



A Road Map for Returning to School FALL 2021



GOOD SHEPHERD EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

A Road Map for Returning to School

FALL 2021

MISSION

The mission of Good Shepherd Episcopal School is to inspire each child to achieve academic excellence within a diverse, nurturing community that builds character and fosters respect for one another and our shared environment, locally and globally.

OUR COMMITMENT

Good Shepherd is committed to delivering our mission, and we recognize this is best accomplished through on-campus programming. Our plan is to open campus with enhanced health and safety requirements in place per CDC and local health department guidelines. To effectively open campus, we are following guidelines from the CDC, state and local health officials, and medical professionals to develop protocols and procedures specific to our campus.

CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Priorities and Principles	3
Start of School	3
Pandemic Response Team	4
COVID-Related Health and Safety Information.....	4
Campus Adjustments.....	4
Procedures and Guidelines.....	5
Program Information	7
Health and Wellness	8
The Rams Resolve	8
Health Policy	9
When Should a Student or Staff Member Stay Home?	9
COVID Symptom Checker	10
Student Illness at School.....	11
Protocol for Returning to School.....	11
COVID Positive Test Result for Staff or Student.....	11
Learning Scenarios.....	13



ROAD MAP FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL FALL 2021

WELCOME

Thank you for partnering with us on this journey back to school. We appreciate your flexibility and perseverance. Know that we, as a school, value your partnership with us. Parents are our allies and that is more important now than ever. Dealing with the COVID virus over the last 18 months has taught us all many life lessons, and we are going to use these lessons to our advantage as we take all the steps necessary to be open in the fall.

OUR ROAD MAP FOR THE FALL

PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES

- Focus on student, faculty, and staff safety and well-being.
- Provide parents with peace of mind.
- Continue to follow detailed plans and procedures to support safety and well-being.
- Utilize guidelines offered by state and local governments, the CDC, the WHO, and more specifically the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) and the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS).
- Preserve familiar routines for students and faculty wherever possible.
- Maintain our commitment to provide a challenging and supportive educational experience.
- Provide clear and consistent expectations for the entire community.
- Communicate with families, following guidance from the health department, regarding any exposure or confirmed cases within our school community.

START OF SCHOOL

Preparations for Opening

The Virginia Private Schools COVID Mitigation Health Plans prescribe key elements to opening schools:

- Intent to vary from the guidelines (We have no intent or need to seek any variances.);
- Creating a COVID team for developing and instituting health protocols;
- Plan for communicating COVID related matters to every constituency;
- Plan for continuing COVID related education for each constituency;
- Plan for physical distancing throughout the day in all classes, meetings, and activities;
- Building/facilities health-related procedures;
- Cleaning products to be used and protocols to be implemented throughout the day.

We, at Good Shepherd Episcopal School, meet or exceed each guideline.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAM

The Good Shepherd Pandemic Response Team includes point person and Head of School Ken Seward, Assistant Head of School Nancy Negus, Assistant Head of School Lori Jobe, Dean of Students Mark Binford, Dean of Admission Lorie Bartee, Building Maintenance Supervisor Will Recinos, and Nurse Jennifer Sharpe. You can find contact information for each of these individuals on the school's website. The team will post updates to this plan on the website and will communicate changes through the weekly *Rams News* electronic newsletter or through direct email notifications.

New COVID related policies, procedures, and protocol are available in parent and faculty handbooks, on the website, and highlighted in *Rams News*. In case of an emergency, the school will notify parents immediately by text and/or email.

COVID-RELATED HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

CAMPUS ADJUSTMENTS

GSES Building Interior

- **HVAC Air Filtration System** - To improve efficiency and removal of higher percentages of airborne contaminants and to improve indoor air quality, all filters were upgraded in the fall of 2020. Additionally, fans have been placed in windows to increase natural air flow, and each room has been equipped with air purifiers with HEPA filters.
- **Water Fountains** - GSES has flushed and tested water in the building. Existing water fountains have been disabled, and a touchless sink has been installed in the first floor hallway. Water coolers are touchless and will be cleaned regularly.
- **Front Office** - A see-through door partition has been installed to regulate and limit the maximum number of people permitted.
- **Cleaning** - The daily and weekly cleaning schedules have been enhanced, and products used will recommendations of the CDC.
- **Hand Sanitizer** - Touchless sanitizer dispensers have been placed in the lobby and main hallways. Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms.
- **Building Use** - No entry, outside of regular school days/times, will be allowed other than by staff for school purposes.

GSES Building Exterior

- **Recess and Outdoor Classroom Spaces** - Spaces for outdoor activities will be clearly defined, marked, and evaluated for proper social distancing.
- **Fire/Tornado/Lockdown Drills** - Drills will be conducted keeping physical distancing in mind, but putting safety first.

Classrooms

- Students will be encouraged to maintain a minimum distance of 3 feet apart with a goal of 6 feet apart when possible.
- Personal items (clothing, shoes, lunch box, etc.) must not touch another student's items.
- No items (pens, pencils, rulers, books) or food should be shared among students.

- Non-contact thermometers are available to teachers during the school day for temperature checks.
- “Gatherings” are limited by square footage of the location. Each room in the school has a designated maximum occupancy based on social distancing requirements.
- Classes and grades will avoid intermingling of students from different classes whenever possible.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Student/Parent/Staff Requirements

- **Daily Health Checks** - All staff, students, and others entering the building will be required to have their body temperatures checked at the time of admittance. Staff and students will be screened each day with touchless thermometers. Staff and students exhibiting a temperature of 100 degrees will be sent home. Students, staff, and visitors with temperatures at 100 degrees or above should stay home. Parents must notify the Front Office immediately of the elevated temperature and absence. If a student develops a fever while at school, the student will be isolated, and parents will be notified to pick up the student immediately. See Health Policy section for more details.
- **Morning Procedures** - Kindergarten through Grade 8 students are dropped off in car line each morning or arrive through the pedestrian gate after walking or riding their bikes to school. Student temperatures will be checked upon entering their classrooms by their homeroom teachers. Be aware if students present with fever, they will be sent home. Parents may not escort their children to classrooms.
 - Car line times will be staggered. Students with last names beginning with A-G and all families with a kindergarten student should arrive between 8:00 and 8:10 a.m. and be picked up between 3:00 and 3:10 p.m. Students with last names beginning with H-Z should arrive between 8:10 and 8:20 a.m. and be picked up between 3:10 and 3:20 p.m. Kindergarten students are dismissed at 2:45 p.m. This staggered system also helps to prevent cars from unsafely backing up on Forest Hill Avenue.
 - Students must be picked up by a parent, caregiver, or another GSES family member (prearranged, with the Office Administrator notified). If, in an emergency, someone other than a parent, caregiver, or regular carpool will be picking a student up in the afternoon, an email must be sent to the Front Office by noon before afternoon car line.
 - Preschool students will be escorted to the playground by a parent or caregiver. Student temperatures will be taken with touchless thermometers before parents leave. Students and parents should arrive masked.
- **Daily Symptom Review** - Each person planning to enter the school building should review symptoms each morning before leaving for school. If any symptoms are present, the individual should stay home. Please see the Health Policy section for more information on symptoms.
- **Parent Protocols** - Parents must call or email the Front Office, the nurse, and their child’s teacher when a fever or other symptoms of illness are present in students. Parents visiting the school will be screened before being allowed to enter the building. We ask that parents limit visits to school and take care of school details through email and phone calls rather than in person.
- **Reporting COVID Symptoms or Positive COVID Tests** - All symptoms and diagnoses must be reported to the Front Office and the nurse.

- **Masks/Face Coverings** - For students, parents, and staff, masks are required inside the school building. Masks may be removed for snack and lunch. Children aged two and under are not required to wear face masks. The Virginia Department of Health advises all athletes regardless of their vaccination status to wear masks at all times, such as during training, competition, and high contact activities. In P.E., which is mostly held outside, the students will often not have to wear a mask if a three-foot distance can be maintained. Students will be required to wear a mask during a close contact activity such as basketball. Parents must provide masks for students that are consistent with the dress code: colors and patterns are acceptable, but masks may not have writing or large graphics. Students should arrive at school wearing a mask, and another mask or two should be kept in reserve in the student's bin at school. Neck gaiters may be used if they are of the highest quality (adequate thickness) and approved by an administrator or the nurse. **Masks are required regardless of vaccination status.**
- **Bringing Personal Items** - Personal items coming from home should be limited. Classroom materials and supplies will be purchased and supplied by the school.
- **Personal Hygiene** - More frequent hand-washing within classrooms/restrooms will be instituted and supervised. In addition, a large, touchless sink has been installed in the main hallway, inside the front entrance, with hand-washing instructions placed in each restroom. Hand sanitizer will be made available by the faculty and staff.

Visitor/Vendor/Tutor Requirements

- **Health Checks** - Upon entrance to building, individuals must complete the on-site, health-check protocol, which includes temperature check and health-check information sheet.
- **Masks/Face Coverings** - A mask, to be worn whenever inside the building, is required for each visitor.
- **Sign-In/Out** - Each visitor must physically sign in and out at the front desk at each visit. This is to allow us to follow contact-tracing procedures.
- **Personal Hygiene** - Each visitor must use hand sanitizer before leaving the Front Office.
- **Visitor Protocol** - Visitors will be escorted to their destination by school staff, and vendors will not work or deliver during schools hours.

Training

- **Faculty and Staff** - Faculty and staff will receive training on all new protocols during the August work week.
- **Students** - During the first week of classes and frequently throughout the year, students will be constantly reminded of good hygiene and social distancing protocols.
- **Parents** - Parents will gain training through handbooks, newsletters, and back-to-school nights.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Sports and Physical Education

- **Classes** - Physical education and outdoor education classes will require 10-feet x 10-feet spacing when students are exercising vigorously without masks.
- **Location** - Physical education classes will take place outdoors whenever possible to allow for maximum airflow and ventilation.

- **Athletic Equipment and other High-touch Items** - Use of athletic equipment and other high-touch items will follow the CDC sharing and cleaning guidelines for schools. Students will have access to materials for play, building, and exercise.

Fine and Performing Arts and Chapel

Our fine and performing arts classes will resume programming at the start of school. All art classes and programs will follow defined health and safety guidelines and may be conducted differently than they have in the past. Chapel will be held virtually via Google Meet only if it is unsafe to meet in larger groups. Weekly plans for chapel will be communicated in *Rams News*.

Extended Day Program (EDP)

- **Procedures** - EDP will be held in Parish Hall.
 - For morning EDP (7:30-8:00 a.m.), students and parents should enter through the Parish Hall steps and doorway on 43rd Street. A staff person will be at a welcome desk to complete the morning health check while parents sign in students. Parents will not be allowed to leave until the student's health screening is complete. Parents and students should wear masks.
 - When checking in for afternoon EDP at 3:15 p.m. in Parish Hall, temperatures will be taken for each student entering EDP. Each student will have a storage bin for his or her personal belongings. Parents should enter through the same 43rd Street entrance to pick up students. Masks must be worn.
 - Please remember that drop-in EDP is no longer available. Students must be registered for EDP by August 15 to participate. Payment for EDP must be made by check or through FACTS.
- **Grouping of Students** - Social distance spacing and small group separation will be implemented; maximum number of students will be determined by the size of the space, allowing for appropriate social distancing.
- **Personal Hygiene** - Hand-washing will be required as the students enter the Extended Day space/s and be repeated frequently as needed.
- **Maximizing Outdoor Time** - Out-of-doors time will be extended for appropriate activities.

Enrichment Activities

We plan to offer activities that can accommodate social distancing regulations later in the fall. At this point, we plan to have the Mountain Biking Club, Richmond School of Music, and classes through Riverside Outfitters.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

WE MUST WORK TOGETHER

To maintain a healthy campus community, we will depend on all of our families to support these efforts. Making changes to support physical distancing is just one measure that supports a healthy campus environment, and we need families to actively partner with us to keep our students healthy. With our families' ongoing support and cooperation, we can work together to maintain a healthy school environment and minimize risk for our students, faculty, staff, and our entire community.

FAMILY COMMITMENT TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

We will ask all families to diligently follow the health and safety protocols in place for our school community. Families must agree to keep children home when they are not feeling well, have COVID-like symptoms, or have potentially been exposed.

GOOD FAITH RESPONSIBILITIES

These are actions we ask each person to observe in order to enhance the safety of our whole community:

- Restrict non-essential travel.
- Limit items coming in from home to lunch, homework, backpacks, and a coat or jacket.
- Adults should enter the building only for business that cannot be handled through email or by phone.
- Monitor your health and the health of your family members.
- Stay at home if you have been exposed to someone with COVID or if you have been in contact with someone who develops symptoms until you are symptom free or test negative for the virus.
- Please consider COVID-19 vaccinations for those eligible in your household.

THE RAMS RESOLVE

We resolve to #KeepRamsSafe.

Good Shepherd Episcopal School is a special place, and we want our entire community to be able to share experiences in person at school each day. To make this happen, we have to work together to protect each other and share the responsibility for the health of our whole community. We call this responsibility **The Rams Resolve**.

Before coming to school, I promise to:

- Monitor myself and/or my children for any symptoms of the virus. Those symptoms may include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever of 100° or more, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new GI symptoms, and/or loss of taste or smell.
- Seek medical assistance for myself or my family members if I or they experience any such symptoms and immediately notify the Front Office of a positive test for the virus.

- Reduce potential exposure by adopting the following behaviors: avoiding large crowds and gatherings, keeping a safe distance from other people (at least 6' apart), washing hands often and not knowingly come into contact with a person who has been diagnosed with the virus.

At school, I promise to:

Follow GSES's basic health measures to protect myself and others from contracting the virus, including

- adhering to social distancing guidelines;
- wearing face masks as directed;
- complying with COVID-19 related signage;
- washing my hands often or using hand sanitizer, especially after sneezing, coughing, or touching high-contact objects like doorknobs, handrails, computer stations, etc.; and
- monitoring myself and my family for any symptoms of the virus.

Outside of school, I promise to:

- Actively stay abreast of changes communicated by GSES as the pandemic situation evolves.
- Mitigate risks while away from school by following good health practices, including social distancing, mask use where appropriate, and hand hygiene.
- If I or my child experiences any symptoms, refrain from attending school or participating in any other activities, seek assistance from my doctor, and follow quarantine and isolation directives until I am diagnosed or cleared by my doctor.
- Get my flu shot and COVID vaccine absent any vaccination concerns.
- Respect others who may have heightened concerns compared to my own.

I understand that even though GSES will take precautions to reduce the risks of COVID-19 at school, my child or I can never be completely shielded from all risk of illness caused by the virus, and everyone in our school community, including me, shares the responsibility for the health of the community. I acknowledge my individual effort and my family's effort are critical to a successful 2021-2022 academic year and commit to upholding my promise to fellow Rams as outlined above when choosing to participate in school life.

HEALTH POLICY

WHEN SHOULD A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER STAY HOME?

Families and staff need to follow this important policy to support the safety and well-being of our community.

- If a member of your household is positive for COVID-19, awaiting test results, or experiencing COVID-like symptoms (which include headache, cough, fever, chills, muscle pain, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, new GI symptoms and/or congestion/runny nose), students and staff members should stay home, contact the doctor, and inform the Front Office.
- If a student or staff member is unwell with COVID-like symptoms (including a fever of 100 degrees or higher), please stay home, call your doctor, and inform the Front Office.
- Families should contact the Front Office one day prior to a student returning to school to confirm that the return-to-school protocol has been met. Staff members need to coordinate a return to school with the Head of School after a negative COVID test.

COVID SYMPTOM CHECKER

Please keep in mind that recent guidance has indicated that children may exhibit different symptoms from those below, which may include congestion, runny nose, and headache.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your healthcare provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

316475-A 07/21/2020

STUDENT ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

- Students showing symptoms of illness or who are not feeling well will be escorted to and monitored in the isolation room (infirmary), a space with privacy dividers and space for up to two students at a time.
- The student's temperature will be taken, and presenting symptoms will be recorded.
- Parents will be called to pick up students immediately.
- Parents must send an email or call when the student cannot attend the following day, by 8:00 a.m. A message may be left overnight or an email sent at any time before 8:00 a.m. Please be specific about the reasons the student is staying home (symptoms, etc.).
- A physician's note is required prior to returning to school for COVID-like symptoms.

PROTOCOL FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

- A student or staff member who has been at home with a fever must be fever free without medication for 48 hours before returning to school.
- If a student has been at home with COVID-like symptoms, he or she must have a doctor's note confirming a safe return to school **and** must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours.
- If a staff member has been at home with COVID-like symptoms, he or she must have a negative COVID test result and be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

COVID POSITIVE TEST RESULT FOR STAFF OR STUDENT

- **Reporting** - Any staff member, student, immediate family member of staff or students, or vendor who has a confirmed COVID diagnosis must report the diagnosis to a school administrator.
- **Procedure** - CDC and Virginia Department of Health guidelines will be followed, including temporary closure of school for cleaning, for reporting, communicating to the community, and reopening. According to the CDC:
 - If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID, local health officials must be notified immediately. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for the school.
 - The school will likely dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities. The school will work with local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.
- **Defining Close Contacts** - A close contact is defined as someone who was within six feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a twenty four hour period. It is important to keep in mind that an infected person can be contagious and spread COVID two days prior to having any symptoms. This is why contact tracing is so important and helps to identify who was truly exposed and who was not.
- **COVID Positive Result for Vaccinated Individual** - Fully vaccinated individuals can get COVID and are just as contagious as an unvaccinated person. Often a vaccinated person will experience less symptoms than an unvaccinated person. Fully vaccinated people

should be tested 3-5 days following a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. They will need to isolate for 10 days if they are positive.

FAMILIES CAN HELP OVER THE SUMMER

Creating a healthy campus environment will require the support and participation of the entire school community. Over the summer, families can help reinforce safety protocols and healthy hygiene practices by:

- Encouraging frequent hand-washing and/or use of hand sanitizer,
- Adding daily temperature checks to the morning routine,
- Continuing regular doctor visits and well-child appointments,
- Keeping immunizations and physicals current,
- Encouraging lots of physical activity and time outside,
- Visually showing and practicing keeping six feet distance, and
- Practicing wearing cloth face coverings (face coverings should not be used for children under three years of age or anyone who has trouble breathing).

LEARNING SCENARIOS

As long as the school is offering in-person classes, students are expected to attend as they have in the past (before the pandemic).

If a class must be out of school for an extended period due to a COVID-19 diagnosis, the GSES distance learning model will be implemented for that particular class. In the event that school must be closed due to state regulations after having opened with in-person instruction, the GSES distance learning model will be implemented for the school.

OUT OF SCHOOL/DISTANCE LEARNING MODEL

Priorities will include:

- Staying connected as a community – morning messages, hang out, Zoom, Google Meet, teacher office hours, etc.
- Schedules – daily and weekly expectations clearly communicated
- Communication with parents – about individual child and program and program expectations
- Instruction – recorded lessons, Google Meet, Zoom, videos
- Feedback about student performance – grading/correcting work, meeting the requirements of the distance learning program
- Resources – digital and paper
- Technology support

We have expanded our capacity for online learning:

- Each student has a gmail address
- Every teacher is trained in Google Classroom
- We have increased our digital subscriptions and texts for the coming year
- Teachers will provide instruction in core and enrichment subjects. We don't envision requiring all students to be at a computer all day. This would not be possible for many of our families and is not in line with our mission.
- Laptops will be provided for those students who do not have access to one at home.
- Each grade will have a daily schedule and a weekly checklist for assignments. Assignments and communications will be managed through Google Classroom, and virtual classes will take place via Google Meet.

If students are learning at home, parents are responsible for their childrens' computer/internet use and online behavior.

For students who must be out of school due to a COVID-19 diagnosis or self-quarantine, plans will be in place to aid students who need to be out for an extended period. Online resources (such as online textbooks) will allow for these students to keep up with their classmates who are at school. Students who have been ill will be expected to catch up with assignments as soon as they are well enough to do so. Students who are well but in quarantine are expected to keep up with assignments as directed by their teachers. Teachers will not provide real time instruction for students at home when school is in session.

Please keep in mind that requirements, protocols, and guidance on this ever-evolving pandemic constantly change. Our pandemic team will keep abreast of new requirements and recommendations and update the above guidelines accordingly. Any changes or additions will be communicated through the *Rams News*, email, and/or the school's website.

We will need to work together as a community to keep our families, teachers, and staff healthy and to keep our school open. We are relying on our entire community to follow the above guidelines to the best of our abilities and to work with our students on making these changes a part of their daily routines. We are so thankful that we have the opportunity to come together in person in August. We cannot wait to welcome you back!

Gratefully,
The GSES Team

THE RAMS RESOLVE – We resolve to #KeepRamsSafe.

Good Shepherd Episcopal School is a special place, and we want our entire community to be able to share experiences in person at school each day. To make this happen, we have to work together to protect each other and share the responsibility for the health of our whole community. We call this responsibility **The Rams Resolve**.

Before coming to school, I promise to:

- Monitor myself and/or my children for any symptoms of the virus. Those symptoms may include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever of 100° or more, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new GI symptoms, and/or loss of taste or smell.
- Seek medical assistance for myself or my family members if I or they experience any such symptoms and immediately notify the Front Office of a positive test for the virus.
- Reduce potential exposure by adopting the following behaviors: avoiding large crowds and gatherings, keeping a safe distance from other people (at least 6' apart), washing hands often and not knowingly come into contact with a person who has been diagnosed with the virus.

At school, I promise to:

Follow GSES's basic health measures to protect myself and others from contracting the virus, including

- adhering to social distancing guidelines;
- wearing face masks as directed;
- complying with COVID-19 related signage;
- washing my hands often or using hand sanitizer, especially after sneezing, coughing, or touching high-contact objects like doorknobs, handrails, computer stations, etc.; and
- monitoring myself and my family for any symptoms of the virus.

Outside of school, I promise to:

- Actively stay abreast of changes communicated by GSES as the pandemic situation evolves.
- Mitigate risks while away from school by following good health practices, including social distancing, mask use where appropriate, and hand hygiene.
- If I or my child experiences any symptoms, refrain from attending school or participating in any other activities, seek assistance from my doctor, and follow quarantine and isolation directives until I am diagnosed or cleared by my doctor.
- Get my flu shot and COVID vaccine absent any vaccination concerns.
- Respect others who may have heightened concerns compared to my own.

I understand that even though GSES will take precautions to reduce the risks of COVID-19 at school, my child or I can never be completely shielded from all risk of illness caused by the virus, and everyone in our school community, including me, shares the responsibility for the health of the community. I acknowledge my individual effort and my family's effort are critical to a successful 2020-2021 academic year and commit to upholding my promise to fellow Rams as outlined above when choosing to participate in school life.

