

NCA 2020-2021 Opening Plan Parent Meeting Q&A

On Thursday, July 23rd NCA families were emailed our Operating Plan for the coming school year. Our plan announced that NCA will have in-person classes and the steps we will take to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and implement the required state mandates.

On Tuesday, July 28th at 3:00 p.m. NCA hosted a live parent Zoom meeting to discuss the operating plans for the coming school year. For those families that were unable to attend, a list of the questions and answers from that meeting are provided below:

Question:	Please tell us more about the mandated law mentioned in email?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor changed the size of group gatherings • CDC report about why kids should be back at school. I shared this on my personal FB page, but I can send it out to parents <p>Clarification from parent – The immunization mandated law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new immunization law does not pertain to COVID; a letter with information regarding the new law was included in summer mailing. We will provide this information to parent again, via email.
Question:	Is there any way to choose remote learning instead on in person?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are not set up to have the staff or the operational capacity to offer both in-person and remote learning. • We will be fully on-site or fully remote, if mandated. • We will provide remote learning for sick students that are out of school or those out due to quarantine period.
Question:	Are there guidelines for face coverings?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are following OSPI, state and local department of health guidelines • Currently, the only mandate is that there be a face covering, and in OSPI's guidance it does state that face shields are an option. • They do not have a specific type of cloth face covering that they are requiring. • CDC has info on requirements based on different levels of transmission. Currently, our state has not gone to this extent of guidance on face mask types and when they should be used. • We can set up a source of information with this kind of information.
Question:	Will desks in classroom be 6 feet apart?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desks will be as close to 6 feet apart as possible. • We have measured all our rooms and based on classroom size we can have 18-20 students per room depending on the classroom. • We were able to get single desks from another private school and we will be using these to spread out students and provide physical distancing. • In the lower grades they have a different desk configuration. We have strategies if we have to use these types of desks with shields, spacing etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are actively working with teachers and staff to account for social distancing in the classroom.
Question:	Transition and summer care have been ongoing this summer. Can we provide information to parents on how things have gone?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our summer care and transitions programs have given us a great example of the challenges, successes and things we need to adjust for the school year. We currently have not had any confirmed cases on campus. We can provide some articles regarding safe schools and information on transmission in children onto one central spot. This way parents can access to hopefully provide information to help parents make informed decisions with regards to sending their students back to school. The documentation from local, state, and national sources is that from ages 10 and under the threat of spread is very minimal We have families that vary greatly on their views regarding COVID. And our goal is to find a healthy balance in the middle of the spectrum in order to provide a safe and healthy environment. We are going to follow all required mandates and implement protocols to keep our families safe and comfortable either way. We are using literature to guide our decision in finding that middle ground, and we would be happy to share that.
Question:	What is our threshold for how many students have symptoms before shifting to remote? When would we shut down due to high numbers of related students/staff out with the same symptoms?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oregon just came out with their metrics on determining how schools will be able to open, whether on-site or remote. They're using data based strictly on statistics to decide that. That might be something that our state moves to, and that's something that was just brought up with the Department of Health reps we were on a call with. Decision on a specific metric will be more on a local county health department level. We will be monitoring this but the decision would be based on health department recommendation. If we felt at any point that our students, staff, or families were at an increased risk we would definitely make a decision to put that in place.
Question:	Is there an option for parents to purchase a desk barrier for their student in order to avoid wearing face masks?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this point that is not a choice we are currently allowed to make within our school. It is a statewide mandate that requires students to wear masks. It does not state that a student could not wear a mask even with a barrier.
Question:	Are we having before/after care?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That is something that will have to be decided as we get closer to school because of what mandates will be in place and with different requirements. If we are required to move to remote learning, care would also be affected by guidance given at that time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are following guidelines regarding child care as they are released. And have made changes several times during the summer as information changed. Our plan is to have care if we can. It would include smaller groups and possible other adjustments. Again, as we get closure to school opening we will be providing the plan to parents.
Question:	Are 7/8 th students remaining in their homerooms?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have three classrooms to utilize for the Junior High After discussing options with teachers and administration the decision is to intermingle the JH (7th & 8th) grade students to allow for movement between the three classrooms and leveled subjects such as math. There will be disinfecting and cleaning procedures in the classrooms as the students move between classes.
Question:	Is there a choice to enroll in the spring, if we choose not to do so for fall?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently we have several full classes and many with wait lists and the possibility for not having space available in the spring is high due to this. We are continuing to experience many calls and tours as word of mouth on our fall plans gets out as well as the success this past spring with our remote learning. Choosing to wait for spring enrollment is an option but there is a high risk of not having a spot for your student come spring due to these reasons.
Statement:	<p>Further information on remote Learning from Mrs. Deleon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had a stressful spring, but our teachers and students moved quickly to the remote learning platform. We have heard that this was a much smoother transition than other schools. Planning and training for possible remote learning this fall has been ongoing and will continue throughout the summer. Teachers are in planning groups, collaborating, and in professional development in order to prepare for the chance of mandated remote learning come fall. We will have a consistent standard between grade levels where possible. Remote learning plans will be released these later this summer and will include these standards.
Question:	If the state mandates a closure will parents not be charges monthly tuition costs?
Answer:	<p>Tuition – The Board is actively discussing this. We have Board members on our call today, perhaps they can speak to this question.</p> <p>Board Member – not speaking in an official board capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board is aware of the topic and having discussions but have not yet made any decisions. Considerations are that we do not have wiggle room in our budget. There are some variations in cost when switching to remote learning but it is actually a very small percent. In order for your child to stay enrolled you would need to pay tuition. Impressed with the pivoting done by our schools last spring.

Question:	When can parents expect to hear from the board? Are parents authorized to attend board meetings or can parents get notes to see the dialogue from board meeting?
Answer:	<p>Board Member and Mrs. DeLeon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be sent out when decisions have been made through normal parent email channels • Most private schools among ACSI are not able to offer discount as they are funded through donation and tuition. • Decision on tuition will be provided before school starts. <p>Board Chair –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next board meeting is August 10th and these tuition questions will be on the agenda for discussion
Statement:	Current Board response drafted after meeting with regards to tuition during remote learning.
	<p>The board has provided the following response, <i>“The Board has been discussing this question and has it on the agenda for the next board meeting which takes place on August 10th. There are many factors that the Board must consider for this decision. The operational costs to run our school do not appreciably change if we transition to remote learning. We know from our experience last spring that there are some fluctuations in service-related expenses (i.e. lunches, extended care, athletics etc.) and we experience a very minor decrease in utilities. We also see decrease in income (preschool, fees for lunches, fees for extended care, etc.) As a general rule, tuition dollars pay for education (teachers and office staff and infrastructure), not for the peripheral services which account for the fluctuations in cost. Of course, there are other considerations as well. These decisions are not easy and the board must carefully consider not only the best interests of our schools, but we also must consider how we value the hard work of our teachers and administration and how we value our parents who deeply care about the quality of the education that our children receive at Northwest Christian Schools. The board will prayerfully come to a decision on this matter on August 10th.”</i></p>
Question:	Can board meetings be attended? Meeting notes?
Answer:	<p>Board Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By law, two board meetings per year are open to the public • Board meeting minutes from all of our meetings are available and can be requested through the front office.
Question:	What about Health Screening?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature checks and symptom screenings will be done each day • We feel this is very important as there are sometimes students that don’t really talk to their parents about those other symptoms, or as a child they don’t even recognize that they have a fever. • We have implemented temperature checks already this summer and are already valuable.
Question:	Will students have opportunities for mask breaks?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, teachers are actively working time into the schedules to provide breaks with outdoor activities and other options as much as possible. • We definitely understand the need for mask breaks, even us as staff need them too.

Question:	Will NCA be having sports?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trisha, our Athletic Director will be releasing information as soon as we have it available. • WIAA has released high school guidance. • We are not WIAA as a K-8 school. Our league, OSPI, nor DOH has yet to release guidance on sports for the upcoming school year • Based on the WIAA guidance the only sport we would be able to offer is cross country, but we continue to await further guidance from proper K-8 channels. • As soon as further sports guidance available, we will provide it
Question:	Can we speak a little more on what remote learning look like? Will it include Zoom meetings, physical work packets?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade level impacts what it will look like Example: One of our early education teachers is working on manipulatives for home. • Zoom will be utilized as it is the only way to get the face-to-face piece of learning. We are looking at that being more prevalent this time. You will see more Zoom, not necessarily all required. There will definitely be more optional opportunities for our students, knowing that they will be recorded and students can watch them at a time that's best for their family. • Integrated projects - teachers working through ideas that will be project based, providing instruction day-to-day and not necessarily worksheets that need completed daily. • A Remote Learning Plan is currently being worked on and will come out in August. It will have standards for all grade levels.
Question:	Will masks be required outside?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We currently have students in summer care and transitions and staff have been working with this throughout the summer so far. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They have developed signs for reminding students about mask use and physical distancing • Outside when physically distant masks can be off
Question:	Supply list says "All school supplies and materials must stay at school". What does this mean?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School books will definitely be allowed to travel back and forth between school and home. • Pencils, scissors, markers, glue sticks, and etc. supplies will be kept in their desks and that is what they will use during the day. • Items will not be shared in the classroom, unless something that can be sanitized.
Question:	We have Robert on the call, can you speak on NCHS WIAA sports rules?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCHS sorting out sports seasons with WIAA guidelines. • He asked NCA question to see what NCA has anything at this time.

Question:	What kind of hand sanitizer is used? Does it contain alcohol? What is authorized and what meets the standard CDC has provided?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will look into this check recall list on hand sanitizers • The hand sanitizer that we have ordered does contain alcohol • And students who need to avoid use due to skin sensitivity, smell sensitivity or allergies will be allowed to physically wash their hands. Please let us know if your child should avoid hand sanitizer.
Question:	How would we receive notification of an on campus confirmed COVID case?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, but due to privacy laws we would not release the name of that person. • We would work with local DOH to notify families through official DOH contact tracing.
Question:	What if the confirmed COVID case does not inform us?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are relying on the partnership between the school and families/staff to inform us on confirmed or suspected cases • Staff are required to report their employer • Notification could come through contact tracing by the local DOH
Question:	Can you provide your own hand sanitizer for your child?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, you definitely can
Question:	So winter break this year is from Thanksgiving to Christmas?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, clarification this is just possibly between Thanksgiving break to Christmas break for remote learning, if we see transmission rates are on the uptake • Parents will be involved in this decisions if we were not mandated by other sources (state/DOH) • Decision would not be made until later in the school fall OR if parents were fully in support of it earlier than that.
Question:	Are there policies in place for other illnesses (flu's, allergies)? And how do we show that it is not COVID?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example from this summer. Student with allergies, we recommended seeing pediatrician and they did confirm allergies and sent confirmation • We have reached out to Pediatricians in the area to ask. Are they ready for this onset of families needing clarification? They said yes are they are prepared to provide documentation • Parents will sign a COVID agreement with the school much like our summer agreement. It will have information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Temperature ○ Symptoms ○ Options for quarantine, or maybe negative test, or how long your child would need to be out. • All of this information will be provided to you before school starts
Question:	Regarding educating our students to the evolving to new procedures and policies. Why we wear the mask and why some cannot wear? Would we be teaching tolerance and love as to why things are different?

Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are receiving training this summer • Teachers will be training students in their classes with appropriate age level, without introducing fear • We are planning to provide videos showing kids and families what to expect before they get on campus. • Wording on what we use can be provided to parents so wording can be the same.
Statement:	<p>If we are required to go remote learning before the school year begins, NCA is planning on having opportunities for student and family to meet with teachers in small group settings or one on one with safety procedures in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information on this will be released before the school year begins.
Question:	<p>What kind of planning are we doing on transferring remote – tools to get kids ready? The skill set students need to prepare them for remote learning.</p>
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working with a district administrator from White River School District to provide training for teachers. We are careful to not overwhelm our teachers with too much information at once so they are able to process the different training. • Google Classroom – utilizing it across all grade levels • Zoom • FACTS SIS: has a lot more capabilities for communication between parents and the school • Videos • Plan to work with students on-site if we start on-site to familiarize them with platforms.
Question:	<p>With students illnesses possibly going from 2 days off to 10 days off – how do we plan to do this? Particularly with regards to not letting students fall too far behind.</p>
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under a week a teacher will facilitate • There will be a difference for quarantine or illness • If longer time, it will be more remote, we would like to hire a person to facilitate this, but it will depend on enrollment if we can afford to do so • Training for students on how to get on Google Classroom, how to communicate with teachers, how to connect with their peers. Making sure they feel proficient if we are required to move to remote learning. • Google Classroom will always have assignments posted, so if they are home for any reason they will have access to upcoming assignments.
Question:	<p>Will there be a script of what you plan to tell the kids so we can use the same terms at home leading up to school?</p>
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will share those resources. • There will be a lot of basic curriculum terminology and visuals that the teachers will use age appropriately for parents to use as well.
Question:	<p>If the state mandates remote learning, would we as a private school have any other options or do we have to go along with the mandate?</p>
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on what we're hearing right now, we would not have an option right away and we would have to comply with any mandate given.

Question:	Do we have access to any data that shows the best masks for children?
Answer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not currently have any data that shows the best masks for children. • There have been a lot more options coming out in the last few weeks and we would love to get a community going to share resources on that. • Look for a post in the NCA Families Facebook group. • It is important as well that students are practicing wearing their masks now and through the summer so there isn't a difficult adjustment once school starts.
Closing:	<p>God doesn't want us to live in fear and that's one of the messages we want to share with the kids. They're going to pick up on things and feel the way we're feeling. I don't want our campus to be one where our students walking on campus being fearful. I want them to see that our school is here, that we're a community, that we love these kids. Our teacher are so desperate to have these kids back on campus. Almost every time I give a tour and walk into the gym I almost tear up thinking about our carnival, Family Dance Night, and Nerf Night, all the fun events we want back. But we don't want the kids to focus on the fact that we aren't doing that, we want them to focus on them being back on campus and seeing friends. That social, emotional development is so important for them and we want them to experience that here on campus, and keep them safe at the same time.</p> <p>Feel free to email, set up appointments, and call us to get questions answered that weren't answered here. Your survey feedback is really important, so if you have not filled out the survey please do so because that helps us to plan, not only for staffing but to provide answers to our school community. And if you questions that are specific to your kiddo, please reach out.</p> <p>Thank you for coming today, we will offer more of these if they're beneficial and parents are enjoying them. So just let us know if you want us to keep going on that.</p>