school buildings will strongly rely on general public health strategies, including increased testing of people for the virus, social distancing, and isolation if necessary. The VSCA precautions and maintenance plan will focus on cleaning and disinfecting our classrooms, hallways, offices and additional working spaces on a daily basis and staff implementing precautionary practices.

Social Distancing: Social distancing of 3 feet or a barrier will be maintained between individuals in the schools and on school grounds. The physical barriers, if used, will not adversely affect airflow, heating, cooling, or ventilation, or otherwise present a health or safety risk. The barriers will be in accordance with the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines.

Screens for Staff Desks: There will be protective screens for security desks at each building and for desks in office spaces where social distancing is not possible.

Student Desk Spacing: Spacing and configuration of desks will be based on most recent CDC, DOH and NYSED guidelines. Desks will all be facing the same direction at this time with social distancing of 3 feet between students as much as possible.

Face Coverings: Face coverings (acceptable for COVID-19) must be worn by all students, staff and visitors as per CDC and DOH guidelines. Disposable face masks will be provided to staff and students who do not have their own. Training will be provided on how to put on, take off, clean (if needed), and discard PPE.

Face shields: Face shields will be worn by nurses, custodial staff, and other staff where deemed necessary as an accommodation.

Gloves: Gloves will be made available for all staff.

Gowns for nurses: Protective gowns will be used by nurses when confronted with symptomatic individuals.

Signage for Social Distancing and Health Hygiene Protocols: Signage and visual aids will be utilized throughout each building to inform staff and students with regard to social distancing and health hygiene protocols.

Playground equipment: Playground equipment access will be determined by current CDC, DOH and NYSED guidance. The playground equipment will be permitted to be used and shared.

Security Staff: Security staffing will be determined and assigned based on points of entry for arrival and dismissal.

Restrict Water Fountain Usage: Students and staff will not be permitted to drink directly from water fountains. Fountains will only be used for filling up refillable water bottles.

Student Bathroom Usage: Principal will establish protocols to monitor and limit student usage of bathrooms in order to minimize unsupervised interactions between students and facilitate cleaning of bathrooms throughout the day. Use of face masks and maintaining social distancing will be required. Only one student at a time will be permitted. Teachers will contact the front office to inform and regulate this procedure.

Additional Instructional Spaces: Maintaining social distancing may be difficult. If additional space is needed, art room, cafeterias, gymnasium, and other rooms may be repurposed.

Early Morning Program: An early morning childcare program will be provided in each school with the utilization of masks, social distancing, and cleaning protocols in place.

Teachers' Lounge: Social distancing will be crucial in this space. The CDC recommends that seating be limited in common areas. Communal items, like coffee pots, water coolers, and bulk snacks, should be replaced with pre-packaged, single-serve items.

Means to Control Infection

- Time management to reduce interaction
- Reduction in time spent outside of classroom including but not limited to:
 - Entering and exiting building
 - Changing of classes
 - Classroom doors will remain open. Wherever possible, windows will be left open when weather permits.
 - Alcohol-based hand rub dispensers will be available in each classroom, office, and hallway.

Role of Nurse

- The nurse will work alongside the School Principal as the COVID-19 coordinator for the building.
Protocols in confirmed cases:
- **If a staff member or student comes into direct contact (within 6 feet) with a person with COVID-19 or a staff member or student has COVID-19, they must report such to the School Administration. This is immediately reported to the Department of Health by the School Nurse.**
- **The School Nurse will supervise the isolation room.**

HYGIENE AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Building Cleaning Protocols: All custodial staff will be following CDC and DOH Guidelines for building cleaning (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/clean.html>). This will include cleaning high risk areas (desks, door knobs, railings, tables, water fountains and any areas used by many and frequently touched surfaces) utilizing products recommended from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19.

Cleaning in the event of confirmed COVID-19 related illness in the building: On a case by case basis, the school will follow CDC guidelines and Department of Health(DOH) guidelines regarding cleaning in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 related illness in the building (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>).

Cleaning of Restrooms: Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.

Protocol for Distribution and Cleaning of Technology Devices: Devices utilized by staff and students will be cleaned daily with alcohol wipes. Students will only use their own devices.

Hand Sanitizers and Stations: Hand sanitizers are located throughout each building. Hand sanitizer will also be in classrooms where no sink for handwashing exists.

Health Hygiene and Other Training Regimens: Ongoing training for students and staff will be provided with regard to use of face masks, coughing, sneezing, social distancing and proper hygiene (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>).

Screening and Tracking

Screening Upon Entry to Buildings

The CDC no longer recommends daily screening questionnaires and temperature checks. Anyone with a temperature over 100 degrees F is not permitted to be in the building. Parents should monitor their child's health and possible symptoms diligently each morning.

Protocols for asthma - related acute respiratory treatment care will be based on current standard of care. The state and local health department will be notified immediately about a case if diagnostic COVID-19 test results are disclosed as being positive.

Isolation

- Any individual who is positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, or who presents with a temperature greater than 100 degrees F, will not be allowed to enter a school building and must immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health provider for assessment and testing.
- If a child needs to go home due to being symptomatic, parents will be notified about an expeditious pick-up. Parents must pick up their child immediately and provide information for a designated person to pick up their child if they are not able to do this immediately.

- The child will be separated from other students and supervised with physical distancing until the child is picked up.
- Until a parent or designated person picks up the child he/she will stay with the nurse, in PPE, with social distancing, in the health office or designated isolation
- Until a parent or designated person picks up the child, he/she will stay with the nurse, in PPE with social distancing, in the health office or designated isolation area.
- Other health cases will be taken care of in an alternate location.
- If a staff member becomes ill, he/she will notify the school nurse immediately.
- Additional staffing will be provided to support nurses in these situations.

Tracing

- Nurses will collaborate with the Nassau County Department of Health in accordance with the New York State Contact Tracing Program regarding tracing if confirmed cases occur. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal/state law/regulations.

Discovery of Cases/Containment

- When COVID-19 cases are discovered, decisions as to when the entire school will be closed will be made in consultation with the state and local health department and VSCA will fully cooperate with the Department of Health in all recommendations. Plans will be communicated internally and externally throughout the closure process.
 - If a full school closure is warranted, parents will be notified immediately through the various means in our SIS platform. Students and staff will resume regular class schedule through the use of online learning and video conferencing platforms.
- In consultation with the local health department(s), requirements for when an individual may return to the in-person learning environment will be determined. At a minimum, a health care provider evaluation, clinical decision to return and any testing is a decision of the student or staff member's health care provider, and symptom resolution or medical release from isolation must be provided.
- Responsible parties will refer to the DOH's "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure" or CDC guidance for staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

Facilities

Social Distancing, Ventilation, Safety Drills

Social Distancing: Social distancing of 3 feet will be maintained between individuals in the schools and on school grounds whenever possible.

Building Condition Survey: Compliance will be ensured with the 2020 Building Condition Survey and Visual Inspection.

Code Reviews: All new building materials used, will not adversely affect airflow, heating, cooling, or ventilation, or otherwise present a health or safety risk. The barriers will be in accordance with the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines.

Ventilation: Bethlehem Assembly of God has installed an air ionization and sterilization system. In addition, ventilation will allow in outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) in the classrooms. Filters have all been replaced and will continue to be done in the future, as per guidelines.

Safety Drills: Fire evacuation drills and lockdown drills will be conducted according to the existing state requirements without deviating from current requirements. The drills will be conducted with social distancing, use of face masks, and gathering points located outside for fire drills.

Building Code Compliance: Any changes or additions to facilities will comply with the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC).

Lead-In-Water Testing: New facilities are not being leased and tents are not being utilized. The existing toilet and sink fixtures meet the minimum standards. Each building has drinking fountains and can provide one drinking fountain per one hundred occupants. Any plastic separators utilized will comply with the 2020 BCNYS Section 2606.

Nutrition

Protocols:

- Students will have lunch and snacks in their classrooms, separated per three foot social distancing guidelines. The tables will be cleaned and disinfected.
- During all lunch or snack times, students will continue to follow all CDC social distancing requirements including 3 feet distancing.
- Elementary students will remain in their designated classroom for all meals.
- Middle school students will have a designated lunch room.
- High school students will be permitted to leave the campus to buy lunch but must return to the campus to eat. They will be given a designated space including but not limited to their classrooms.
- Students will be required to perform hand hygiene before and after eating.
- Sharing of food and beverages will not be permitted.
- Individual student food delivery will not be permitted. Consideration will be given to reinstate the school lunch vendor program.

TRANSPORTATION

- VSCA does not provide bus transportation. School will abide by bus transportation policies.
- Students taking bus transportation, public or private, will be expected to keep face coverings on at all times.
- Students being transported by parents or guardians should wear masks when carpooling with other students.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

- VSCA will address mental health concerns as they occur.
- Mental health education will be addressed age-appropriately within each classroom.
- Students will be given an opportunity to privately discuss their emotional well-being.

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

Arrival and Dismissal:

Students will enter school buildings at several different entry points designated by Administration. Each entry point will be assigned specific grade levels in order to address density reduction needs. Students will remain on socially distanced single lines while entering the building.

Designated staff members with PPE will take posts to monitor safe distances and the entry of students walking into the school buildings.

Dismissal will occur on staggered schedules to restrict the flow of students in hallways as they exit the buildings. Parents will be required to pick up their child and leave school grounds immediately.

Scheduling and Instruction:

Scheduling and instruction were developed with input from stakeholders through meetings, surveys and social medial platforms to meet the needs of every student to allow for continuous instruction and academic support given the current status of COVID-19 in our area, and based upon governmental orders and guidance of the health department. If a full, in-person return to school buildings is permitted and possible, all stated precautions will be in place. However, we need to be prepared in the event this is not possible. We

understand that, should there be a need for an alternate day schedule or full at-home distance learning, this will present challenges for many of our school families.

The health and safety of all is VSCA's first priority and the school must adhere to existing orders and guidelines. Prevention of spread will be minimized by restricting interaction between cohorts and limiting student movement throughout the school buildings.

At this time, the learning models formally described as Remote and Hybrid will not be offered, however, they remain a possibility should governmental orders and guidance from the health department require.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

GRADES K-12

- All students will receive textbooks and access to digital resources for each academic subject.
- Current supply lists for classroom instruction are available on the school website. Students will not be permitted to share supplies.
- All instruction will remain at grade level expectations and standards across all core curriculum including but not limited to:
 - Language Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
- The 1,200-minute lab requirement will be met through hands on laboratory experiences, virtual laboratory experiences, or a combination of both.

The Arts

- In-person instruction
 - For elementary students, this will take place in each individual classroom. Students will receive individual kits of needed supplies.
 - For secondary students, a designated space will be used. Students will receive individual kits.

Physical Education

- In-person P.E.
 - Whenever possible, P.E. activities will take place outside.
 - All other P.E. activities will take place in gymnasium following CDC guidelines.

Teaching and Learning:

- Equitable instruction will be provided for all students with continuity of learning ensured with all of the instructional models.
- Daily interaction will take place between the students and teachers to ensure that students may interact and seek feedback and support from them.
- The instructional plans will be communicated to parents and guardians.

Classroom Procedures: Classroom procedures for full in person instruction and the hybrid model were developed with social distancing and safety parameters to protect all members of the school community.

- Desks will be rearranged to place all students facing in the same direction while adhering to social distancing of three feet and maintaining cohort groups as per current NYSED, CDC, DOH guidelines.
- Mask breaks will be given during the school day. Masks may be removed while eating meals and intermittently during instruction while remaining at one's desk.
- Students need to start each day with their own device, wiped clean daily and only use their own device throughout the day.
- Visual aids will be used to show traffic flow and spacing in classrooms.

- Staff will reinforce hand washing routines and discuss coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for students and staff. Students must use hand sanitizer in the classroom when returning from the restroom.
- Students will be educated on safety protocols (i.e., the importance of not touching their faces or others, to remind students how to show friendship without touching another).
- Students will not be permitted to share supplies (scissors, pencils, etc.).
- Restroom/hall passes and sign in/out logs will not be utilized to minimize cross contact.
- Class pets/ animals will not be permitted in the classrooms.
- Items from home must be in a plastic bag with the student's name clearly marked and only be used by that student.

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Attendance data will remain consistent with past practice unless modified by law, regulation, or executive order. Attendance will be taken daily with the full in-person model, the hybrid model and the remote learning model. The classroom teacher will be the point of contact for their cohorts of students. Daily attendance will be taken by the teacher in all models. Teachers will take attendance daily and record it in FACTS for in person instruction. If a student arrives late to school, then the School Office Personnel will enter the student's attendance data. If it is a hybrid and/or remote day, then the teacher will utilize Zoom/Google Meets with a time stamped virtual entry to gather the students' attendance data. This data will then be administered into FACTS daily by the teacher. Attendance data will be reported to the student information system or SIRS. Chronic absenteeism will be addressed immediately with parents. If a student does not engage in distance learning, immediate outreach will take place with teachers, and/or School Administration reaching out to the students and family.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Internet access will be provided to students and teachers in the school buildings.

Staff members have been provided with ongoing professional development and support in the area of remote learning which will continue in the future.

Designated COVID-19 Coordinator:

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