



Ocone Christian Academy

# Return to Learn Plan

## 2020-2021

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## **Background**

Fulfilling the mission of Oconee Christian Academy (OCA) to partner with parents to provide a Biblically faithful, academically excellent education for our students will always be the aim of OCA 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. (**Psalms 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 continuous learning was last year, the possibility exists that we will experience similar disruptions in the 2020-21 academic school year. OCA staff did the heavy lifting of transitioning our instruction from “brick and mortar,” face-to-face instruction to distance 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 OCA 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 virtually. 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 Oconee Christian Academy for the 2020-21 school year. It is modeled and organized based on guidance from the SC Association of Christian Schools (SCACS).

Oconee Christian Academy'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 Oconee Christian Academy
- Provide a safe learning environment for students and staff
- Ensure continuous learning through a variety of potential teaching and learning scenarios
  - On-Campus classes
  - Distance Learning via Google classroom platform
- Ensure any distance 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

OCA 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 OCA’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.

X=Active COVID cases

GREEN Status No Local Outbreaks	YELLOW Status $0 < x \leq 8\%$	ORANGE Status $8\% < x \leq 10\%$	RED Status $x > 10\%$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor students and staff for symptoms at school</li> <li>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"> <li>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.</li> <li>Staff at increased risk for severe illness should have a plan to stay home if there are school-based cases or community spread.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Encourage staff and students to stay home when sick and notify school administrators of illness</li> <li>Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.</li> <li>Ensure hand hygiene supplies are readily available – and used frequently – in the building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue cleaning, disinfecting and hand hygiene efforts</li> <li>Implement social distancing measures</li> <li>Health checks (e.g., temperature screens upon entering the building and respiratory symptom screening) of students, staff, and visitors</li> <li>Required use of PPE for <b>staff and students</b> in common areas of the building (e.g., hallways, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students at increased risk of severe illness should consider implementing individual plans for distance learning</li> <li>School will be cleaned and disinfected prior to re-entry of staff/students</li> <li>Cancellation or rescheduling of extracurricular activities as needed</li> <li><b>Alter schedules to reduce mixing</b></li> <li><b>Limit inter-school interactions</b></li> <li>Temporary distance learning for some classes (if direct exposure to a class occurs) while other classes (not directly impacted) occupy the building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broader, longer-term school closure, either as a preventive measure, because of staff and/or student absenteeism, or due to a state/local mandate.</li> <li>Cancellation, change, or rescheduling of school-associated gatherings (e.g., concerts, Association meetings, etc.)</li> <li>Partial or entire implementation of distance learning protocols as needed</li> </ul>

## 1. LEADERSHIP

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 persons served on Task Forces to provide input, draft, and finalize the plan.

### Faculty and Staff

Scott Glenn, HS Teacher  
Jenny Keaton HS Teacher  
Beth Cooper, Middle School Teacher  
Jim Watson, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher  
Greyson Williams, HS Teacher  
Dr. Joe Chapa, Distance Learning Coordinator

### Parents and Community Stakeholders

Dana Jones, Parent/OCA Board Member  
Jennifer Woodring, Parent/OCA Athletic Director  
Charleen Price, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher/Parent  
Lara Strickland, Librarian/Elem Computers/STEM  
Dwaina Brooks, Parent  
April Burgess, Parent/OCA Nurse/Prisma Health  
Nurse)/OCA Health & Safety Coordinator

### School Leadership

Pamela Edgar-Crain, Head of School  
Dean Bare, Chief Officer of Operations

### ***Communication Plan***

During the 2020-21 school year, communication – both internally and externally – will be very important. 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 Chief Operating Officer with the ***subject line: COVID-19 Update.***

OCA families will receive updates on COVID-19 issues in the Weekly Warrior 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 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 OCA School Board supported adjusting the school calendar to open school on August 17--one week later than previously announced. This later start will provide for necessary HVAC units to be installed on the elementary hall. An updated school calendar is forthcoming and will be shared with OCA families.

### ***Attendance and Grading (during any Distance 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, OCA will make the switch to Distance Learning. Because the State of SC has mandated all schools – public and accredited non-public schools – must have a learning plan that includes required student learning, OCA will require student attendance and participation during any distance learning instruction and maintain our standard grading procedures during distance learning.

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

While attendance is expected during learning, we also know that accommodating family needs and schedules during 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 criterion 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 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, OCA is currently implementing a Google Classroom learning environment. Teachers are engaging in professional development activities to utilize the Google platform (both for in-school use and potential learning applications) to be ready for use in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Teachers are asked to review current curriculum guides and determine 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 will work collaboratively with their colleagues in the grade above to review missed content due to previous COVID-19 school closures.

An OCA Task Force led by Dr. Joe Chapa met this summer to prepare and plan for instruction and provide professional development for teachers in using Google classroom.

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***

Our Lunch Coordinator will continue to send out weekly lunch menus for catered lunches.

Heat-ups will be allowed ONLY if your student's name is clearly visible on the package and the time to heat is indicated (not more than 3 minutes). Please provide appropriate serving dishes for heat-up items such as Ramen noodles or canned food items that do not come in microwavable containers. No glass dishes, please.

Two lunch periods have been in place at OCA and will continue unless it is deemed necessary to move to three lunch periods.

### **3. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The health and safety of our students and staff are primary concerns for Oconee Christian Academy. 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.

OCA is committed to using all available resources in our efforts to protect students and staff including, but not limited to, resources from the office of the Oconee County Health Dept, SC's Department of Public Health, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Guidance and recommendations from these agencies will continue to inform OCA'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 OCA'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. OCA will work with our local and state health departments in making any decisions about short- and long-term school closures.

In order for OCA 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 (page 4). Moving from one level to the next will be evaluated by the OCA Board, School Leadership and the Nurse while taking into consideration information shared by county and state health officials. Per our Tiered Operating System included in this plan, 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.

#### ***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. OCA 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 99.5 or greater, please do not send them to school.** All students and staff will be temperature scanned before entering the building when operating in YELLOW or higher status per the Tiered Operating System. As has been done in the past, we will notify parents of elevated temperatures (99.5 or greater) and not allow anyone to enter the building with a temperature of **99.5** or greater.

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.

Symptoms are, but not limited to:

- 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
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

#### **Positive COVID-19 test results or COVID-19 Symptoms**

- Staff and Students are required to stay at home while showing any signs of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Staff and Students should isolate until 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms AND have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- Families of anyone who may have been exposed to the person who had symptoms or a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be notified while maintaining the privacy of that person.
- Individuals of the household of the confirmed case of COVID-19 who attend OCA will be required to wear a mask for two weeks from the time of exposure.
- Teachers will continue to provide instruction while absent from the classroom when symptoms do not interfere with performance.
- Students will continue to engage and learn through virtual learning via Google Classroom when symptoms do not interfere with performance.
- Absences due to COVID-19 infection, exposure, or symptoms will be excused, but students are required to make up work and keep up with work when able. **Students who join via Google Meet for classroom instruction will be counted present for that class.**

**High Risk Students.** Parents must submit a letter via email to the student’s teachers copied to Nurse Burgess and the Head of School stating that their student is high risk, listing the reasons for this determination. Please include any special instructions regarding classroom activities. It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate with the teacher about planned activities. High risk students will be given seating arrangements that limit contact with others as much as possible.

In the event that the teacher is conducting a group activity, high risk students will be allowed to work

alone or will be offered an alternative assignment so as to limit contact with others when possible.

**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.

- **OCA teachers and staff** are expected to wear facemasks and/or face shields inside the building in **common areas** during school hours. 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.
- **Students** should plan on having a facemask with them each day and available at all times. Students are strongly encouraged to wear facemasks/face shields and are **required** to do so in the hallways during class changes. Students will also be **required** to wear masks during small group work or other occasions where social distancing isn't possible such as safety drills e.g., tornado drills.
- **Visitors/parents** in the building (volunteers, UPS/FedEx deliveries, maintenance workers, etc.) **will be required** to wear facemasks while in the building.

OCA will make masks available for visitors who must be in the building and do not have a facemask upon entering the school.

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

Administration, faculty, staff, and students will be encouraged and reminded to appropriately distance in common areas (e.g., hallways, restrooms, etc.). Teachers and staff will remind students in common areas as needed.

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

Should it become necessary, elementary classroom teachers will move to staggered morning and lunch recesses to reduce student interaction between classrooms and reduce potential exposure from student to student. This plan could 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 when hand washing is not available or practical
- Encouraging the use of hand sanitizer 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, calculators, 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.

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

- **Kindergarten**
  - Students and teachers wiping down shared tables.
  - Eliminating stuffed animals.
  - Ensuring there is a procedure for wiping down and disinfecting manipulatives.
  - Ensuring students have their own crayons, markers, writing instruments in their own desks/containers rather than shared bins.
- **1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> 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 manipulatives and desks.
  - Ensuring students have their own crayons, markers, writing instruments rather than shared bins.
  - Determining a method for cleaning shared classroom furniture (e.g., beanbags, chairs, couches) or eliminating their use during COVID outbreaks.
- **Middle/High School**
  - Utilizing same methods as in grades 1-5.
  - As students enter classrooms, desktops and chairs are to be wiped down with cleaning materials provided in the classroom. (Parents are asked to contribute 2 rolls of paper towels and 2 bottles of peroxide (3%) or containers of Lysol or Clorox wipes).
  - **Students should come prepared to class and not share materials.** This will ensure students have ample writing instruments in their possession and eliminate classroom sets or bins of writing instruments.

**Drinking fountains and water bottles.** Students should plan to bring water bottles to school. Drinking fountains in the building will be used **only** for refilling water bottles. Elementary students will be able to refill water bottles using classroom sinks.

**Temperature scanning.** Visitors will be temperature scanned before entering the building. Any visitor who presents with a temperature 99.5 or greater will not be permitted to enter the building.

While in **YELLOW Status** (page 4), OCA will scan the temperature of staff and students entering the building. Anyone with a temperature of **99.5 or greater** 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.

**Locations for Sick Students/Staff.** Students who come to school with or develop a temperature of 99.5 or greater 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, OCA will ensure safe traffic flow into and out of the building. This is a work in progress, so please understand that the plan will be revised as needed.

- **Morning Drop-off Entry Points**
  - Elementary students will enter through the Elementary Entrance.
  - MS/HS students will enter through the Main Office Entrance.

Staff will be present in the morning to greet students, ensure they enter the building safely, scan temperatures according to the Tiered Operating System matrix (page 4). Hand sanitizer will be available at each entrance.

By utilizing two doors for student entry, students will enter the building closer to their classrooms and reduce congestion in the entryways and halls. Students will report directly to homeroom classes.

- **Afternoon Pick-up.**
  - Elementary students will remain in their classrooms and be called out as parents arrive in the pick-up lane.
  - All Middle School students will exit the building through the Main Entrance.
  - HS student drivers will be dismissed five minutes before other HS students (at 2:55 PM). Students must leave the building promptly!
  - All HS students will **exit the building through the SIDE door** closest to the high school hallway directly to parking area.
  - **Traffic flow in the building.** Students will remain in the right side of the hallways at all times while moving from place to place.

**Cleaning and disinfecting.** OCA will work with the janitorial staff to ensure that nightly cleaning includes the disinfecting of high touch surfaces. Throughout the day, staff and students will work to disinfect high touch areas in classrooms and common areas. Surfaces will be disinfected with an EPA approved product that meets CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

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

**Visitors/Volunteers in the Building.** During the 2020-21 school year, OCA will allow visitors/parents in the building to attend specific events (chapel, in-class activities, lunch with your child) or conduct school business (drop-off/pick-up forms; make payments, etc). Reminder that all visitors will have temperature scans and masks will be required. By implementing this change, the school can limit the potential introduction and/or spread of the virus in the building.

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

If OCA must move to distance learning in either ORANGE or RED operating status conditions, the

building will be closed to the public.

Head of School, Chief Operating Officer, and Classroom teachers are designated as essential staff and may enter the building.

Essential Staff members may access the building during distance learning under the following guidelines:

- 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 identify priority content and review unfinished content from the past school closure. Teachers will review curriculum guides and plan 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***

We have approached our return to learn planning with the expectation that occupying the building for in-person instruction is our desired goal.

OCA 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. The Google Classroom environment will be used consistently during face-to-face learning to ensure proficiency in the event of moving to distance learning.

Examples for elementary classes include classroom newsletters, spelling lists, and Bible verses or other assignments posted weekly in your child's Google Classroom.

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

Teachers will also evaluate individual student needs and prioritize 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 Google Classroom technology that may be needed for distance learning and understanding login procedures, passwords, and other general requirements that facilitate distance learning efforts.

Return to school activities will include significant focus on learning expectations – for both in school and distance learning. OCA 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 distance learning expectations for learning, required

attendance, daily work, etc.

### ***Plans for Distance Learning***

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

**Goals of distance learning.** If necessary due to a COVID-19 outbreak, OCA will move to required continuous learning (Distance Learning) for students. OCA is committed to continuing to provide Biblically-integrated instruction during Distance Learning. Our goals include the following:

- Focus on the Mission of Oconee Christian Academy 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 distance learning as real school, with real work.
  - Students should be ready to engage and learn during normal school hours.
- 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 distance learning.
- Keep student screen time and work expectations reasonable.
  - Students will not be in front of computer screens all day.
  - Instructional time will occur during regular school hours.
  - 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 during Distance Learning. Bear with us, share concerns, and let grace abound.

**Required Attendance.** When we move to Distance Learning, attendance will be required. Instruction will be continuous and include both synchronous (e.g., scheduled instruction via Google Meet) and asynchronous (videos and flexible off-line and online assignments without direct teacher interaction) learning opportunities. Student progress will be monitored, and grades issued.

**Distance Learning Instructional Time.** Distance learning will include specific allotted time for instruction (for MS/HS students their class schedule will still be followed for instruction via Google Meet) and completion of work for each grade level. Parents and students should expect daily instruction and student work and daily check-ins (Office Hours will be provided by teachers).

## **5. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CARE**

OCA 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 Oconee Christian Academy in any future distance 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 distance learning scenario.

### ***Identify student and family needs***

Early in the 2020-21 school year, OCA will survey parents and students to better understand family needs during distance 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 distance learning activities.

### ***Emotional connections for students/families while Distance Learning***

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, OCA teachers will engage with students regularly and adapt learning activities, virtual lessons, and distance learning 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**

Oconee Christian Academy desires to ensure all students have access to the learning supports and technology necessary to participate meaningfully in distance learning.

### ***Ensure plans are in place for support of students with ISP/504***

The OCA Resource Advisor will continue to be a resource to parent/students with accommodations during Distance Learning. Faculty and parents will work together to implement accommodations during Distance Learning.

### ***Planning for access to technology and learning materials***

Students must have access to computers and broadband internet to utilize the Google Classroom environment during Distance Learning.

OCA has utilized funds made available via the Equitable Distribution of Resources portion of the CARES Act to order Chromebooks for OCA. Coupled with our adoption of the Google Classroom platform, new Chromebooks will enable our students to have access to a device on an as needed basis throughout any distance learning period.

- A copy of this document is posted on the school website, [oconeechristian.org](http://oconeechristian.org) and will be updated as needed.
- Alerts to changes to this document will appear on the weekly OCA newsletter.
- Parents are instructed to keep children home if they are sick with any type of illness.

- Before returning to school, students/staff with general illness need to be 24-hours symptom-free with no medication.
- For COVID-related illness, students/staff are to be isolated 10 days from onset of symptoms AND fever-free for 24 hours.

**Please sign and return the last page of this document and return to the OCA Main Office on or before August 27, 2020.**

## **2020-2021 OCA Health and Safety Guideline Waiver Form**

The novel coronavirus COVID-19 ("**COVID-19**"), has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is very contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact.

Oconee Christian Academy (OCA) has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, OCA cannot guarantee or assure you that your child (which term shall include a child for whom you are the guardian) will not become infected with COVID-19 after attending classes, activities and events at, or sponsored, arranged or allowed by OCA (collectively "**School Events**"). Attending School Events could increase your child's risk of contracting COVID-19.

I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk on behalf of my child that my child may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by attending School Events and that such exposure or

infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death.

On my behalf, and on behalf of my child, I hereby waive, release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless OCA, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and representatives, of and from all claims, liabilities, actions, damages, costs, or expenses of any kind, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees and costs, in any way arising from or out of or relating to, directly or indirectly, COVID-19 infection of my child or me or anyone else that I or my child may come into contact with, and any effects thereof, whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any School Events.

**Printed Student Name(s)** *(continue on back if additional space is needed)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(OCA Office or Admin Personnel)

