

Health plans as ALA School Year 2021-2022 begins

During the 2020-2021 school year, a number of new but temporary health protocols were enacted to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. At that time, Arizona Lutheran Academy committed to following and encouraging these procedures:

- Reminding students to sanitize their hands with sanitizing stations placed throughout the building;
- Disinfecting high-touch surfaces throughout the day;
- Cleaning materials that were shared for student use;
- Cleaning & disinfecting the building after each school day.
- Requiring the wearing of face masks by students and staff members in keeping with community guidelines.
- Maintaining social distancing where possible.

Over the course of the year, we eased some of these, ending the school year with a largely “return to normal” approach that was to lead us into a new school year, operating under normal, pre-COVID protocols. Some of those temporary health protocols still make good sense hygienically, and some of the equipment which we installed will remain operational. We will continue to encourage students to exercise good hygiene overall.

Sicknesses have been a part of life for all of human history since the Fall into Sin (Genesis 3), and we have trusted in our God to work through all circumstances, even negative ones, for the good of his children (Romans 8:28). However, while we look to this promise to avoid living in a state of fear, this does not mean that we believe we have a protective bubble surrounding our campus which would prevent any sicknesses from touching our students and staff. We have managed sicknesses in school for all of our history by relying on parents to exercise good judgment in caring for their children by keeping them home when they are exhibiting symptoms related to any communicable illness and by sending them home when those symptoms are demonstrated on campus.

Due to the ready availability of COVID vaccines for persons older than 12-years-old, ALA will not formally monitor COVID cases as we begin this new year. Rather, we are making these plans to manage the occurrence of all communicable diseases as we begin our 2021-2022 school year under normal conditions.

- Parents are asked to exercise good judgment in monitoring their children’s health and symptoms closely and keep them home while symptoms or unhealthy feelings persist. This demonstrates care for your own child as well as concern for others.
- When a student is not feeling well at school, he/she must report to the office and parents will be notified as appropriate.
- If a student is symptomatic of any communicable disease, the following guidelines should be followed:
 - When a student has had a fever over 100 degrees, he/she must be fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) before returning to school.

- When a student has been vomiting or has diarrhea, he/she must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Students exhibiting significant symptoms of respiratory illness should remain home. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Thick, colored mucus from eyes or nose
 - Serious cough
 - Wheezing
 - Runny or crusty eyes
 - Sore throat
 - Earache
- Students may return to school if free from symptoms for 24 hours, providing the child's behavior indicates that he/she is feeling well.
- Contact the ALA office immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease, such as, but not limited to, strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, chicken pox, impetigo, COVID-19, ringworm, fifth disease, hand-foot-mouth disease, pink eye, or mononucleosis. The office may be able to share guidance for managing the disease safely for all involved.
- The wearing of masks will not be mandatory but remains an option for students or staff.
- No special arrangements are planned to effect social distancing.
- ALA will not be providing an online option for instruction. Students who cannot attend school during a sickness will continue to have access to Google Classroom and any assignments posted there. Teachers will exercise their own discretion in recording class sessions and may post those recordings on Google Classroom.
- The ALA athletic department will operate under these same guidelines as practices and competitions get underway.
- If health-related absences affect 25% of our student body at a single time, the ALA administration will consider taking additional precautionary measures.
- To the extent required by law, ALA will report the presence of communicable diseases among our community to the Maricopa County Department of Public Health.

As always, we will continue to monitor what is happening in our society and reserve the right to adjust these plans as needed at any time.