

Heritage Christian School Return to Learn Plan



Heritage Christian School
255 Hackberry Street
North Liberty, IA

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Background

Fulfilling the Mission of Heritage Christian School to partner with parents to provide a Biblically faithful, academically excellent education for our students will always be the aim of Heritage teachers and staff. Above all else we acknowledge that God is sovereign and in control of all things. God:

- Is above all things and before all things. He is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. He is present everywhere ([Revelation 21:6](#)).
- Created all things and holds all things together, both in heaven and on earth, both visible and invisible ([Colossians 1:16](#)).
- Knows all things past, present, and future. There is no limit to His knowledge, for God knows everything completely before it even happens ([Romans 11:33](#)).
- Can do all things and accomplish all things. Nothing is too difficult for Him, or impossible with Him ([Jeremiah 32:17](#)).
- God is in control of all things and rules over all things. He has power and authority over nature, earthly kings, history, angels, and demons. ([Psalm 103:19](#)).

We also acknowledge that COVID-19 caused major disruptions in our lives including the delivery of educational services to students during the 2019-2020 school year. We also recognize as difficult as the transition to remote and continuous learning was last year, the possibility exists that we will experience similar disruptions in the 2020-21 academic school year. Heritage staff did the heavy lifting of transitioning our instruction from “brick and mortar,” face-to-face instruction to remote learning with little previous experience or planning. While effective in our efforts, we desire to continually improve on our delivery efforts in order to ensure continuity of teaching and learning regardless of what public health emergencies or other disruptions may be encountered in the future.

This Return to Learn Plan has been designed to assist Heritage in planning for, and delivering, instruction to students for the 2020-21 school year. It is designed to address continuous learning efforts, whether in-person or remotely. It is also designed to address issues related to the health and safety of our students, their families, and our faculty and staff; to describe how communication of information to key stakeholders will occur; and to outline other pertinent details related to how the school will function in the 2020-21 school year.

More than anything, our desire is to ensure the health and safety of every individual who enters our building. This desire is driven by a love for our students, school families, and staff. When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment in the Law was, he answered in Matthew 22:37-39, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ***‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’***” Loving our neighbors during a global pandemic means we will have to do things differently. Keeping our distance from one another, limiting visitors in the building, even wearing masks as needed – all of these are extraordinary actions that show love, care, and compassion for our neighbors. Our desire is to demonstrate that love in all that we do in the coming year.

This document is intended to address a variety of issues related to the re-opening of Heritage Christian School for the 2020-21 school year. It is modeled and organized based on the Iowa State Department of Education’s return to learning guidance documents. It does not address all of the issues outlined in those documents since many of the issue areas required of public schools are not germane to Heritage.

Heritage Christian School's Return to Learn document is organized according to the following categories:

- Leadership
- Infrastructure
- Health and Safety on Campus
- Instruction
- Social/Emotional Learning
- Equity

Guiding Principles

- Uphold and continue to deliver on the Mission of Heritage Christian School
- Provide a safe learning environment for students and staff
- Ensure continuous learning through a variety of potential teaching and learning scenarios
 - In-person
 - Remote
 - *Potential Modified Hybrid*
- Ensure any remote learning schedule that is implemented addresses issues of access and equity and is supportive of family and student needs and scheduling
- Where possible, provide learning pathways for students with unique learning needs (e.g., student or family health issues)

Tiered Operating System

Heritage will operate on a tiered operating system during the 2020-21 school year. Conditions for the school's operating status and other health and safety procedures will be continually monitored and changes communicated to all families. The table below outlines Heritage's operating levels and what to expect at each of those levels. As with all things related to the pandemic, this list is not exhaustive and is subject to change. Additionally, there may be state or local requirements for schools that supersede our site-specific operating system.

GREEN Status No – Minimal Outbreaks	YELLOW Status Minimal to Moderate Local Outbreaks	ORANGE Status Moderate to Severe Local Outbreaks	RED Status Severe Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor students and staff for symptoms at school • Evaluate students and staff who are at increased risk of illness and develop plans (as appropriate) for them to continue to work or receive educational services if there is moderate levels of COVID-19 transmission or impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Parents of children at increased risk for illness should discuss with their health care provider whether those students should stay home in case of school or community spread. ◦ Staff at increased risk for severe illness should have a plan to stay home if there are school-based cases or community spread. • Encourage staff and students to stay home when sick and notify school administrators of illness • Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. • Ensure hand hygiene supplies are readily available – and used frequently – in the building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue cleaning, disinfecting and hand hygiene efforts • Implement social distancing measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Reduce the frequency of large gatherings (e.g., chapel, assemblies) ◦ Limit the number of attendees per gathering. ◦ Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger recess, entry/dismissal times) ◦ Limit inter-school interactions • Health checks (e.g., temperature screens upon entering the building and respiratory symptom screening) of students, staff, and visitors • Required use of PPE for staff in common areas of the building (e.g., hallways, gym, etc.) • Encourage increased use of PPE for students in common areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students at increased risk of severe illness should consider implementing individual plans for remote learning • Short-term closure of school (2/3 days – two weeks) and cancellation or rescheduling of extracurricular activities as needed (e.g., infection of staff/students) for cleaning and contact tracing • Implement short-term remote learning protocols if closure is longer than 3 days. • Temporary remote learning for some classes (if direct exposure to a class occurs) while other classes (not directly impacted) occupy the building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader, longer-term school closure, either as a preventive measure, because of staff and/or student absenteeism, or due to a state/local mandate. • Cancellation, change, or rescheduling of school-associated gatherings (e.g., concerts, Association meetings, etc.) • Implement remote learning protocols

1. LEADERSHIP

Committee Members

In order to build a *Return to Learn* plan that addresses the necessary issues related to instruction, teaching, and learning; health and safety; communication; and other associated needs, the following committee was assembled to provide input, draft, and finalize the plan.

Faculty and Staff

Nichole Early, 2nd Grade

Sarah Franje, 5th Grade Teacher

Sarah Greazel, 1st Grade Teacher

Shari Montgomery, Middle School Teacher

Rachel Super, 4th Grade Teacher

Brenda Wichhart, Administrative Assistant

Parents and Community Stakeholders

Katrina Cannon, Parent and medical professional

Stephanie Coons, Alumni Parent and medical professional

Brent Smith, Parent, EMT, and North Liberty City Council Member

School Leadership

Scott Montgomery, Head of School

Tammy Veenstra, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Communication Plan

During the 2020-21 school year, communication – both internally and externally – will be critical. We desire to communicate the most accurate information related to school operations, health and safety, and other pertinent health and safety information to families, students, and staff on a regular basis. We understand both the need to provide relevant information but also the need to not inundate staff and families with too much information.

School staff will receive internal communications as needed related to pertinent COVID-19 issues (e.g., information from state and local health officials, school operations, building closure, etc.). These messages will come from either the Head of School or the Administrative Assistant with the ***subject line: COVID-19 Update.***

Heritage families will receive, at minimum, weekly updates on COVID-19 issues in the Weekly Heritage each Friday. Additional urgent information (e.g., steps at promoting health and safety, event cancellations, school closure notice, etc.) will occur on an as needed basis via email and/or text (Parent Alert) under the ***subject line: COVID-19 Update.***

Additionally, teachers will be communicating regularly with parents regarding classroom activities, social distancing, cough and sneeze protections, and any other issues that arise within the classroom through their regular weekly newsletters.

Expect that communications from the school will intensify during any direct infection of students, classroom, or school closure. We will make every attempt to limit these communications but also want to ensure families are aware of all necessary information.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has been, and will continue to be, fluid. Due to this fact, our planning assumes that guidance and current and future regulations and safety measures may change over time. As changes occur, it is likely our plans will also need to change. This document attempts to address the most common and likely scenarios that may occur due to COVID-19; however, in the event unforeseen circumstances warrant, we will address those issues and relay information to the school community in the most timely manner possible.

2. INFRASTRUCTURE

School Calendar/Schedule Changes

The Heritage School Board voted in May to adjust the school calendar to allow school to open August 17 – one week earlier than previously announced. This early start allows Heritage teachers and staff to engage students in learning earlier, begin early diagnostics to determine student-learning targets, ensure new school wide health and safety procedures related to COVID-19 are addressed with students, and begin the process of reintroducing students to the school learning environment.

Additionally, based on STAR assessment data and teacher recommendation, select students are being invited to a two week “Summer Support” program (July 27 – August 6) to address any potential areas in need of support prior to the beginning of the school year.

Attendance and Grading (during any Remote Learning)

Our desire for the 2020-21 school year is to occupy the building and provide direct, face-to-face instruction to the greatest extent possible, in the safest way possible. In the event direct instruction cannot occur due to a COVID-19 school closure, Heritage will make the switch to Remote Learning. Because the State of Iowa has mandated all schools – public and accredited non-public schools – must have a remote learning plan that includes required student learning, Heritage will require student attendance and participation during any remote learning instruction and maintain our standard grading procedures during remote learning.

Our goal for any instructional time outside the building is for real teaching and learning to occur, with real results and accountability. Teachers will provide assignments, issue grades, monitor student progress, and engage with students regularly during remote learning periods.

While attendance is expected during remote learning, we also know that accommodating family needs and schedules during remote learning can be complicated. As mentioned in our plan overview, grace and love will guide our actions this year; as such, attendance will not be used as a criteria for grading in any class. If attendance becomes challenging, we will communicate and work with families to determine how best to support student(s) and family needs.

Teacher Professional Development

We know from our spring 2020 Remote Learning experience that teachers used a variety of different technology tools and communication methods during our time out of the building. In order to streamline our efforts and provide a central student-learning tool across all grades, Heritage is currently implementing a Google Classroom learning environment. Teachers are engaging in professional development activities over the summer to utilize the Google platform (both for in-school use and potential remote learning applications) to be ready for use in the fall.

Over the summer, teachers are reviewing current curriculum guides and determining priority content and standards that are best taught face-to-face and in-person as well as those content standards that are critical for continued student success. Additionally, grade level teachers are working collaboratively with their colleagues in the grade above to review missed content due to previous COVID-19 school closures.

Teachers are also completing the *Continuous Learning Field Guide* provided by Grant Wood AEA's Digital Learning Team to prepare and plan for remote instruction.

These professional development efforts are important steps in ensuring teachers are equipped for a variety of scenarios and that continuous learning occurs during the 2020-21 school year.

School Lunch Program

We are working with our caterer to determine the feasibility of providing our current lunch program or moving to box lunches for our school lunch program. At this time, we cannot provide exact details on the program and will share final information with parents before August 1. We understand such a move may limit some meal choices for parents and students but in moving to boxed lunches, Heritage can limit volunteers in the building and reduce the potential spread of the virus. If the boxed lunch option does not appear viable, we will continue with our current hot lunch program and determine ways to provide the service as safely as possible for all students.

We have also made the decision to limit visitors in the building during the 2020-21 school year. In limiting visitors, Heritage will not allow parents to enter the building for lunch with their children as we have in past years.

3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our students and staff are primary concerns for Heritage Christian School. While it is impossible to plan for all potential scenarios that could take place due to COVID-19 (or other similar emergency situation), this section outlines current planned procedures that will govern school operations while occupying the school building.

Heritage is committed to using all available resources in our efforts to protect students and staff including, but not limited to, resources from Johnson County Public Health, The State of Iowa's Department of Public Health, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Guidance and recommendations from these agencies will continue to inform Heritage's operations and efforts.

Determining When to Close the Building

During the 2019-20 school year, state leaders made decisions about school closures outside of Heritage's control. In the coming year, such closures may occur again; however, in the 2020-21 school year, state governors and local leaders are less likely to make such blanket decisions unless the public's health and safety are at immediate risk. Decisions on school closure related to COVID-19 will need to be made on more localized issues and data. Heritage will work with our local and state health departments in making any decisions about short- and long-term school closures.

In order for Heritage to operate effectively in what will likely be a quickly evolving landscape, guiding principles on school closure and a Tiered Operating Structure have been established. Moving from one level to the next will be evaluated by the school's Return to Learn team, and in consultation with Johnson County and/or the State of Iowa Health Departments. The Head of School will make all final

decisions regarding moving between operating levels – including school closure – and communicate them to parents and staff through our communication channels. The following guidelines will help inform our operating status and decisions:

- When active cases of COVID-19 are present in Johnson County, Heritage **will operate** under YELLOW Status.
- If students or staff have been directly *exposed* to individuals with the virus, those individuals should seek care with their local health care provider, self-report to the Head of School, and self-quarantine until advised by a doctor they are allowed to return to school. Heritage will consult with local and state health agencies and **may consider** moving to ORANGE Status if advised.
- If students or staff *contract* the virus, Heritage **will operate** under ORANGE Status and:
 - Consult with local and state health offices and determine all appropriate next steps
 - **Close** short term for cleaning and disinfecting of the school building
 - **Require** students/classes directly exposed to self-quarantine and move to remote learning for impacted classes (other students/classes not directly impacted will be able to return to the building for direct, in-person instruction)
- If the total number of students and/or staff *directly infected* with COVID-19 is >10% Heritage will consult with local and state health officials and **will move** to RED status if advised.

If state or local health officials deem conditions warrant and closures are mandated, Heritage will move to RED Status and implement remote learning protocols.

Planning for Health and Safety of Individuals (when in the building)

Teachers and staff will spend a significant portion of our return to school, discussing and reinforcing appropriate protective and preventative behaviors (e.g., social distancing, sneeze and cough protection, etc.) to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Heritage staff will use the guidelines outlined below to limit the spread and potential infection in our school community.

Home Monitoring and Self-Reporting. The most effective way to prevent the spread of any virus is to isolate infected individuals. Monitoring your own children's health and taking preventative measures at home is the first and most important step in fighting the spread of COVID-19.

If your **child has a fever of 100.3 or greater, please do not send them to school.** All students and staff will be temperature scanned before entering the building. As has been Heritage's policy in the past, we will notify parents of elevated temperatures (>99) and not allow anyone to enter the building with a temperature greater than 100.3.

Additionally, people with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild to severe. If staff or students display any of the CDC's COVID-19 symptoms, please do not attend to school:

- Fever
- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). There is no doubt that PPE has proven effective in limiting the spread of COVID-19. We also recognize that PPE can present challenges to students and teachers in the educational environment. Balancing between safety and effective instruction is challenging and we want to do our best to ensure both.

- Heritage Christian **teachers and staff will be required** to wear facemasks and/or face shields during school hours while inside the building in common areas. Once staff are in their respective work areas (teachers = classrooms, administration = office, etc.) staff may remove their masks/shields if they choose. Teachers may choose to utilize facemasks or face shields while in their respective classrooms.
- Staff supervising the Before and After School Program (BASP) will follow the same protocols as staff during the school hours.
- **Students** are strongly encouraged to wear facemasks/face shields but are **not required** to do so (students should plan on having a facemask available for small group work or other occasions where social distancing isn't possible).
- Visitors in the building will be limited and those required to enter the building (e.g., limited volunteers, UPS/FedEx deliveries, maintenance workers, etc.) **will be required** to wear facemasks while in the building.

Heritage will purchase cloth masks and clear face shields for all staff members to utilize in common areas and/or their classrooms. Heritage will make disposable facemasks available for visitors who must be in the building and do not have a facemask upon entering the school.

Contact Guards. Plexiglas guards have been/will be installed in the school office and will be considered in other high-density areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart.

Social Distancing. In addition to PPE, we know that distancing from one another helps reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Within the common areas of the building (e.g., hallways) students will be encouraged to maintain appropriate distances from one another. Teachers and staff will monitor, remind, and correct students as needed during passing periods and other times when students are in common areas.

Lines, space markers, and other visual devices will be in place to assist staff and students to appropriately distance in the hallways, restrooms, and other common areas of the building.

Classroom desks will be spaced as much as the physical space of our classrooms permits to encourage distancing of students.

Lunches have always been staggered at Heritage and will continue to be. Students who receive hot lunch (or boxed lunch) will be dismissed for lunch with their class and will be monitored to ensure appropriate distance from one another.

A plan is currently being developed by classroom teachers to stagger morning and lunch recesses to reduce student interaction between classrooms and reduce potential exposure from student to student. This plan will include rotating playground areas for each class to utilize during recess.

Walking to and from specials, recesses, etc. students will maintain appropriate distance from one another. Recess and specials (co-curricular classes) lengths may be adjusted to allow for additional time necessary for distancing in hallways, surface disinfecting, and handwashing.

Hand washing/sanitizing, sneeze, face-touching precautions. Some of the most effective measures related to combatting the spread of COVID-19 are precautionary. Staff will work to ensure the following safety procedures are taught and used throughout the building. Planned activities include:

- Providing instruction and signage on how to properly wash hands and use hand sanitizer.
- Planning for students to wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer after coughing/sneezing, before and after meals/snacks.
- Providing hand sanitizer in all classrooms and including time into instructional transitions for students to wash and/or sanitize hands.
- Providing hand sanitizer to all students when entering the building (e.g., before school, after recess, after group activities, etc.) and encourage frequent handwashing.
- Working to regularly disinfect hard classroom surfaces throughout the day.

Additionally, posters reminding students and staff of handwashing and sneeze/face-touching etiquette will be displayed throughout the building and frequent reminders made to our school community.

Plan for shared classroom materials/resources. Within the educational setting, there are often shared materials among students in the classroom (e.g., computers, math manipulatives, science equipment, etc.). Ensuring that these materials are properly disinfected and cleaned will be an important step in slowing the spread of the COVID virus.

Each classroom will establish a routine for limiting the use of shared materials and for wiping down shared spaces and equipment. This will vary across classrooms and age groups but will include such areas and equipment as:

- PreK and Kindergarten
 - Students and teachers wiping down blocks and shared tables.
 - Converting sensory tables into sensory tubs.
 - Eliminating shared classroom teddy bear/stuffed animals.
 - Ensuring there is a procedure for wiping down and disinfecting laptops/iPads.
 - Ensuring students have their own crayons, markers, writing instruments in their own desks/containers rather than shared bins.
- 1st – 5th grades
 - Students and teachers wiping down shared spaces within the classroom.
 - Assigning classroom textbooks to each student rather than allow general classroom use.
 - Ensuring there is a procedure for wiping down and disinfecting laptops/iPads.
 - Ensuring students have their own crayons, markers, writing instruments rather than shared bins.
 - Creating a method for students to utilize classroom libraries that limit the number of books they touch and a procedure for checking books in that allows for their cleaning.
 - Determining a method for cleaning shared classroom furniture (e.g., beanbags, chairs, couches) or eliminating their use during COVID outbreaks.
- Middle School
 - Utilizing same methods as in grades 1-5.

- Creating a 2-3 minutes gap at the end of the instructional period for students to wipe down desk surfaces before leaving the classroom.
- Ensuring students have ample writing instruments in their possession. Eliminating classroom sets or bins of writing instruments. Students should come prepared to class and not share materials.

Drinking Fountains and water bottles. Students should plan to bring water bottles to school. Drinking fountains in the building will be turned off to avoid the potential spread of the virus. Students will be able to refill water bottles using classroom sinks.

Eliminating soft surfaces. Heritage is removing “soft surfaces” from classrooms (e.g., cloth upholstered chairs, area rugs, etc.) for the 2020-21 school year that cannot easily be wiped down, cleaned, and disinfected. This will help eliminate areas in classrooms that could trap and accelerate the spread of the Coronavirus. “Calendar time” in lower elementary grades will continue but will not occur on carpets where students are closely gathered.

Temperature scanning. While in YELLOW Status, Heritage will scan the temperature of students and visitors entering the building. Current school policy is to notify parents if their student presents with a temperature above 99.0 and that practice will continue. Students who present with a temperature at or above 100.3 will not be allowed to enter the building. In the case of students whose parents may have left campus, the student will be isolated and parents called to pick up their child.

Visitors will be temperature scanned before entering the building. Any visitor who presents with a temperature at or above 100.3 will not be permitted to enter the building.

Locations for Sick Students/Staff. Students who come to school with, or develop a temperature greater than 100.3 during the school day, will be isolated from other students and staff in the school office (vacant middle office). The room will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use with EPA approved products that meet CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

Building Entry and Exit Points. During the 2020-21 school year, Heritage will ensure one-way traffic into and out of the building.

- Morning Drop-off Entry Points
 - **PreK – 2nd grade** students will enter the building through the **main entrance**.
 - **3rd and 4th grade** students will enter the building through the **playground entrance** (the far side of the building).
 - **5th – 8th grade** students will enter the building through the **side entrance** (the traditional morning drop off entrance closest to the parking lot).

Staff will be present in the morning to greet students, ensure they enter the building safely, scan temperatures, and provide hand sanitizer prior to entering the building.

By utilizing three doors for student entry, students will enter the building closer to their classrooms and reduce congestion in the entryways and halls.

- Afternoon Pick-up.
 - All students will remain in their classrooms and be called out as parents arrive in the pick-up lane.

- All students (PreK-8th grade) will **exit the building through the side doors** closest to the parking lot.

In order to limit the number of individuals in the building and decrease the risk of spread of the virus, Heritage will limit entry to the building. Parents **will not be allowed in the building during drop off or pick up.**

A plan is being developed on how best to accommodate drop-off for PreK and Kindergarten parents and students who are attending school for the first time. More information on how we will manage those drop-offs will be forthcoming.

Traffic flow in the building. The main hallways of the building will be lined down the middle. Students will remain in the right side of the hallways at all times while moving from place to place. Overhead signage will show the traffic flow for all students and staff.

Cleaning and disinfecting. Heritage will work with the janitorial staff to ensure that nightly cleaning includes the disinfecting of high touch surfaces (e.g., desks, lockers, door handles, etc.). Throughout the day, staff and students will work to disinfect high touch areas in classrooms and common areas: door handles, lockers, etc. Surfaces will be disinfecting with an EPA approved product that meets CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

Alternative CDC approved alcohol-based disinfecting wipes will be available for students or staff who have allergies to commonly used disinfecting wipes (Clorox, Lysol).

Any classroom or space used by a student or staff member who *directly contracts* COVID-19 will be closed and returned to service only after it has been cleaned and disinfected utilizing EPA approved products that meet CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

Visitors in the Building. During the 2020-21 school year, Heritage will limit entry to the building to students, staff, and essential visitors only (needed volunteers, deliveries, maintenance, etc.). This policy change has implications for parents and volunteers. By implementing this change, the school can limit the potential introduction and/or spread of the virus in the building.

Practically, for parents this means:

- Parents will not be allowed in the building during drop-off or pick-up of students (see Entry and Exit Points section)
- Parents will not be allowed to bring lunch to, and/or eat with, their student
- Parents will not be allowed to join their students during chapel
- Teachers will be eliminating/modifying certain class activities (e.g., student of the week, class presentations, etc.) where parents would traditionally be in attendance

We understand this is a major change for many parents and we continue to pray this is temporary. The health and safety of your children and school staff are paramount this year.

Volunteers. We know that volunteers (typically parents and grandparents) are essential to many of the activities on the Heritage campus. We are currently evaluating the types of activities on campus that will require volunteer assistance (e.g., lunch service, Friday Bible memory verse recitation, etc.) and which activities teachers and staff can support and which activities will require volunteer support. More information on volunteer opportunities and guidelines will be coming soon.

Plans for Essential Staff in the event of a switch to remote learning

If Heritage must move to remote learning in either ORANGE or RED operating status conditions, the building will be closed to the public.

Classroom teachers, Before and After School Care staff, and the Head of School are designated as essential staff and may enter the building.

Essential Staff members may access the building during remote learning times under the following conditions:

- Teachers and staff working in the building must be in their classrooms/work areas with the door closed.
- When in common areas (e.g., hallways, office, teacher workroom, etc.), all staff must wear masks and remain appropriately distanced from one another.

4. INSTRUCTION/STUDENT LEARNING

As noted in the Professional Development section, teachers will be working to identify priority content and reviewing unfinished content from the past school closure. Teachers are also reviewing curriculum guides, planning for priority content for the coming year, looking ahead to content that could be removed to make room for unfinished learning and priority content in the 2020-21 school year.

Plans for In-School, face to face instruction

The results of our parent survey revealed the vast majority of respondents (90%) favored being on campus for in-person instruction and 83% of respondents reported being comfortable or very comfortable in sending students back to the building. We have approached our return to learn planning with the expectation that occupying the building for in-person instruction is our desired goal.

Heritage implemented a Google Classroom environment over the summer that will be utilized to support direct instruction. Teachers will work with students early in the year to ensure student (and parent) understanding and usage of the Google environment.

All classroom newsletters, spelling lists, and Bible verses will be posted weekly in your child's Google Classroom to ensure students and parents are routinely accessing and utilizing the platform.

Middle School teachers will utilize Google Classroom both for on-site and remote learning and utilize the platform for weekly assignments, homework submissions, files, quizzes, formative assessments, and/or student posts to the Classroom Stream. All tests and major paper due dates will be posted in Google Classroom at least two days in advance for both on site and remote learning. These assignments will compile into each student's Google Calendar.

Teachers will also spend a significant portion of our return to school evaluating individual student needs and prioritizing instructional supports to ensure maximum student success.

During in-school instruction, teaching and learning will focus on priority content standards. Additional priority will be given to ensuring students are familiar with technology that may be needed for remote learning (e.g., SeeSaw, FlipGrid, etc.) and understanding login procedures, passwords, and other general requirements that facilitate remote learning efforts.

Return to school activities will include significant focus on learning expectations – for both in school and remote learning. Heritage teachers and staff will work to ensure that students understand the significant

challenges the nearly five-month absence from the learning environment places on student learning. Importance will be placed on classroom and remote expectations for learning, required attendance, daily work, etc.

Plans for Remote learning

Teachers worked during the summer months on professional development activities to better prepare themselves and their students for remote learning. While we hope and pray this option is not required, we are prepared to implement remote learning if required to do so.

Goals of Remote Learning. If necessary due to a COVID-19 outbreak, Heritage will move to required continuous learning (Remote Learning) for students. Remote learning is a requirement of the State of Iowa for the 2020-21 school year. Our goals for remote learning will remain similar to those we outlined last spring during our spring Remote Learning efforts:

- Focus on the Mission of Heritage Christian School and expect excellence in all that we do.
 - Our Mission to partner with parents has not changed.
 - We will continue to deliver on our promise of providing an academically challenging, biblically faithful education to students.
- Make instruction relevant, engaging, and meaningful for all students.
- Emphasize teaching and learning.
 - Teachers will treat remote learning as real school, with real work.
 - Students should be ready to engage and learn.
- Use technology to enable learning, not hinder it.
- Embrace new opportunities. Teachers will focus on priority content but also try new and innovative teaching methods to introduce new content during remote learning.
- Keep student screen time and work expectations reasonable.
 - Students will not be in front of computer screens all day.
 - Keep instructional aspects and parent engagement reasonable; our desire is not to overwhelm anyone – student or parent.
 - Students should have time to engage with parents, siblings and others socially – and safely – and get outside for fresh air. Our desire is to balance learning with family time.
- Keep everything in perspective. We cannot replicate everything remotely. Bear with us, share concerns, and let grace abound.

Required Attendance. Since all schools are required to move to remote learning, attendance will be required (with flexibility and grace provided where possible). Instruction will be continuous and include both synchronous (e.g., scheduled instruction via Zoom or other video service) and asynchronous (videos and flexible off-line and online assignments without direct teacher interaction) learning opportunities. Student progress will be monitored and grades issued.

Remote Learning Instructional Time. Remote learning will include specific allotted time for instruction and completion of work for each grade level. While not policy, [guidance from Grant Wood AEA](#) provides a general outline for parents regarding the amount of time (by grade level) students should be engaged in remote learning. Parents and students should expect daily instruction and student work and daily check-ins (Office Hours).

Potential Hybrid Learning

A hybrid model of learning includes some combination of Remote Learning and On-site Delivery – either for all students (e.g., “50-50 model” where some students learn at home while others are in the building and then alternate) or only a limited number (e.g., at-home learning to support unique health and safety

concerns). Such hybrid models require additional resources – both human and fiscal – that make hybrid models challenging for Heritage to fully implement.

We are currently exploring options for how we might be able to support the unique needs of some families with modified hybrid models. While these options are not yet fully developed it is our hope to have a plan by July 17, to address two potential hybrid models that could be implemented on a limited basis.

Off-site Hybrid. While other students occupy the building for On-site, traditional instruction, we know there are some students/families (approx. 5%) with health risks that make attendance in-person challenging. We are currently exploring how we may be able to support Remote Learning for those families. This would likely include providing content and materials to students with some amount of Zoom, videotaped, or online instructional content to help support at-home learning.

On-site Hybrid. If required to close school due to a local COVID outbreak or state mandate, we know that many Heritage families have essential jobs that require them to work. Having a safe, secure location where students can be during the day is essential for these families.

If the school needed to move to Remote Learning, we are exploring how we might be able to support some limited number of students (approx. 25%) to provide support during Remote Learning. Heritage would support and assist students with access to synchronous learning sessions online, and monitor, motivate, and support students in completing asynchronous learning expectations. This benefits both students who learn best in the school environment as well as offers support for parents who must work due to the essential nature of their jobs.

These plans require significant planning and preparation and more details will be available soon. If you have questions about these options or are interested in utilizing one of these options, please contact the school office and speak with Mr. Montgomery.

5. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CARE

Heritage realizes our previous COVID-19 school closure was difficult on many students and families – it was difficult for teachers and staff as well. A priority of Heritage Christian School in any future Remote Learning effort will be to ensure for the social and emotional care of our students and families.

Research suggests that students with a high sense of belonging are happier, healthier, and more engaged learners. We know that students who feel connected to school are less likely to have emotional distress, be involved in fighting or bullying behavior, and be more engaged in their community and family. While challenging, we want to ensure that we are connecting and engaging students during any remote learning scenario.

Identify student and family needs

Early in the 2020-21 school year, Heritage will survey parents and students to better understand family needs during remote learning (e.g., technology and equipment, self-care, coping strategies, prayer/devotion needs, etc.) that will help staff identify ways the school can continue to support families during any remote learning activities.

Emotional connections for students/families while remote

The healthiest way for students to interact with technology (especially screen media) is if an adult is physically or virtually present and participating in usage with the child. In order to support this healthy

technology interaction, Heritage teachers will engage with students regularly and adapt learning activities, virtual lessons, and remote social-emotional care to foster connectedness while away from the school environment. Teachers will use a variety of different activities to engage students:

- Daily or regular virtual/video instruction (depending on the grade level)
- Virtual morning meetings and devotions for students and families
- Virtual Chapel
- Regular teacher virtual or video check-ins (Office Hours)
- Virtual class field trips, scavenger hunts, classroom/school mix-tapes and video creations, parent nights, and other efforts to promote and support school-student-family connections.
- Online classroom discussion boards and chats
- Formal and informal teacher virtual office hours
- Virtual and – when possible – in-person acts of kindness, notes of gratitude and appreciation, and other efforts to remain connected to students and families.

6. EQUITY

Heritage Christian School desires to ensure all students have access to the learning supports and technology necessary to participate meaningfully in remote learning.

Ensure plans are in place for support of students with IEP/504

Heritage is working with the Grant Wood Area Education Agency to ensure that students receiving special services through the AEA can continue to receive those services during remote learning times. Last year, even though Heritage chose required learning services for our students the school could not utilize AEA services as our local public district chose optional supports. In the coming year, since all schools will have required continuous learning supports in place, Heritage expects our students to continue to receive those services during any remote learning effort.

Planning for access to technology and learning materials

Heritage's Return to Learn Parent Survey included questions regarding device access and internet connectivity. Overwhelming families responded that they had ample access to devices and internet connectivity. While this is encouraging, we also want to ensure all families have access to technology and materials necessary for remote learning.

A variety of options will be utilized should Heritage be forced to implement remote learning options during the school year including issuing school-owned laptops to students who lack a device or have limited devices.

Heritage has utilized funds made available via the Equitable Distribution of Resources portion of the CARES Act to purchase Chromebooks for Heritage's Middle School students. Coupled with our adoption of the Google Classroom platform, new Chromebooks will enhance our middle school programming and ensure all students in grades 6-8 have access to a device and learning opportunities throughout any remote learning period.

The Chromebook initiative also allows greater access to the school's current laptop and iPad resources (approx. 80 additional devices) for students in grades K-5. If needed during a remote learning situation, the school will utilize those resources and loan them to K-5 students in need of a device during any remote learning situation.