

2020-21 School Year FAQs

Thanks to the overwhelming response from our “Return to School” Survey and consultations with health professionals within our community, Augustine Christian Academy has used all available data to develop the following guidelines for the 2020-21 School Year.

We have been guided by our founding principle that our school operates as an extension of the family under the assumption that parents have the primary voice in a child’s education. Therefore, ACA Staff and Administration, while complying with the Tulsa City Ordinance, will support each family’s decision regarding face coverings/masks for their child during the 2020-21 School Year or until the mandate has been lifted. No student will be shunned or criticized for any extent of health protocols they take to make themselves feel comfortable and safe.

Please note that any future mandates or closures set by city, state, or federal governments could alter information in this document. We will continue to monitor the science and statistics surrounding COVID-19 and will keep you informed of any necessary changes.

Please carefully review the following information and do not hesitate to reach out to the ACA Administration at any time.

Q: Has the first day of school changed?

A: Yes. Augustine Christian Academy has pushed the start date for the scholastic calendar to begin Friday, August 28th, for a half-day orientation. Regular, all-day instruction will begin Monday, August 31st.

Q: Has the school day schedule changed for the 2020-21 school year?

A: No. School is in session from 8:00-3:15, Monday-Friday. The secondary class schedule has changed to include 4 classes on M/W/F and 3 classes on T/TH. This revised schedule can be found on our website.

Q: Will the school host “Meet the Teacher” events?

A: Yes. Two “Meet the Teacher” nights are scheduled for August 24th and 25th. Families are not required to attend but we have scheduled these events for families that have requested an opportunity for students to visit classrooms before the start of school.

Q: Will the school offer the Extended Day program?

A: No. Due to financial constraints, Augustine Christian Academy has suspended the Extended Day program for the 2020-21 school year.

Q: What is meant by “ACA Cyber School”

A: In the spring of 2020, classes were abruptly halted due to COVID-19. If we have any disruption to the 2020-21 school year, instruction will shift to ACA Cyber School. ACA Cyber School utilizes Gradenet and G Suite (Google for Education) to communicate assignments and instruction. We hope ACA Cyber School is not necessary for 2020-21, but we are prepared to press forward with full teaching online, if it becomes necessary, so that our students are able to continue learning.

Q: If school has to be shut down for health reasons, how will this be communicated?

A: Augustine Christian Academy will try to give as much notice as possible. We will use the S.A.F.E application, available on most Smartphones, to communicate all critical, time-sensitive messages. Delays or closings may be due to health concerns, but may also be caused by inclement weather, power outages or municipal problems (such as a water main break) that may adversely impact day to day operations of the school. We will still utilize the message boards on local television stations, but S.A.F.E. is immediate and very specific to critical information that we need you to know.

Q: If school has to be shut down for health reasons, how long will school be closed?

A: There is no way to predict the length of time that school would be shut down. Our goal is to keep school in session for the entire school year. We would remain closed until it was deemed safe to re-open our school.

Q: Will there be any Cyber School days built into the school calendar?

A: Yes, there will be one day built into the school calendar. That day is September 21st. We are sharing this now so parents can have ample time to plan. This will be a day when students learn from home rather than on campus. The goal of this day is for students and teachers to become familiar with ACA Cyber School, even though we hope it is not needed for the 2020-21 school year. However, during the 2019-20 school year, ACA closed due to inclement weather and an electrical issue. ACA Cyber School days may be implemented for reasons other than health concerns. As such, we want the ACA community prepared to continue teaching and learning through Cyber School.

For students in the Schools of Dialectic and Rhetoric, all four classes will be represented in cyber form with reasonable expectations and assignments. For Grammar school students, the classroom teacher will provide lessons. Assignments will be available outside standard classroom hours to support a variety of family schedules. This ACA Cyber School day will be the equivalent of a day of learning in the classroom and will not result in added days to the school calendar.

Q: Will Augustine Christian Academy offer full-time online classes as an alternative to classroom instruction?

A: We have two cyber-hybrid classes planned for the school year. We will be offering a Poetry class as well as a Logic class, both being taught by Mr. Post. Other than those two classes, unless we transition to ACA Cyber School, all classes will be offered on campus. For more information about our part-time option for homeschool families, please visit the Home School Option page on our website at acatulsa.org.

Q: What steps will the ACA Administration take to keep the school as safe as possible?

A: Augustine Christian Academy will make every effort to promote healthy practices and protocols in our school. We will have enhanced daily cleaning protocols, and distancing will be practiced to the extent possible. Frequent hand-washing and other healthy protocols will be modeled by adults and encouraged for students. Additionally, hand sanitizer, hand sanitizing stations, and physician-recommended HEPA air purifier units will be present throughout the school buildings. ACA Staff will provide increased supervision during class breaks and passing periods to encourage social distancing amongst students.

Q: Will drop-off and pick-up routines be adjusted?

A: Augustine Christian Academy maintains a student drop-off and pick-up location on the south side of the main building. In order to limit the number of people in the building, we highly encourage parents to utilize this drop-off and pick-up location. However, if a parent would like to walk their child to the building, we ask that the parent stay within the front lobby area. This will, again, limit the number of people within the building.

Q: Will students in the Schools of Dialectic and Rhetoric be sharing technology such as Chromebooks?

A: Yes. Augustine Christian Academy will be implementing additional cleaning protocols for all shared devices. However, we are encouraging families to provide students with their own laptop or Chromebook if they do not wish to share devices.

Q: How will social distancing occur in school?

A: It is difficult to consistently maintain distance between students. Every effort will be made to reduce close contact among students in the classroom, as well as in common areas such as hallways, restrooms, and in the Great Room, ACA's common room. Teachers will be encouraged to space student desks and chairs as much as possible and to reduce activities that require close contact between students. For the 2020-2021 School Year, lockers will *not* be utilized in order to minimize high-traffic areas. In addition, social distancing protocols will be implemented by assigning groups of students to different designated areas of the school during breaks and lunch which will keep congestion to a minimum.

Q: Will wearing face coverings/masks be mandatory for students to attend school?

A: On September 30, 2020, the Tulsa City Council approved a citywide addendum to the original mask ordinance that has lowered the age requirement for those who are required to wear a mask from ages 18 and over to ages 10 and over ([Source](#)). As a result, all persons, aged 10 and over, are now being asked to wear a face mask while in school buildings. Masks are not required while outside.

We recognize that some of our students will be exempt from this updated ordinance. An exemption form is available for parents to sign in the Front Office. We are asking that families ensure their student has a face covering for use while in school or have an exemption form on file.

ACA has provided each student with an ACA face mask. Along with encouraging social-distancing, ACA highly recommends that students utilize their provided face masks when outside the classroom. However, as stated in the “Who We Are” section on our website, our school operates as an extension of the family under the assumption that parents have the primary voice in a child’s education. Therefore, ACA Staff and Administration, while complying with the Tulsa City Ordinance, will support each family’s decision regarding face coverings/masks for their child during the 2020-21 School Year or until the mandate has been lifted. No student will be shunned or criticized for any extent of health protocols they take to make themselves feel comfortable and safe.

Q: Will wearing face coverings/masks be mandatory for staff and students age 18 and older?

A: On September 30, 2020, the Tulsa City Council approved a citywide addendum to the original mask ordinance that has lowered the age requirement for those who are required to wear a mask from ages 18 and over to ages 10 and over ([Source](#)). As a result, all persons, aged 10 and over, are now being asked to wear a face mask while in school buildings. Masks are not required while outside.

Q: Will a certain type of mask be required?

A: Due to the mask ordinance being amended on September 30, 2020, ACA has expanded students' mask options to include more unique styles and colors. As long as the mask is in the spirit of the dress code (not extreme or in questionable taste), it will be allowed.

Q: What steps can families take to keep school as safe as possible?

A: We ask that parents check their children’s health status at home every morning. Please use the self-check list below.

By sending your child to school, you are representing to Augustine Christian Academy that the answer to each of these questions is “no”.

1. Does your child have a fever of 100 degrees or more?
2. Is your child experiencing a new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea?
3. Is your child abnormally experiencing two or more of the following symptoms?
 - Chills
 - Cough
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
4. Is your child experiencing ANY of the Emergency Warning Symptoms of COVID-19?
 - Shortness of breath
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion
 - Inability to wake or stay awake
 - Bluish lips or face
5. Has your child had, or do you think your child has, COVID-19?
6. Has your child tested positive for COVID-19?
7. Has your child been around a person with COVID-19?

Q: Will staff members be taking these same protocols?

A: Yes. Augustine Christian Academy is requesting that every employee ask these same questions of themselves before leaving home each day.

Q: How can I remember all of the steps for my students regarding when to stay home and when the student can return to school?

A: Augustine Christian Academy will provide a reference page for parents that you can print or keep on your phone.

Q: Will students have their temperature taken before entry to school is permitted?

A: No. Parents checking temperatures at home is more practical and, with the parents' help, children would not even come to school if they are running a fever. However, if a student begins to feel unwell during the school day, we will take their temperature to help determine if they are feeling poorly enough to require a call to their parents or be sent home.

Q: Will parents be notified if their child has come in direct physical contact or close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

A: Yes, if a child has been in direct physical contact or close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, the parents will be notified. "Direct physical contact or close contact" is defined as a student being in the same classroom and/or House as the individual who has tested positive. In the event of a positive COVID-19 test by an individual on campus, the ACA Administration will work closely with the individual to identify anyone with whom they may have had direct physical contact or close contact with and notify individuals as necessary. Students or staff who have come in direct contact or close contact with an individual on campus who has tested positive will not be required to quarantine. We will, however, ask that families exercise caution and seek guidance from their own primary care physician to determine the best course of action. In addition, no student or staff member will be shunned or criticized for any extent of health protocols they take to make themselves feel comfortable and safe.

Q: Will an individual (student or staff) be required to quarantine themselves if they have come in direct physical contact or close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

A: No. Students or staff who have come in direct contact or close contact with an individual on campus who has tested positive will not be required to quarantine. We will, however, ask that families exercise caution and seek guidance from their own primary care physician to determine the best course of action. In addition, no student or staff member will be shunned or criticized for any extent of health protocols they take to make themselves feel comfortable and safe.

Q: Will parents be notified if anyone in the school has tested positive for COVID-19?

A: No. Parents will be notified if their child has come in direct physical contact or close contact with someone who has tested positive, but parents will not be notified if there is no direct physical contact or close contact with a person testing positive.

Q: Should a parent notify the school if their child or someone in their family tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Yes. The child should not return to school and the parent should notify the Headmaster or Dean of Students. The child may return to school when deemed safe to do so by the family's primary care physician, and a note from a physician will need to be provided to front office staff stating that the child can resume school activities. In addition, please do not send your child to school if their COVID-19 test is pending.

Q: What if my child misses school due to illness or possible contact with someone with COVID-19?

A: Students who are ill or suspect they are ill should remain at home. Augustine Christian Academy will work with parents to support students during periods of absences when families are working to support their child's health and the health of others. ACA will not penalize students for absences during the 2020-21 School Year.

Q: Will activities (field trips, chapels, concerts, etc.) be held in the fall semester?

A: Our primary focus right now is making every effort for school to be in session for the 2020-21 school year and to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. Determinations about activities will be made as we enter each phase of the school year.

Q: Will the school be offering lunch to students for 2020-21?

A: Yes. We have worked with our vendors to create a menu of individually pre-packaged meals, following CDC health protocols for the safety of our students.

Q: How will parents receive updates and information throughout the school year?

A: General communication from the school and administration will come through a weekly email known as The Charger Newsletter. This is a critical tool with which we communicate all things of importance to our families. Please make it a point to read this newsletter weekly to stay on top of important information and events. Families will be added to the Charger Newsletter during the enrollment process. We also utilize the S.A.F.E application, available on most Smartphones, to communicate all critical, time-sensitive messages such as school delays or closings due to health concerns, inclement weather, power outages or municipal problems, such as a water main break, that may adversely impact day to day operations of the school. We will still utilize the message boards on local television stations, but S.A.F.E. is immediate and very specific to critical information that we need you to know.

Q: If I have a question that hasn't been answered here, what do I do?

A: If, after reading these FAQs, you still have questions please feel free to email Mr. John Ahrens, Headmaster, at ahrensj@acatulsa.org or call 918-832-4600.