



Southside Christian School  
*"Excellence through Absolute Truth in Christian Education"*

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May 21, 2020

To: SCS Families

From: SCS Leadership Team

Re: SCS Covid-19 Plan of Action

**Please note that the information regarding best practices regarding COVID-19 is fluid. The points included in this document have been updated as of 5.20.20. There will continue to be updates as they are made available.**

The nation is waiting to see what will happen in the fall regarding the reopening of school. As believers, we walk in both faith and wisdom. Because of our faith, we have ordered the curriculum, hired the teachers and staff, and continue with the enrollment process for our 2020-2021 school year.

The leadership team at SCS appreciates your prayers for wisdom as we lead our school community through this unprecedented time. We seek to serve the Lord with gladness and provide well for our school community. May God be glorified in all we do, and may this season be a time of much grace for one another.

Johnston County had an intense flu season this past winter. As a school, we amped up our cleaning of door handles, restrooms, student desks, pencils, and play equipment. The water fountains were taped off, and we were more keenly aware of students' who seemed fatigued and took temperatures often. This was certainly great preparation for the coming year.

It is only natural for parents to be seeking an understanding of our plan regarding the opening of school in August. We hope this document will bring answers to our families during this time of uncertainty. The number of possible scenarios is exhaustive. These key points will hopefully answer most of your questions. Please note that as of the writing of this document, Governor Cooper is unsure of the timeline as he is watching the number of new cases of COVID-19 on a daily basis.

**If NC schools open two weeks early beginning August 17<sup>th</sup> and add an additional five days to their school calendar...**

SCS will stick with our original calendar for the upcoming school year and begin school on August 24<sup>th</sup>. We will not add days to our calendar. The primary reason for starting two weeks early is to make up for the learning loss the public schools encountered by their delayed start with distant learning and inability of some students to participate in the distance learning.

(May 5, 2020) "State Rep. Craig Horn, who co-chaired a House panel on COVID-19 education strategies, says the mandatory start date, which falls a week earlier than most districts had planned to open, is a compromise. He says **many educators wanted more time to make up for this spring's disruption**, while business owners wanted summer revenue once stay-home

orders are lifted." <https://www.wfae.org/post/nc-schools-will-reopen-early-add-5-days-more-pay-still-question#stream/0>

If NC schools are shut down and private schools are not required to shut down...

SCS will use care to protect students on campus. Temperatures will be taken for all persons entering the building. This includes parents, volunteers, younger siblings, staff, etc. We ask that parents do not administer fever-reducing medication and send their children to school. Water fountains will not be available for student use. Personalized water bottles should be sent from home.

If there is a known case of COVID-19 in the student body or staff...

The school community will be notified. The buildings will be thoroughly cleaned prior to students returning to school. It is possible that the cleaning will be done that afternoon and evening. Depending on the relationship of the person who has contracted the virus with the school community, appropriate measures will be taken. SCS will follow best practices to ensure the safety of our students.

If NC mandates that classes adhere to a student/teacher ratio...

SCS will likely be in good standing due to our small class sizes.

If NC recommends that students wear masks to school...

Students may wear masks, but at this time, students will not be required to do so by SCS leadership. Wearing of masks will not be required for students with medical/emotional needs prohibiting the wearing of masks.

If NC recommends that teachers wear masks at school...

Staff may wear masks, but at this time, teachers will not be required to do so by SCS leadership. Especially when teaching Phonics and reading, students need to be able to see the movement of their teacher's mouth in learning proper letter enunciation. The ability to communicate is vital, and facial expressions are vital in communication.

If NC mandates that all schools, businesses, and churches close due to a spike in COVID-19...

If there is no other option, SCS will follow government mandates and transition to online learning until schools reopen.

If NC mandates A/B days for public schools...

SCS will determine if this is to provide specified SQ FT per student, or student/teacher ratio. The classrooms are in process of being measured, as are the open, multi-purpose classrooms, lunchrooms, etc. to ensure we have a plan in place to accommodate the ruling. Student/teacher ratio has been addressed.

If children are not feeling well but have already missed several days of school, should I send them or keep them at home?

As in days before COVID-19, SCS has a 24 hr symptom free policy in regards to school attendance. Please keep your child home for unusual conditions such as extreme fatigue, fast breathing, conjunctivitis, chills, muscle pain/soreness, unusual headache, etc. Missed days during this time are not as concerning as the safety of the children. A list of pages covered in

class will be posted online by your child's teacher so your child can keep up with concepts missed while out.

If NC schools are closed and SCS is open, and a parent becomes concerned and wishes to quarantine for a couple of weeks...

SCS teachers will provide a list of work covered each day. It is not feasible for the teachers to provide distance learning via Google Classroom and teach on campus. Privacy issues limit the teachers' ability to record other students in the classroom due to discipline and right to privacy. Student work will be submitted to the teacher for grading. The students may return to class when the parents feel secure to have them return. As long as the student is submitting the assignments, there will be no penalty for missed days.

If NC schools recommend a COVID-19 test for entry into school in the fall...

SCS will not require a COVID-19 test for entry into school. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the medical community is still unsure whether or not someone with antibodies can become re-infected, whether or not all people who have had COVID-19 have antibodies, and so forth. Because of these unknowns, at this time SCS would not require testing.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/05/07/852360101/will-antibodies-after-covid-19-illness-prevent-reinfection>

If NC schools require students to take a COVID-19 vaccine when or if it is ever developed and offered...

SCS accepts religious and medical exemptions from vaccines. "No child may attend a K-12 private or religious school unless a certificate of immunization is presented to the school or the child has received a medical or religious exemption." <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/non-public-education/regulation-map/northcarolina.html>

If a student enrolled at SCS tests positive for COVID-19...

The medical facility where a child receives notice of a positive COVID-19 test may report the finding to DHHS for "contact tracing". That is not the role of SCS. Notification of school community has been addressed.

If NC schools do not allow students to play on the playground or have recess...

Though many sources have differing opinions, the medical community seems to be in agreement that sunshine is a great weapon in fighting COVID-19. SCS encourages students to have fresh air and sunshine. As of the writing of this document, SCS will allow students to play on the playground equipment. Soccer will be altered to streamline interaction to include drills rather than games at this time, but once community and school sports resume, SCS would allow soccer games as well.

<https://www.newsweek.com/sunlight-kills-coronavirus-scientist-1500012>

If NC schools mandate that team sports will not be permitted to practice or play sports...

SCS will follow guidelines mandated by the state. We encourage coaches to prepare individual workouts, communicate with their teams via Zoom or Google Meet, and set spiritual and physical goals for their teams. If a seasonal sport will likely not be played for the season, then Coach Harris will oversee the workouts, etc., OR SCS will modify amount paid to coaches based on actual practices and games.

<https://jocoreport.com/op-ed-what-will-johnston-county-schools-look-like-in-the-fall/>

To whom should I take questions/comments about this plan of action?

Thank you for following Matthew 18 and bringing your questions to the right place. Once school begins, parents of elementary students may bring your questions to the elementary secretary. Likewise, parents of upper school students should bring their questions to the upper school secretary. If the secretary is unable to answer your question, she will have the principal of your child's campus reach out to you.

Prior to school beginning, you may take your questions directly to Mr. Dentel for the upper school campus and Mrs. Davis for the elementary campus.

Again, thank you for your patience as we walk through this time with new and often conflicting information being published daily by reliable sources.

By **Jon Evans** | May 13, 2020 at 5:01 PM EDT - Updated May 14 at 3:35 PM

**Jon Evans:** *"This morning, governor, I saw that California's State University System is looking at cancelling most in-person teaching for the fall semester. Do you have a fear that North Carolina might not be able to open its university system, community colleges or K-12 public schools in the fall?"*

**Gov. Roy Cooper:** *"We aren't there yet. Right now, the health experts are working with educators to plan what our K-12 schools will look like in the fall when they open up. What our universities and community colleges will look like when they open up. We know things will have to be different because the virus will still be here and we want to keep people safe. But right now, the plan is to try to open up our schools and universities and community colleges in the fall, and we're working on trying to do it in the safest way. We will again be looking at the numbers for our state, the indicators that show us how widespread the virus is, how many people are getting sick and how many people are in the hospital. So those calls will have to be made when we get closer. But there's a lot of planning and a lot of hard work going into various meetings and conferences that are trying to look at what our schools and universities and community colleges will look like in the fall. I'm hopeful that we can get people back in school and back to work as soon as we possibly can."*