CAMPUS REOPENING PLAN AND COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
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August 26, 2020

SUMMARY OF OUR RE-OPENING PLAN

Abiding Savior Lutheran School is committed to the health and safety of your child, your family, and our staff throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. We are also committed to a successful start of the school year and a robust and exceptional educational experience for your child.

Our 12-step re-opening plan is in place to ensure that we will be able to accomplish the following goals.

1. Faith-filled culture, centered on Jesus Christ and His promises for us
2. Rich and exceptional educational experience
3. Safe and secure campus
4. Face-to-face instruction*
5. Full school day – 8:15 AM to 3:00 PM
6. Continued exceptional teaching and learning

    a. PE, music, technology, enrichment, electives, etc. will continue, as guidelines allow
    b. Athletics continued as feasible
    c. Chapel will continue weekly – will be held in two groups

Returning to school involves moving forward in faith and acknowledging that there is some risk as soon as we leave the safety of our homes. No place of business, worship or education can guarantee 100% protection from COVID-19. But we can all do our part to minimize those risks and the spread of the disease. We need all our families to agree to daily monitor their children's health and not send them to school if they exhibit any of the symptoms for COVID-19.

If a child or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, all people who had contact with that person will be notified of their exposure, while maintaining confidentiality of the patient. The school will follow all CDC protocols if this situation occurs, which includes:

1. 14-day quarantine for all people exposed to a positive COVID-19 case.
2. Students who are quarantined will have instruction delivered online and will not be counted absent during the 14-day period.

*Parents that feel it is too risky to attend face to face instruction because of health or home situations would be allowed to do distance learning via a synchronous model.

The following terms are used throughout this document and are understood as defined below.

- SARS-Cov-2 – an acute respiratory problem
- COVID-19 – an immune based disease

ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL

RE-OPENING PLAN FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

PREAMBLE, MISSION AND PURPOSE

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. ~ Hebrews 10:23-25 ESV

PREAMBLE

Martin Luther, the igniter of the Great Reformation in 1517, was as much an education reformer as he was a church reformer. And like the early church fathers who placed the Bible at the center of their school's curriculum, Luther said:

> *"Above all, in schools of all kinds the chief and most common lesson should be in the Scriptures....*
> *But where the Holy Scriptures are not the rule, I advise no one to send his child. Everything must perish where God's word is not studied unceasingly. When schools prosper, the Church remains righteous and her doctrine pure. Young pupils and students are the seed and source of the Church. If we were dead, whence would come our successors, if not from the schools? For the sake of the Church we must have and maintain Christian schools". Martin Luther, quoted in F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 168; as reproduced in CSE Magazine, "1,900 Years of Christian Schools and Their Impact on Society", available at ACSI.org*

Faith. Hope. Love. An unbroken and unbreakable 1,900-year legacy of Christian Education. God, His word, our prayers and the gathering together of the saints. These are the timeless and unchanging spiritual principles, from God, through His word, and passed from generation to generation by a great cloud of faithful teachers that compel the reopening of our school for the 2020-2021 year in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

MISSION

Reopen Abiding Savior Lutheran School for the 2020-2021 school year on time and for on campus learning as safely and fully as possible.

PURPOSE

Advance the gospel of Jesus Christ through private Christian Education, as an in-person gathered community of teachers, administrators, staff, parents and students to God's glory, our joy and for the benefit of all connected with Abiding Savior Lutheran School.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of Abiding Savior Lutheran School's reopening plan is to provide re-entry that fosters the overall health of children, adolescents, staff, and community that we serve. The plan is based on evidence that is currently available and will be monitored as new information or situations arise. We hold as true and not opening our school would be counter to scripture, and would have a negative impact on the spiritual, mental, behavioral, and developmental health of our students. We trust that this plan will provide a framework for safety when Abiding Savior Lutheran School reopens on August 25, 2020.

There are many federal, state and local guidelines available when it comes to making decisions on how to best mitigate the risk and protect our school and community. Abiding Savior Lutheran School has carefully considered many of the available guidelines and will lean most heavily on the medical advice from the American Academy of Pediatrics and has adopted the actionable 12 steps to reopening schools from The Hospital for Sick Children in Ontario, Canada.

From the American Academy of Pediatrics:

> *'Schools are fundamental to child and adolescent development and well-being and provide our children and adolescents with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, physical/speech and mental health therapy, and opportunities for physical activity, among other benefits. Beyond supporting the educational development of children and adolescents, schools play a critical role in addressing racial and social inequity. As such, it is critical to reflect on the differential impact SARS-CoV-2 and the associated school closures have had on different races, ethnic and vulnerable populations. These recommendations are provided*
> *acknowledging that our understanding of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic is changing rapidly.'*

From the Hospital for Sick Children:

> *"Not opening schools in September would continue to have a negative impact on the mental, behavioral and developmental health of children. We hope these recommendations help provide a framework to keep everyone safe when school doors reopen."*
>
> Developed by experts from SickKids and Unity Health Toronto, with input from scientists at the University of Toronto and SickKids' Family Advisory Network, the recommendations include important topics such as screening, hand hygiene, physical distancing, use of non-medical masks, and more.

SCIENTIFIC, STATISTICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS FOR ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL REOPENING

Multiple reports from around the world indicate that children account for less than 5-10% of infections. In California, according to the California Dept. of Public Health, of 200,461 COVID-19 cases reported as of June 25th, 11,985 (6.00%) were in children aged 5-17 years. There have been 0 reported deaths due to COVID-19 in California for ages 0-17. Children are less susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection and may be less likely to transmit the virus to others. There is also strong evidence that the majority of children who become infected are either asymptomatic or have only mild symptoms, such as cough, fever, and sore throat. While serious

disease requiring hospitalization is known in children, including multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), this is relatively rare and is generally treatable. Severe disease requiring intensive care admission occurs in a small minority of pediatric cases, particularly among those with certain underlying medical conditions, but the clinical course is much less severe than in adults and deaths are non-existent in California. Again, there have been no pediatric or minor children deaths ages 0-17 reported in California as of June 25, 2020.

The community based public health measures (national lockdown, school closures, stay at home orders, self-isolation etc.) implemented to mitigate COVID-19 and "flatten the curve" have significant adverse health and welfare consequences for children. Some of these unintended consequences include decreased vaccination coverage, delayed diagnosis and care for non-COVID-19 related medical conditions, and adverse impact on children's behavior and mental health. Increased rates of depression, trauma, drug abuse and addiction and even suicide can be anticipated. Several organizations including the American Psychological Association (APA) and World Health

Organization have highlighted concerns about the potential impact of lockdown on family discord, exposure to domestic violence, child abuse and neglect. **Thus, the impetus to reopening schools is to optimize the health and welfare of children, not for the purposes of allowing parents to get back into the workforce or to facilitate re-opening of the economy.** As mentioned, it is critical that we balance the risks of COVID-19 in children, which appear to be minimal, with the harms of school closure which is impacting their physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health. It should be recognized that it will not be possible to remove all risk of infection and disease now that SARS-CoV-2 is well established in many communities. Mitigation of risk, while easing restrictions, will be needed for the foreseeable future.

Return to school has always been associated with increases in cases of community-associated seasonal respiratory viral infections. As a result, it is anticipated that there will likely be an increase in cases of COVID-19 upon the resumption of school and as such, the appropriate measures should be proactively put in place to mitigate the effects of such an increase. This includes the need for readily available testing and contact tracing support, which is critical to avoid outbreaks. Consistency is essential for our students and it will be important to ensure that once children return to school, our schools stay open to the extent possible. Furthermore, children rely on structure and schedule for stability, which supports the need for a daily school model.

ONGOING MONITORING OF OUR PLAN

Abiding Savior Lutheran School recognizes that COVID-19 is constantly changing and has assembled a team that will meet on a regular basis to monitor outbreaks within the school, the families we serve, and our community. This team is made up of the school administrator, a Leadership board member, 2 teachers, 2 parent representatives and 2 staff members. They make recommendations to the administration for any alterations that may be needed.

This team will follow the key principles as outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- School policies must be flexible and nimble in responding to new information, and administrators must

be willing to refine approaches when specific policies are not working.

- It is critically important to develop strategies that can be revised and adapted depending on the level of viral transmission in the school and throughout the community and done with close communication with state and/or local public health authorities and recognizing the differences between school districts, including urban, suburban, and rural districts.
- Policies should be practical, feasible, and appropriate for child and adolescent's developmental stage.
- Special considerations and accommodations to account for the diversity of youth should be made, especially for our vulnerable populations, including those who are medically fragile, live in poverty, have developmental challenges, or have special health care needs or disabilities, with the goal of safe return to school.
- No child or adolescent should be excluded from school unless required in order to adhere to local public health mandates or because of unique medical needs. Pediatricians, families, and schools should partner together to collaboratively identify and develop accommodations, when needed.
- School policies should be guided by supporting the overall health and well-being of all children, adolescents, their families, and their communities. These policies should be consistently communicated in languages other than English, if needed, based on the languages spoken in the community, to avoid marginalization of parents/guardians who are of limited English proficiency or do not speak English at all.

Any questions or comments that you have can be directed to COVIDteam@abidingsavior.com.

THE FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY

While medical experts agree that the risk to the individual child is very low and reasonable precautions are being taken, there is risk that a child could become infected while attending Abiding Savior Lutheran School and infect others.

No one knows the interactions of their child better than the parents. We are asking that the parents make the ultimate decision and accept the responsibility that enrolling their child at Abiding Savior Lutheran School is appropriate. Please prayerfully consider whether or not you would like to have your child attend our school and that the steps that we are taking as a community are in the best interest of your family.

ABIDING SAVIOR'S 12 STEP PLAN FOR REOPENING

The following summarizes our current plan for school reopening based on the available evidence as well as expert opinion, organized into the categories below:

1. Screening to prevent symptomatic individuals from entering the school
2. Hand hygiene
3. Non-Medical and Medical Face Masks for Children
4. Physical Distancing
5. Grouping
6. Environmental Cleaning
7. Ventilation
8. Mitigation of Risk for Students at Higher Risk for Severe Disease

9. Special Considerations for Children and Youth with Medical and/or Behavioral Complexities
10. Mental Health Awareness and Support for Children
11. Protection of Staff and at-risk Persons or Families
12. Communicating about COVID-19 to Children, Youth and Parents/Caregivers

Adopted from the University of Toronto, Hospital for Sick Kids

1. SCREENING TO PREVENT SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS FROM ENTERING THE SCHOOL

In order to prevent the spread of infection, students, teachers and other employees who have signs/ symptoms of COVID-19 (according to CDC, California DPH and local Public Health guidance) should stay home and decisions about testing and return to school should be guided by CDC and California DPH in consultation with local Public Health protocols. In addition, return to school decisions for those who have had an exposure to SARS-Cov-2 should be in accordance with local Public Health recommendations.

Abiding Savior Lutheran School hereby states and implements a strict exclusion policy for symptomatic students and employees. Teachers and administrators have provided information and training on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in children so that appropriate action can be taken if children develop symptoms during the day. Teachers have been trained in all areas of symptoms, hygiene, physical distancing, movement on campus, cleaning and room set-up.

Parents are given information on signs and symptoms. The re-opening plan and all potential options have been emailed to parents. Signage has been placed throughout the campus to alert parents on signs, symptoms, and responsibilities. Parents and caregivers are ultimately responsible for the screening of their children, daily, at home, prior to entering campus. A checklist will be provided, as requested, for them to do daily screening before arriving at school to clear for entry. Parents must keep their children home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms: have a fever (100.4 or higher), coughing, difficulty breathing, sore throat, chills, muscle aches, or loss of taste or smell, vomiting for any reason, excessive sneezing, or uncharacteristic lethargy.

Samantha Fitt is the person in our office that monitors the health records and communicates with the OCHCA. She is also responsible for notifying parents of any health alerts. Teachers will be taking attendance and schedules of groups have been put in place to aide in tracing and identifying contacts. Our school office has record of attendance, schedules and groupings. All COVID-19 positive tests or known close contacts of cases in students or staff are reported to the Health Care Agency(within one business today) by calling the COVID Schools Response Team through the Orange County Health Referral Line.

Teachers will commit to self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms, including temperature checks daily. Teachers and staff who have been exposed to COVID-19 will be sent for testing and remain in quarantine until negative result.

Triggers for switching to Distance Learning:

Virtual learning or other forms of structured learning may be implemented on an as-needed basis for children who are required to stay home because they are sick or in isolation due to COVID-19 infection or exposure.

Abiding Savior Lutheran School will identify and implement available options for students who have limited internet availability or other barriers to online learning. Abiding Savior is prepared to switch to online learning in the event of a 5% COVID-19 case count or if the local health officer deems a school closure necessary according to CDPH.

COVID-19 Testing is available for people with insurance through their primary care physician. https://occovid10.ochealthinfo.com/testing-resources-orangecounty
Information about the availability of COVID-19 testing at the Orange County COVID-10 Super Site for Orange County residents at no-cost for people who meet Public Health priorities for testing (symptomatic or close contacts) and cannot get a test through their medical provider. https://occovid19.ochealthinfo.com/supersite

COVID-19 testing(symptomatic only) is available through the Orange County COVID-19 Testing Network . https://occovid19.ochealthinfo.com/oc-covid-19-testing-network-those-symptoms

COVID-19 Testing Locations Map https://occovid19.cohealthinfo.com/covid-19-testing-locations-map

2. HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES

SARS-Cov-2 and other respiratory viruses are almost exclusively spread by respiratory droplet transmission. As a result, and because virus shedding may occur prior to symptom onset or in the absence of symptoms, routine, frequent and proper hand hygiene (soap and water or hand sanitizer) is critical to limit transmission. In fact, proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of most respiratory viruses including SARS-CoV-2, particularly during the pre- symptomatic phase of illness.

Students will be taught how to clean their hands properly (with age appropriate material) and to try and avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible. This should be done in a non-judgmental and positive manner. Students who have symptoms of a respiratory tract infection should stay home and students should be reminded to sneeze or cough into their elbow/sleeve.

Age-appropriate signage is placed at Abiding Savior Lutheran School to remind students to perform hand hygiene. A regular schedule for routine hand hygiene, above and beyond what is usually recommended (before eating food, after using the washroom etc.) will be encouraged. Possible options would be to have regularly scheduled hand hygiene breaks based on a pre-specified schedule (for example, scheduling a minimum of 5 times during the day). For practical reasons and to avoid excess traffic in the hallways, the preferred strategy for these extra hand hygiene moments would be hand sanitizer unless sinks are readily available in the classroom.

Access to hand hygiene facilities (hand sanitizer dispensers and sinks/soap) is critical with consideration for ensuring accessibility for those with disabilities or other accommodation needs. Hand sanitizer (60-90% USP grade alcohol, not technical grade alcohol) will be available at the entry point for each classroom. Adequate resources and a replenishment process will be implemented to ensure supplies are available to perform hand hygiene frequently. Liquid soap and hand sanitizer will be replenished and tissues available for drying. No-touch waste receptacles will be available for disposal of materials.

3. NON-MEDICAL AND MEDICAL FACE MASKS FOR CHILDREN

Non-medical masks may reduce transmission from individuals who are shedding the virus. However, the extent of this benefit is unknown (especially in children) and would only be potentially beneficial if done properly. Accordingly, Abiding Savior Lutheran School will comply with civil authority in regard to the use of face coverings for children and adults. As of July 17, 2020, the state of California mandates masks for all children in grades 3-12. Face coverings are recommended, but not required, for students in grades 2 and under. All school personnel will wear masks and/or clear shields.
The following procedures will be implemented to support students and staff in adhering to this policy:

- Children will have breaks from wearing masks throughout the school day. Masks are not required for outdoor play, while eating, or during rest times. During these times students will store their masks in a clean paper bag.
- Families will provide clean reusable masks for their children. The school will provide disposable masks if a student's mask becomes lost or soiled during the school day.
- Children who cannot tolerate masks due to a health condition can receive a waiver from the policy from their doctor.
- All staff will use cloth face coverings and/or clear face shields.
- All parents will wear masks while on campus.

4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING

The objective of physical distancing is to reduce the likelihood of contact that may lead to transmission and has been a widely used strategy during the pandemic. Physical distancing will be encouraged as much as is practically possible.

When students are in the classroom, to the extent possible, Abiding Savior Lutheran School will arrange the classroom furniture to leave as much space as possible between students. Smaller class sizes will aid in physical distancing. Student supplies will be kept in separate containers.

Attention and implementation has been given to any congestion spots on the campus and create one-way traffic patterns, especially on the stairwells. We have 3 entrance and exit areas for parents. Kindergarten parents are asked to park in the lot on the corner of Whistler and Frontage Road and enter through that gate. Parents in grades 3, 4, and 5 are asked to park in the back lot and use gate by the 3rd grade room. All other grades are asked to park in the main lot and enter by the gym. Please follow the one-way markers on the concrete. Parents are encouraged to use the morning drop-offline. Physical distancing spots have been put on the concrete for students to wait for their rides in the afternoon. Recess and lunch periods are scheduled to minimize traffic congestion and passing periods.

When weather permits, consideration will be given to having classes outside.

Large gatherings/assemblies will not take place for the immediate future.

Lunch breaks and recess times will be staggered. Hand hygiene will be performed prior to and after lunch

breaks, and as weather permits, lunch breaks will take place outside.

Students will be required to perform hand hygiene prior to sports activities/outdoor play/playground use. Sports and physical education classes will take place as per past Abiding Savior practice. Sports equipment (e.g. balls, hockey sticks etc.) will be cleaned at the conclusion of the activity or not be used for 72 hours. Abiding Savior will endeavor to offer as many of their usual sports, clubs and activities as possible. Locker rooms will be temporarily closed, and students will not be required to dress out for Physical Education Classes.

5. GROUPING

The purpose of grouping is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that if a child or employee develops infection, the number of exposures would be reduced. However, grouping should not be done in a manner that compromises daily school attendance or alters the curriculum options available to children.

To the extent possible, students will stay with the same class group and there is less mixing between classes and years. This applies to both indoor as well as selected outdoor activities. This applies to both indoor as well as selected outdoor activities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING

Detailed policies are beyond the scope of this document. In brief, SARS-CoV-2 has been detected on a variety or surfaces, and it is possible that infection can be transmitted by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching mucous membranes (i.e. mouth, nose, eyes). As a matter of utmost importance, Abiding Savior Lutheran School has high quality, reputable cleaning and sanitization services to provide deep, thorough cleaning of the school immediately prior to the first day of school, and to thereafter regularly sanitize the school to mitigate the possibility of transmission of infection on school surfaces. Disposable disinfectant wipes will be readily available so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by individuals before each use by teachers and/or older students.

A regular cleaning schedule will be used throughout the school year with emphasis on high touch surfaces. Maximum efforts will be made to reduce the need to touch objects/doors (no-touch waste containers, prop doors open), and teachers and staff will regularly reinforce “no sharing” of food, water bottles or cutlery policies. To the greatest extent possible, classroom materials and equipment will be made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected. Outdoor tables and playground equipment will be cleaned on a regular basis.

7. VENTILATION

Detailed recommendations are beyond the scope of this document. In brief, it is expected that environmental conditions and airflow influence the transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2. Adequately ventilated classroom environments (e.g. open doors with air flow, and improved airflow through ventilation systems) are expected to be associated with less likelihood of transmission compared with poorly ventilated settings. Abiding Savior Lutheran School will, prior to the first day of school, engage professionals to provide a comprehensive inspection of ventilation systems, and make recommendations for improvement to maximum safety guidelines, and to improve and optimize classroom ventilation. Abiding Savior is committed to increasing the proportion of

outside air brought in through these systems, where possible, and to the use of outdoors or environments with improved ventilation (e.g. keeping doors open, weather permitting).

8. MITIGATION OF RISK FOR STUDENTS AT HIGHER RISK FOR SEVERE DISEASE

Some children may be at higher risk of adverse outcome from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions such as immunocompromised states or chronic medical conditions such as cardiac and lung disorders. Children and youth who are medically complex, particularly those with medical technological supports associated with developmental disabilities and/or genetic anomalies, are also in a potentially higher risk category. However, at the present time, there is no convincing evidence to suggest the level of medical risk to these children from SARS-CoV-2 is different from that posed by other respiratory viruses, such as influenza. As a result, given the unintended consequences associated with not attending school, attending school is recommended for the majority of these children. (For more details pertaining specifically to medically and behaviorally complex children and youth, see section 9 below)

Students with underlying conditions may attend school as they would per usual. However, it is important for parents to work with their child's health-care providers so that an informed decision can be made. This is particularly relevant for children with newly diagnosed illnesses requiring the first-time use of new or augmented immunosuppression. In the event that such children have a documented exposure to the virus, in addition to involvement of the local public health unit, it is recommended that the child's parent/caregiver(s) contact the child's health-care provider for further management.

9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH WITH MEDICAL AND/OR BEHAVIORAL DIAGNOSIS

Return to school will present unique challenges to children and youth with medical and/or behavioral complexities and their families. Many of these families have had a prolonged period of time in home isolation compounded by a lack of respite and/or homecare supports. Transitioning medically and behaviorally complex children back to school requires specific focus and will be extremely important as many families are already in crisis mode.

Abiding Savior will liaise with parents to accommodate a more individualized return to school to ensure smoother transitions to ensure that those families who choose to not send their children to school receive remote learning opportunities and do not lose access to home care and respite supports. Abiding Savior will make accommodation where reasonable and appropriate to ensure that students continue to receive access to therapy and nursing services while in the school. In appropriate circumstances, and where reasonable and necessary, Abiding Savior may provide environmental (e.g. smaller class size) and classroom supports (e.g. teacher aides) for those children who may need assistance with hygiene measures, such as some children with behavioral/developmental disorders.

10. MENTAL HEA LTH AWARENESS AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

Abiding Savior Lutheran School will make efforts to address known sources of distress and extend flexibility within existing administrative processes. For example, many children enrolled in transition years, grades 5/6, 8, and 12, during the 2019-2020 school year were required to make decisions regarding special education

programs, school registration, or other specific educational programming in the absence of usual sources of information, including school visits or meetings. Efforts will be made to allow program flexibility in this regard during the first months of the school year, in the event that children and parents realize they have made an incorrect program or school choice. It can be anticipated that rigidity would likely lead to increased stress, anxiety, depression and school refusal that could be otherwise avoided. Similarly, children can be anticipated to return to school at diverse academic levels even within a classroom. It will be critical to provide opportunities for early identification of learning needs and academic support to ensure that children neither become overwhelmed nor bored in the school setting, as these are frequent antecedents to school refusal and mental health problems. For children who may find the new school environment particularly challenging, such as some children with developmental disabilities, extra supports will be needed. Consultation with their parents and families to better understand their individual circumstances and needs is recommended. It can be anticipated that children and youth may experience increased stress and anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, children and youth may have mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression, and substance abuse, which may have been exacerbated by social distancing, including school closures, and may experience symptom escalation on return to school.

Abiding Savior will make an effort to be flexible throughout the 2020-2021 school year in program and/or school enrollment to provide for children and youth who have transitioned to a new program or school for the 2020/2021 school year. Increased in-school educational support may be provided to students and classroom teachers to enable early identification and remediation of learning gaps that some students will have incurred during the school closures.

11. PROTECTION OF STAFF AND AT-RISK PERSONS OR FAMILIES

While detailed recommendations are beyond the scope of this document, the safety of the school staff is an important consideration. Risk mitigation for teachers and other staff will be similar to those recommended for other public settings. With regards to children's home environment, it would be appropriate to consider that the risk posed by potentially infected children to other household members likely varies in relation to socioeconomic status, household overcrowding and the presence of children and adults at increased risk of severe COVID-19 at home.

Physical distancing of school staff from children and other staff will be emphasized and practiced as much as reasonably possible.

Parent volunteers will be kept to a minimum and will need to be approved by the school office. Parents should drop of children at the school gate or drop-off line. Parents entering the school grounds will need to stop at the church office and be screened before entering.

12. COMMUNICATING ABOUT COVID-19 TO CHILDREN, YOUTH AND PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

A detailed communication strategy is beyond the scope of this document. However, it is acknowledged that clear, age-appropriate communication about COVID-19 and what to expect when children and youth return to school should occur in advance of school reopening. In addition, it will be important that regular updates be provided to children and their parents/caregivers throughout the school year through our Gradelink email and Abiding Savior

App.

Parents, children, youth and the community at large should be educated that SARS-CoV-2 is likely to persist and circulate like other respiratory viruses. They should be made aware that in general, SARS-CoV-2 causes mild disease in the majority of children and young adults and that the best overall strategy for these cohorts and the population at large, taking into account the massive secondary adverse health and well-being implication of the lockdown, is to ease restrictions and return to school.

SUMMARY

This document provides guidance surrounding the reopening Abiding Savior Lutheran School as it relates to the measures to mitigate risks. As discussed, the risks of infection and transmission in children, which appear to be minimal, need to be balanced with the harms of school closure which is impacting their spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental health.

On balance, it is recommended that children return to school and that the messaging around this clearly articulate the rationale for the recommendations outlined in this document in order to help reduce the fear and anxiety in parents, children and school staff. In our view, a daily school model is best as it allows for consistency, stability, and equity regardless of the region in which children live. An important factor to consider in this respect is emerging evidence indicating inequalities in the social and economic burden of COVID-19, which may further disadvantage children living in higher burden areas where educational inequality and barriers to online learning may be more pronounced. In addition, we appreciate that the living conditions for children vary across socioeconomic groups and therefore recommend that further work be done to develop guidance and identify supports needed for situations where children reside within the same home as individuals with underlying conditions that put them at increased risk of more severe disease.

Finally, it is important to note that these recommendations reflect the evidence available at the present time and may evolve as new evidence emerges and as information is gathered from other jurisdictions that have opened schools already.

REFERENCES (partial):

- Association of Christian Schools International
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- University of Toronto, The Hospital for Sick Kids
- ChurchWest Insurance Services
- Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company
- Church & Tax Law
- National Association of Independent Schools
- Western Association of School and Colleges
- California State Department of Education
- California State Department of Public Health
- Center for Disease Control