

July 15, 2020

Dear Punxsutawney Christian School Parents, Students, and Community:

PCS would first like to thank all of you who have been so supportive and patient, not only through this pandemic situation, but also through the time of transition our school is experiencing. These are trying times indeed, but we are pressing on. As 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 states, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed," so we as a school are trusting in Christ as our strength.

We want to make sure that everybody is informed as to how PCS plans to open in the fall. One thing we ask is that you be patient and understanding, knowing that not all of the decisions are under our control at this time. Our biggest concerns are: 1) Giving our students the absolute best educational experience possible; and 2) Making sure that our school can remain open as a light in the community for years to come. With this in mind, we ask that you keep PCS in prayer and uphold us with support in any way that you can.

On the next page of this letter, you will find some frequently asked questions that will hopefully clarify how we plan to reopen. A phased reopening plan is also included on our website, [www.punxsutawneychristianschool.com](http://www.punxsutawneychristianschool.com). If you have any further questions, feel free to call the office (814-938-2295).

Again, thank you for your willingness to be part of our PCS family. We truly appreciate each and every one of you that sends your children to our school or offers your support. Please continue to pray that these changes we have to make will be temporary, and that God would intervene in this situation.

In His Service,

Punxsutawney Christian School Board of Directors

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Are students returning to school on time and will they be attending every day?

Our current plan is full, in-person learning. This means that all students will start on time (August 25) and will be attending five days a week. This plan will remain in effect as long as our service area remains in the “Green” phase. This plan will have to be altered according to orders put in place by either the Governor or the Department of Health.

### 2. Will my child have to wear a mask at school?

Under current guidelines, students are not required to wear a face covering if a distance of six feet can be maintained. We are working very hard to maintain this spacing throughout the building so as to not require face coverings. There could be a few instances (using the restroom, visiting the office, etc.) in which a student needs to wear a face covering for a few minutes, but we will not be asking them to wear one for the entirety of the school day. The school is currently looking into breathable, no-fog, plastic face shields for these instances so that students would never have to use restrictive face coverings.

### 3. What are some of the changes that are taking place in the building in order to follow current guidelines?

As outlined in our phased reopening plan, the following are some changes we will be making, understanding that as guidelines change, so will our plan:

- a. Student seating in the classroom will be placed six feet apart and all facing the same direction.
- b. We will place stickers on the floor so as to maintain six feet of distance when students are standing in line.
- c. The gym may temporarily be utilized for classroom space to help us maintain six feet between students.
- d. Assemblies of the whole school will be cancelled until guidelines about spacing are changed.

### 4. Will PCS still be holding student orientation?

There will be an orientation for all grade levels, but to limit the number of people in the building, we ask that only the student and one parent attends. Instead of orientation being one night for everyone, we will have four nights as follows:

- a. K – 2: August 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM
- b. 3 – 6: August 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM
- c. 7 – 12: August 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM
- d. Preschool: August 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM

**5. When should I keep my child home from school?**

As with any school year, we ask that you keep your child home from school any time they are feeling unwell. Because of this year's situation, the school will have a flexible attendance policy, meaning that your child will be allowed more absences without needing a doctor's excuse or being considered truant. Please consult your family doctor any time your child is feeling unwell to determine the best time to return to school after an illness. Times when you should especially keep your child home and consult your family doctor include:

- a. Fever of 100.4° (99.4° on a forehead thermometer) or higher (current guidelines recommend staying home until you are three days fever free)
- b. Cough or shortness of breath
- c. Body aches or fatigue
- d. Runny nose or congestion
- e. Sore throat
- f. Nausea or vomiting
- g. Diarrhea
- h. Loss or altered sense of taste or smell

**6. How will the school be catching my child up from school being shut down in the spring?**

Each teacher is well aware that, while some students did very well with remote learning, others struggled. Our school year always starts off with a review of the previous year's learning, and this year will be no different. There will be more of a focus, especially in the first quarter, on ensuring that necessary skills are reinforced before moving on to new material.

**7. What can we do to support the school and the teachers?**

The biggest support we as a school can ask for is your prayers as we navigate the guidelines and work hard to give your child the best experience possible. We also ask that you talk with your child and explain to them how much we love and care about them, and that although some rules may be different for a while, the teachers are excited to have them back in class and can't wait to see them again. Finally, you can show your support by being patient, understanding, and calm. We as a school promise to do our very best for your children. We know the situation is not ideal, but every decision we make will be with your children's best interest at heart.

**8. How can I stay informed about changes to the school's plans?**

PCS will be monitoring guidelines very closely, and as guidelines change, so will the plan we utilize in the school. Please watch the website, [www.punxsutawneychristianschool.com](http://www.punxsutawneychristianschool.com), and the weekly Home and School Connection to stay informed of any changes we are making throughout the school. You are also welcome to call the school at any time (814-938-2295) or email at [1pcselem@comcast.net](mailto:1pcselem@comcast.net).