



# Frederica Academy 2021-2022 Covid Plan August 4, 2021

## Head of School Introduction

Over the summer the FA Leadership Team revisited the school's 2020-2021 Covid Re-Opening Plan to determine what portions of that document might still be relevant and helpful as we crafted our plan for the 2021-2022 school year. The truth is that although some of our former plan is simply not deemed necessary in our proposed strategy going forward as we now envision it, there are critical assumptions and standards that are still applicable and remain both at the heart of our school culture and with a successful Covid Plan going forward.

The most important assumption is, and always has been, that we are all honorable people acting in selfless and ethical ways. Last year any successes related to Covid and hosting uninterrupted classes all year long were, in part, due to parents who unfailingly did not allow their children to come to school when a child was ill, even understanding that keeping their sick child home might cost them a day at the office or missing another activity. We'll never really know whether it was masks, social distancing, the fact that we had very few sick students ever on campus or a combination of all three that kept our numbers so low, but it will again be critically important that parents vigilantly monitor the health of their children, keep sick children at home, and self-report to the school nurse in a timely manner.

I imagine that for some our plan may seem too relaxed or limited - reducing our social distancing standards, eliminating temperature-taking protocols, and delineating policies and protocols based on whether an activity is voluntary or not. For others, requiring masks even for fully vaccinated students, employees, and visitors might seem Draconian or too restrictive. FA has adopted this plan to begin the year because we believe that both Covid-19 and the Delta variant are still significant health threats in our community, that although vaccines have proven to be a stalwart defense against contracting the virus and reducing the effects of the virus, they have proven less efficacious in preventing the transmission of the virus, and that masks do play a critical role in inhibiting the transmission of the virus. Hopefully, parents consider the school's plan as a reasonable compromise given what is now known, what is yet unknown, the area's vaccination rates, the recent uptick of positive cases locally, and with the understanding that restrictions will change as circumstances dictate during the year. Clearly if the data generated from our specific student population reflects no or even few positive cases, the mask mandate will be revisited in a timely manner. We will need a couple of weeks together in August, though, to generate helpful data once we are all back in classes.

We can all read and listen to the news and see and hear that this Delta variant phenomenon in various parts of our state, our country and various parts of the world is increasing. Many are experiencing much more severe outbreaks of the variant than the Golden Isles presently reports, although our dashboard numbers are swelling quickly (click [here](#) to monitor the Georgia Department of Public Health's Covid-19 Dashboard). Our criteria for loosening or tightening restrictions on campus life is tied somewhat to local positive test rates; and climbing as they are right now, they are still lower than some places outside the county and the state. That makes travel to other parts of the country and the world particularly worthy of attention and caution. If this past year proves even somewhat predictive, our community experienced spikes in positive testing after holidays and school breaks.

Like everyone else, I have no idea as to the future of Covid or the Delta variant virus as it relates to school life going forward. I am extremely hopeful that we can all experience a largely pre-Covid existence together sooner rather than later, that vaccine percentages will continue to rise, and positive test rates will fall. Those who work at FA and those who lead FA as a Board of Trustees very much look forward to a return to the kinds of joyous and respectful interactions that have defined our school community for years.

Please take the time to read the following Covid-19 plan for the 2021-2022 school year. It should help to provide clarity on a number of fronts in this year of transition.

## **TIER METHOD FOR SAFETY AND PREVENTION OF COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

Frederica Academy's health care professionals have developed a three-tier risk assessment method for determining the appropriate protocols that should be in place on our campus based on Glynn County and FA Covid-19 data. The data will be reviewed frequently and regularly and, as appropriate, adjustments will be made to the school's Covid protocols based on the following guidelines, recurring trends, and the specific response within our student body. This tier system will be an important, but not the only factor, in school Covid decisions going forward.

### **LEVEL 1**

Face coverings are optional indoors/outdoors for all students, faculty, and staff at Frederica Academy.

Stay home if you are sick. Contact Nurse Pope if being tested for COVID-19.

Maintain cohort groups if possible.

### **LEVEL 2**

Face coverings are mandatory for all indoor activities (with *the exception of physical education classes*) for all Frederica Academy students, employees, and campus visitors. Athletics and other voluntary, post-school-day, extracurricular activities are exempt.

Stay home if you are sick. Contact Nurse Pope if being tested for COVID-19.

Maintain cohort groups if possible.

### **LEVEL 3**

Face coverings are mandatory for all indoor and outdoor activities on campus for Frederica Academy students, employees, and campus visitors during school hours.

Stay home if you are sick. Contact Nurse Pope if being tested for COVID-19.

Maintain cohort groups if possible.

If deemed necessary, shutdown of certain affected groups (*e.g. cohorts, teams, clubs, classes, grades, division*) for a minimum of 10 days.

**Frederica Academy will start the school year following the protocols in LEVEL 2. The first potential reclassification would occur on or about August 26<sup>th</sup>.**

## FREDERICA ACADEMY 2021-2022 COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AND POLICIES (Alphabetical)

For all issues and questions unrelated to Covid-19, please consult the respective divisional handbook, which can be accessed via the school's website. Much time and effort has gone into updating our divisional Student Handbooks. This document supersedes overlapping policies contained in the division handbooks.

### **Class Seating Arrangements and Larger Group Gatherings**

There are no formally mandated distances separating chairs within any given classroom. Social distancing can be a factor in preventing or hindering the transmission of the virus; but given all of our assumptions in creating this policy and the challenge of monitoring the requisite distances, no strict social distancing policies are included in any of the protocol scenarios. Seats will generally be placed at least three feet apart in classrooms, but there may be times when small group work necessitates less restrictive arrangements. As far as larger group gatherings, every effort will be made to move those gatherings outside.

### **Contact Tracing/Testing/Quarantining**

Contact tracing has been and will continue to be employed by the school to help prevent the future spread of the Covid virus on campus. Contact tracing identifies people in our student or faculty body who have contracted Covid and people who they may have come in contact with. Identification and communication of these exposures with subsequent isolation/quarantining has proven to be helpful in interrupting the spread of the disease,

Frederica Academy will do primary contact tracing for students and employees who test positive or are presumed positive as it relates to contact at school. Presumed positive is defined as any student and/or employee who is symptomatic but elects not to be tested for Covid.

Primary contact is defined as someone who is within three feet of a positive/presumed positive person for 15 minutes or greater in a 24-hour period.

All applicable individuals who are defined as primary contacts will be contacted by Nurse Pope and should report to Nurse Pope any signs and symptoms that they are experiencing. When required by our risk assessment levels, students will be wearing masks except when outdoors. If a student or employee is identified as a primary contact, he or she will have the option to choose one of the following quarantine guidelines listed below.

There are established guidelines for quarantining/isolation with positive, presumed to be positive individuals, and those who are identified as primary contacts. **Quarantine is only required for those who are unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated: however, if fully vaccinated individuals are exhibiting symptoms, they will be required to complete an isolation.**

Any student who tests positive or who is presumed to be positive will be required to complete a 10-day isolation period. They will be allowed to return on Day 11 if they are fever-free for 24 hours, with no fever-reducing medications, signs and symptoms are improving, and have completed the [FA-Southeast Georgia Health System Daily COVID-19 Self-Monitoring Form](#) for the full isolation period. They are not required to provide a negative test result.

Any student or employee who is identified as a primary contact will be required to quarantine. They have three options:

1. A 7-day quarantine with testing no earlier than day 5. They may return on day 8 with a negative Covid test and completion of their daily symptom checklist for a full 14 days.
2. A 10-day quarantine returning on Day 11 if no symptoms occur and with a completion of a daily symptom checklist for 14 full days.
3. A 14-day quarantine returning on Day 15 with completion of a daily symptom checklist.

Any student, faculty, or staff member who can provide proof of being Covid-19 fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine unless signs or symptoms of Covid are present. If there are any additional, Covid-related questions, please contact our campus healthcare providers:

- **Nikki Pope, School Nurse** at (912) 638-9981, ext. 492 in the FA School Clinic; [schoolnurse@fredericaacademy.org](mailto:schoolnurse@fredericaacademy.org).
- **Adam Norman, School Trainer**, (912) 638-9981, ext. 520 in Murray Field House; [adamnorman@fredericaacademy.org](mailto:adamnorman@fredericaacademy.org). Contact Adam for Middle and Upper School athletic matters only.

### **Drop-Off Protocol**

The morning drop-off routine will return to pre-Covid procedures. There will be no temperature checking or symptom screening. Drop-off begins at 7:45 AM each morning. Teachers are not prepared to host students in their rooms before that so please be respectful of that opening time. All students will be expected to mask up when they enter their respective buildings. Lower School students might find it easier to mask up before they exit their cars in the morning. Afternoon carpool pick-up takes place outside and no masks are required.

### **FA Healthcare Officials**

Nikki Pope and Adam Norman are FA's two healthcare providers on staff. Their respective contact information is listed in the earlier **Contact Tracing/Testing** section. All Covid-related questions should be directed to Nurse Pope. Specific athletic-related questions should be directed to Mr. Norman.

### **Face Masks**

Effective August 4, and until circumstances merit revisiting this policy, all students and employees will wear masks indoors, including inside classrooms as outlined in the Level 2 category. It is the responsibility of the family to provide masks for their children every day. The school has a limited supply of masks for emergency situations. Our plan is designed to support uninterrupted education for healthy students and timely recovery for ill students. Simply put, we believe that mask wearing increases the likelihood of continuously operating our on-campus schooling option. Our perspective on that has not changed since last year. All students and employees are required to wear masks to every indoor gathering with the exception of lunch. All students need to wear masks in transitional moments between classes, especially in the hallways of buildings. When outside, no one needs to wear masks. This includes lunchtime, recess, physical education classes, and any designated "mask free" opportunities allocated for students to responsibly unmask.

## FA FACE MASK REQUIREMENT EXAMPLES

Events / Activities / Programs	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
KiX Extended Day Indoor	Optional	Required	Required
KiX Extended Day Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
LS After-School Programs Indoor	Optional	Required	Required
LS After-School Programs Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
LS Morning Meeting Indoor	Optional	Required	Required
LS Morning Meeting Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
Field Trips Indoor	Optional	Required	Required
Field Trips Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
Curricular Bus Trips	Optional	Required	Required
Cafeteria Line	Optional	Required	Required
Extracurricular/Athletic Bus Trips	Optional	Required	Required
MS and Varsity Athletics	Optional	Optional	Optional
Extracurricular Events	Optional	Optional	Optional
Campus Special Events Indoor (School Day)	Optional	Required	Required
Campus Special Events Indoor (Post School Day)	Optional	Optional	Required
Campus Special Events Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
Off-Campus Special Event Indoor (School Day)	Optional	Required	Required
Off-Campus Special Event Indoor (Post School Day)	Optional	Optional	Required
Off-Campus Special Event Outdoor	Optional	Optional	Required
Parent Nights Indoor	Optional	Required	Required

Mask guidelines for students and adults are as follows:

- Disposable and cloth reusable masks are acceptable. Cloth masks should be frequently washed.
- Face coverings attached behind the ears and head as well as tubular masks (e.g. neck gaiters) are permitted.
- Solid color masks are permitted. Masks with print, stripe, or geometric patterns are permitted. Examples of print patterns are floral, plaid, paisley, polka dot, etc.

- Masks with the FA logo are permitted.
- Masks with collegiate logos are permitted.
- Masks with other branding, graphics, text, or logos are NOT permitted.

All visitors to campus must check in with Michele Meyer in the Administration Building or Ashley Lavallee in Corn Hall and must wear a mask when the school is operating under the Level 2 and Level 3 categories. The mask must remain on until they exit the building. This includes visiting parents, parent volunteers, tutors, community coaches, and vendors.

### **Interscholastic Athletics / Middle and Upper School Extra-Curricular Activities**

All school-related activities/programs are grouped into two general categories: those that are optional and those that are mandatory. For all activities and events that one voluntarily chooses to attend or participate in - attending a sporting event, for example - will become a “buyers beware” environment. Mask wearing will be optional. School employees will not be policing mask wearing. Attendance will be based on a personal assessment of the particular risk to those attending. Two additional changes from the August 2020 Covid policy: 1) there will be no limitations on spectator attendance; and 2) concessions will be available as offered during pre-Covid times.

### **Online Learning**

The preponderance of online learning applications utilized last year proved essential to the school’s commitment to operate uninterrupted, on-campus classes for the entire year so that those students who had tested positive for Covid or were quarantined in the contact tracing process could attend lessons virtually. A by-product of this strategy was that faculty and students became much more familiar and adept with distance-learning materials and techniques and have found ways to continue to extend benefits from some of the practices enacted during that time. Students who miss school for an extended period of time for Covid or otherwise this year should contact their respective teachers and make plans to either attend classes virtually or make up the work as mutually agreed upon with each teacher.

### **Personal Responsibility (off-campus and out-of-state travel)**

The primary criteria for our Covid protocols is premised on the prevalence of the virus as reflected in the number of positive Covid tests at any given time in the area. The logic of that bellwether standard only works if unvaccinated people are appropriately cautious when they travel outside the area to parts of the country or the world where either vaccination rates are low or the prevalence of some variant of the Covid virus is high. All FA families, especially those unvaccinated, are reminded to exercise appropriate safeguards when traveling outside of Glynn County.

### **Quarantine/Isolation**

Quarantine/Isolation is still employed by the school for those students and school personnel who either test positively for Covid or who are involved in a contact tracing protocol. See **Contact Tracing/Testing/Quarantining** section for specifics.

### **Sanitation/Hygiene**

Teachers and signage will continue to remind students about the importance of proper hand washing throughout the day. Hand sanitizer stations are available in every classroom and in common areas on campus. Students, employees, and campus visitors should use the hand sanitizer stations or wash their hands when exiting any campus restroom. Drinking fountains will remain deactivated this fall, but the hydration stations will be open and students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles and stay hydrated throughout the day.

**Signage**

Obsolete Covid-related signage has been removed from the campus. For example, the demarcations formerly ubiquitous throughout the school's outside covered walkways designating six-foot distances have been removed. Students can enter the buildings through any doorways and travel in either direction in any of the hallways is acceptable.

**Social Distancing**

Social distancing guidelines are being relaxed campus wide. There are still efforts being made to move group gatherings to outside venues, to limit the size of larger gatherings inside, and to space desks and students out as much as possible within classrooms; but there also is now a competing desire to get back to more vibrant interchanges within small group work, especially in lab situations.

**Visitors**

All visitors regardless of their vaccination status will be required to wear masks when they are inside a building on the FA campus during the school day, when the school is operating under the Level 2 and Level 3 categories. This includes visitors, parent volunteers, tutors, and outside vendors.