



# Atonement Academy Health, Safety, and Emergency Plan (Approved August 2020)

## COVID-19 Policy for 2020-2021

The leadership of Atonement Academy has researched and considered local, state, and national guidelines as well as the needs of our school families as we formulated plans for re-opening in the fall. The American Academy of Pediatrics (link [here](#)) says the following after providing some general principles to keep in mind: “the AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school.” We plan to offer a hybrid model program, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am - 3 pm, with appropriate plans in place to create a safe learning environment for everyone. This policy document is subject to change and will remain in effect until further notice.

### **General Principles & Plans**

As a parish hybrid school for students enrolled in a home education program, we are intentionally smaller than most private or public schools. Atonement Academy’s total student population will not exceed 20 students this year. We have a variety of spaces available for us to use in order to facilitate social distancing. Our students already operate in a cohort-style that many schools are now forming as a result of the pandemic. These are all helpful attributes during a pandemic, because they automatically reduce some of the risk involved with running an educational program. However, we will still take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of our students, parents, and staff, particularly for the sake of those most vulnerable to this disease.

### **Arrival & Departure**

- **Parents will self-certify that they and their children are free of COVID-19 symptoms each day.** We will use [guidelines](#) from the nearby Montgomery County Department of Health to determine when a student should be excluded from school and the duration of that exclusion. Parents should carefully study the matrix found at the link. Students who are sick or showing certain symptoms or combinations of symptoms should

stay home. We have implemented generous attendance and make-up work policies for this year. Parents are asked to stay in touch with us by sending us an email whenever their child is absent from school for any reason.

- **Students are required to arrive wearing an appropriate cloth mask that covers the nose and mouth.** A mask is the only type of face covering we will allow (no face shields, bandanas, or “gator”-style coverings). Masks should be nice-looking, fit well, and be a solid color.
- **Upon arrival, students will report to an assigned staff member, who will screen them for symptoms.** Parents who are dropping off their children are asked to remain until notified that their child has passed this screening process. For students arriving by public transportation who fail the screening process, they will be isolated and a parent contacted if the school determines that they should be excluded. Parents are asked to ensure that we have up-to-date contact information for several people who are authorized to pick up their child in case of an emergency, including showing symptoms.
- Parents will not generally be allowed to enter the building, but when allowed to do so, they should wear a mask or other face covering.
- Students will wear a mask when departing at the end of the school day until they enter their vehicle or until they arrive home if riding public transportation.
- The school may require parents or students to submit results of a COVID-19 test.

### **During the School Day**

- Atonement Academy will follow the mask mandate as published by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and follow appropriate social distancing throughout the day.
- Per the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health’s [guidance](#), students will be allowed to remove their mask during the school day when able to socially distance 6 feet and when eating or drinking.
- When teaching from a socially-distanced position at the front of the classroom, teachers are not required to mask. If they move throughout the classroom in close proximity to students, they are expected to mask.
- Desks/seats will be 6-feet apart.
- Students will generally stay in their seats when indoors and not move around classrooms or intermingle with other students from other classes. Students are prohibited from touching each other or shaking hands.
- Common use areas, such as the lunchroom, and high touch surfaces will be cleaned more frequently.
- During meals, reasonable social distancing will be maintained.
- Each student will have their own set of supplies with them at their desks, so that they do not have to share supplies with other students or use common objects.

- Frequent handwashing and good hygiene practices are essential, including the 20 second rule of handwashing and coughing/sneezing into kleenex, clothing, or elbows rather than hands. Parents should reinforce these by teaching them and practicing them at home. School staff will also teach and practice these.
- Bathroom use will be limited generally to one person per bathroom at a time.
- Hand sanitizer, soap, paper towels, and kleenex will be appropriately available throughout the school day.
- Classrooms and indoor areas will be ventilated more frequently.
- P.E. & recess (if implemented later in the year) will only occur outdoors, and contact sports will be avoided unless students are wearing masks.
- When weather prohibits outdoor activities, indoor recess will consist of board games, puzzles, or art, including appropriate masking and distancing.
- During morning chapel in the sanctuary, chapel, or classroom, students will be assigned a seat and will follow social distancing and masking guidelines. Singing will only be allowed when students are masked. Students will be prohibited from sharing books.

### **Visitors & School Gatherings**

- Parents needing to drop off any items for a student need to communicate first with an appropriate staff person. They should wear a mask when coming to the school.
- Extended-stay visitors will follow the same general guidelines as instructed by staff. This applies to parent volunteers, prospective families, guests touring the school, students shadowing a class, or similar types of occasional visitors.
- The school will determine and communicate the maximum number of guests allowed for any school gatherings, such as recitations and commencement, to ensure compliance with social distancing and masking guidelines. The school may require an invitation for attendance. The school will require guests to follow appropriate guidelines.

### **Contingencies**

- The school may choose to exclude other students who are in the same class with a student who becomes infected with COVID-19. We do not plan to close the entire school if this happens, since we are taking appropriate steps to mitigate and reduce the spread of infection.
- In the event that our school is closed by an appropriate government official for infection control purposes, we will notify parents of our plans for educational continuity through online, distance learning.

## Emergency Plans

- Atonement Academy's total student population will not exceed 20 students during the 2020-2021 academic year. Multi-grade "cohorts" of students stay with one or two teachers throughout the school day. There are no "passing periods" during which students generally wander around the school. This helps to ensure **accountability** of every student at all times.
- **Fire Evacuation** Instructions are posted throughout the building. In the event of a fire or drill, teachers will lead their students to the designated rally point outside the school. Teachers, students, and staff will conduct drills to teach students what to do in case of a fire.
- Teachers, students, and staff will conduct "**lockdown**" and "**lockout**" drills and receive training on what to do in the event of an emergency of this nature. All outside doors will be kept locked, and students will not open outside doors for strangers. Visitors will be directed to the doorbell outside the school office when they need access to the school.
- **Inclement Weather** drills and training will also be provided. In the case of a hurricane or tornado, students will be directed to a designated basement room.