

School Reopening Plan FAQ

Health and Safety FAQ

Q: What does “reopening our schools” really mean?

A: Gathering as a school community is an integral part of Lutheran education. Our plan is to reopen our school buildings to students this fall. This means that all students are welcome to return to classes for face-to-face instruction. We have developed an in-depth plan that addresses numerous aspects of the reopening process, and how schools will function once reopened.

Q: Will students be safe when school is reopened?

A: Safety is always our top priority in Lutheran education. In constructing our reopening plan, we have closely studied guidance from federal and state authorities.

Q: Who decides when a school has met the requirements to reopen? When will this happen?

A: The West Shore Lutheran School Board of Education will determine if it is safe to return students to face to face instruction this Fall while also following the State of Michigan's Phased Reopening of Schools protocol.

Q: Will all students be allowed to return to school at the same time?

A: Yes. Our plan provides for the return of all Lutheran school students for full-day instruction.

Q: Will students and Staff need to wear masks at school?

A: Yes. As per directives of the state, all 5-8 students will need to wear masks while at school. Masks may be removed for brief periods of time under certain circumstances (such as outdoor play or lunch). However, when masks are removed, students must remain physically distant from one another (at least six feet).

All students in grades kindergarten through 4 will not be required to wear facial coverings in their classrooms, unless (1) students do not remain with their cohort class throughout the school day and (2) come into close contact with students in another class.

All staff will wear facial coverings when in classrooms, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.

Q: Do I need to purchase masks for my child?

A: Yes. We are asking all parents to purchase masks for their child. Parents may opt to buy disposable or reusable masks. For disposable masks, each mask must be thrown away at the end of every school day and parents should send plenty of extra masks to school with their child. For reusable masks, masks should be cleaned after every use and students should send at least one extra reusable mask to school.

Q: Can face shields be used instead of masks?

A: The State of Michigan has directed us that Shields can not be used in place of a face mask.

Q: Will teachers teach children how to use masks?

A: Yes. We know that students will need training to learn how to properly wear masks. We will spend time at the beginning of the year helping children learn how to safely keep masks in place. However, we ask that you start this practice at home also. It will be very important that students come to school with basic knowledge on how to put on and take off a face mask.

Q: Will students be required to physically distance at school?

A: When students are with their class or cohort, they should remain as far apart as possible, but do not need to keep at least six feet apart. We know that part of student learning is engaging with their peers. We will do our best to allow for this engagement of learning while also trying to keep within the guidelines of distance from each other.

Q: Should I take my child's temperature every day before school?

A: Yes. A high fever is a key symptom of COVID-19. Parents should take their child's temperature every day before their child is taken to school. If your child has a fever of over 100.4°F, your child should be kept home from school. You should contact your child's doctor and the school's main office. Similarly, you should ask your child if he/she has any of the other [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, such as a sore throat, coughing, or nausea. If your child complains of these symptoms, you should keep him/her home and contact your doctor and the school office.

Q: How will drop off and pick-up be handled?

A: We will be utilizing our exterior exits from the Kindergarten - 8th Grade classrooms for drop off and pick up. Parents will be asked not to congregate near school doors. Principal Brad Feenstra and the Teachers will communicate specific drop off and pick up procedures to you ahead of the start of school.

In addition, when students enter school every day, they will be asked to participate in two tasks. These are:

1. Students should wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer.
2. Students will be asked if they are feeling well.

If a student has a temperature above 100.4°F or complains of other COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be immediately sent to a quarantine room.

Q: What does the plan say about safety and cleanliness requirements for school buildings?

A: Our plan includes very specific requirements for the ongoing cleaning and sanitizing of our school buildings. Generally speaking, buildings will be cleaned very frequently, with a particular focus on high-traffic areas and common surfaces. Windows and/or vents should be opened to maximize air flow. Barriers will be installed in main office areas.

Q: How will lunch take place when school reopens?

A: Classrooms or outdoor areas will be used for students to eat meals at school.

Q: What about recess?

A: Teachers will conduct recess with their own classroom at staggered times so that cohorts are not mixing.

Q: Can I still volunteer at school?

A: Schools have been asked to minimize the number of volunteers this year in an effort to mitigate risk.

Q: Will extended care (before and after care) be available this year?

A: Yes. Schools may continue to offer extended care. West Shore Lutheran School will follow LARA Regulations for extended care.

Q: My child and/or another member of my household is in an at-risk group for COVID-19. Should I send my child to school?

A: Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has defined [conditions in which certain people may be more at risk for severe illness through COVID-19](#). If your child or another member of your household is in an at-risk group, we encourage you to speak to your doctor. Ultimately you should decide whether it is safe for your child to attend school.

Q: Is it okay for my family to travel out of town during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: We recommend that you not travel out of town during the current pandemic. However, if travel is necessary, we encourage you to become familiar with

the CDC's Travel Guidelines. If you or a member of your household travels to another country or to a state identified by the CDC as having a surge in COVID-19 cases, your school may ask you to wait for 14 days until returning your child to school.

Q: What happens if there is a COVID-19 surge in Michigan and the state imposes more restrictions on schools?

A: If a COVID-19 surge occurs, we will work closely with state officials to determine whether we can continue face-to-face instruction (even on an alternate schedule). If necessary, we will return to at-home virtual instruction.

Infection Protocols FAQ

Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

A: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified several [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, including high fever (above 100.4°F), sore throat, coughing, nausea, headache, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, runny nose, fatigue, diarrhea and difficulty breathing.

Q: What should I do if my child has symptoms of COVID-19?

A: If your child shows [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, you should contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a COVID-19 test. You should alert your school's main office and not send your child to school. If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to the office and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school.

Q: My child had COVID-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for COVID-19. When can he/she return to school?

A: If your child does not have COVID-19, but has another illness, you should keep your child home until the illness' symptoms disappear.

Q: What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

A: You should immediately contact your doctor for additional instructions. You should also contact your school's main office. You should not send your child to school.

Q: When can a student return to school after receiving a positive COVID-19 test?

A: If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student must isolate and not return to school until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#). This includes:

1. Three or more days without a high fever;
2. A reduction of other COVID symptoms by at least 75 percent; and

3. At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Q: What should I do if a member of my household (who is not my child) tests positive for COVID-19?

A: You should immediately contact your school's main office. Your school will ask that you keep your child home for at least 14 days. If your family member recovers from COVID-19 (through meeting the criteria in the previous question) AND your child shows no COVID-19 symptoms for the 14-day period, your school may allow your child to return.

Q: What happens if my child's teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students (see above). If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, your school will provide a substitute teacher if possible. Virtual learning for that classroom may become necessary if a substitute can not be found.

Q: What happens if another student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Your school will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. All students in the cohort will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. If more than one student tests positive for COVID-19, it is likely that the entire cohort will be isolated (sent home) for at least 14 days. Students will be allowed to complete work virtually while the cohort is away from school.

Q: Could my child's school building be closed down due to COVID-19 this year?

A: We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment in the coming year. However, if numerous cases appear in a single school, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts, we may need to close the school building and transition all students to virtual learning for a time. Parents will be updated regularly should that need arise.

Academics and Programming FAQ

Q: Will my child's curriculum be changed this year?

A: Schools will still deliver high-quality instruction in core subjects (religion, language arts, math, science and social studies). Special requirements will be in place for departmentalized classes and special area subjects (see sections below). The implementation of safety and health requirements (outlined earlier in this FAQ) will create new complexities in instruction, but our commitment remains to provide your child the best possible faith-based education.

Q: Will my child's classroom look different?

A: We have instructed schools to spread out desks and tables in classrooms as much as possible. In order to maximize floorspace, we've asked teachers to remove non-essential furniture and other items. We have also asked that desks and tables be arranged so that they face the front of the room. These steps were taken to minimize risk of any infection in the classroom.

Q: Will students share school supplies?

A: No. We are asking schools to ensure that students not share school supplies (e.g., books, crayons, technology, etc.), including for such subjects as art and music. Exceptions may be made for activities outdoors (such as outdoor physical education classes). If it is impossible to avoid sharing supplies, such as computers in a computer lab, such supplies must be cleaned after every use.

Q: Will schools still offer classes in special subject areas (e.g., art, music, PE, etc.)?

A: Yes. We will ask special subject area teachers to travel to each class' homeroom for instruction whenever possible. This will be particularly likely for such subjects as art, music, and spanish. If students visit spaces such as the gymnasium, computer/STEM lab or library, the room must be cleaned after every cohort.

Q: Will students participate in field trips?

A: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools will not participate in in-person field trips while West Shore Lutheran School is in Phase 4.

Q: I need to meet with a teacher or my school principal. Can these meetings occur?

A: Yes. These meeting can take place virtually via phone or video chat. A face to face meeting can also occur as long as all parties are wearing a face covering and 6 feet of distance can occur.

Q: Will school chapel still take place?

A: Chapels will be conducted as conditions allow.

Q: How will extracurricular activities be impacted this year?

A: Under Phase 4 West Shore Lutheran School will not be holding extra curricular activities.

Tuition and Fees

Q: Will schools still collect tuition this year?

A: Yes. While this school year may look different, our schools will continue to provide a rigorous academic experience while supporting the moral and spiritual development of each student. Our Lutheran school depends upon tuition revenue to pay our employees who do this work and support other school-related expenses.

Q: I am having difficulty paying tuition, as my own workplace has been impacted by COVID-19. What do I do?

A: We know that some families may have difficulties paying tuition due to the loss of pay during workplace closures and are ready to support those in need of assistance. If this is happening to you, please contact your school's principal. We understand your situation and will do our very best to work with you.